

SIUC School of Literature, Writing & Digital Humanities (ENGLISH)

Graduate Student Handbook

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REGULATIONS GOVERNING DEGREE PROGRAMS, COURSEWORK AND REGISTRATION, AND GRADUATE ASSISTANT REAPPOINTMENT

1.1 General Information

The Student's Responsibility

The Department of English and the Graduate School of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale require graduate students to assume responsibility for their academic progress by keeping an up-to-date record of courses taken, by knowing the regulations specified in the current *Graduate Catalog*, and by checking regularly with the Director of Graduate Studies and their dissertation or thesis directors.

Interpretation of Rules and Policies

The Graduate Studies Committee of the Department approves and interprets all rules and policies governing graduate study in English. Petitions for course equivalency, for waiver of requirements, or for any approvals not specifically covered in these Rules and Regulations should be addressed in writing (with any necessary documentation such as course descriptions, syllabi, graded papers, etc.) to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will act upon them or, if they involve a matter of policy, bring them to the attention and vote of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Advisement

The Director of Graduate Studies advises all new graduate students. After their first enrollment, students may be assigned by the Director to individual advisers for course registration and general program planning. Students should consult with faculty for advice specific to areas of specialization. However, students must meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure all courses satisfy Department and Graduate School requirements. The Director of Graduate Studies approves all decisions concerning program planning and other academic matters such as course equivalency, scheduling of examinations, and ensures that these decisions do not fall afoul of Graduate School rules and regulations.

Graduate School rules prescribe that students who have not fulfilled all requirements for their degree program (e.g., the thesis or dissertation) must show intent to complete their degree by enrolling each semester (summers excluded) for one credit hour of English 601, even if they have satisfied the twenty-four credit-hour residency requirement for dissertation credit.

Registration

- 1) During the pre-registration period of each semester, each student must make an appointment with the Director of Graduate Studies or the Director's designate for advisement and course registration.
- 2) At the time of the appointment, the Director or designate will assign a Registration User Number (RUN).
- 3) Any student registering for an independent readings course (English 499 or English 589), for an internship (English 498), or for thesis hours (English 599), **must have the appropriate forms signed by the faculty member(s) involved (i.e., the director of the readings course or the members of the thesis committee) before coming to the registration appointment.**

These forms are available in the Graduate Studies office and on the Department website: <https://cola.siu.edu/english/graduate/graduate-resources/forms.php>

- 4) The student then completes university registration procedures through the online registration system.
- 5) Each graduate student is expected to plan the course of study carefully. Hence, program changes after registration should seldom be necessary. Such changes must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and, if they involve late registration, by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- 6) Courses listed with a span of hours (e.g., “1 to 9,” “3 to 12”) may be taken in multiples of the first figure for a total of the second over different semesters as the topic varies.
- 7) For further information on registration deadlines, refer to the current “Schedule of Classes” online.

To save time at your advisement appointment, please study and complete the appropriate academic checklist *before you arrive*. Checklists are available online at:

<http://cola.siu.edu/english/graduate/graduate-resources/forms.php>.

Hours Carried Per Term

During a typical term, graduate assistants must be registered for at least 8 credit hours at the graduate level (400 or above). Students completing theses may reduce this load to 6 credit hours during the semester in which they graduate. PhD students who have advanced to candidacy (i.e., completed and defended preliminary exams) may also reduce this load to 6 credit hours. **Courses taken to satisfy the research tool requirement do not count toward these hours.** See the Graduate Assistants United contract for more details in this respect. The maximum course load for a single term is 16 hours. However, the department will never advise students to take more than three graduate courses per term.

Auditing Courses

During a specific period, students may change course registration from credit to audit. Such changes must be initiated with the Director of Graduate Studies and will be screened by the Dean of the Graduate School to prevent misuse for the purpose of avoiding poor grades. In addition, **audited course hours do not count toward the 8-hour requirement for graduate assistantships.**

Waiving Requirements

To waive a requirement for the MA, MFA or PhD, a student must petition the Director of Graduate Studies, who will confer with the Graduate Studies Committee if the waiver involves a matter of policy. If the requirement is a departmental one, the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies and/or Graduate Studies Committee shall be final. If the requirement is within the jurisdiction of the Graduate School, the Director of Graduate Studies will forward a petition of waiver to the Dean of the Graduate School, who will make the final ruling. Copies of all documents concerning the petition for waiver will be placed in the student's file.

Extension of Deadline Requests

All requests for the extension of deadlines that regulate the time span within which an MA or MFA degree (six years) or a PhD degree (five years after admission to candidacy) must be completed shall be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Courses Taken outside the Department of English

A student may offer toward the MA or PhD degree course work from outside the Department provided that such work is relevant to the regular degree requirements (e.g., research tool requirements). Such credits are not figured in the 30-hour requirement or GPA for the MA degree. Course work from outside the Department offered toward the MFA degree must be approved by both a faculty member in Creative Writing and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Grading Policies and Meaning of Grades

Students pursuing the MA must maintain an average of B (3.0) in all courses taken for graduate credit. Students pursuing the MFA or PhD must maintain an average of 3.25. Grades are officially recorded by the letters A, B, C, D, and, with plus/minus distinctions.

A grade of **B-** is regarded as the minimum acceptable graduate performance.

In an entire graduate program, the student may accumulate up to three hours of work below B, so long as an average of 3.0 (MA) or 3.25 (MFA and PhD) is maintained. If the student earns more than three hours below B, he or she must, in addition to maintaining the required average, replace the hours of C or lower with an equal number of hours of A or B. In effect, the number of semester hours of coursework for the degree may thereby be increased. A student who accumulates more than nine hours of C will be dropped from the program.

An instructor of a graduate course may refuse to allow the grade of *INC* in the course. If this is an instructor's policy, it should be made clear to students at the beginning of the course. The graduate student who is granted the grade of *INC* **should complete the course work by the end of the next semester.** All *INC* grades turn into Fs after a year or at the time of graduation, whichever comes first. This is a university-wide policy that cannot be waived by the DGS. This policy matters for PhDs seeking reappointment, and especially for any MAs or MFAs who receive incompletes in their penultimate semester. The graduation trigger could drop students below the required GPA for graduation. Therefore, it is imperative that students rectify all incompletes within a year and prior to graduation.

Deferred or incomplete work will be regarded as finished when a student has submitted all exams, papers, etc., and a grade has been recorded. The grade of *DEF* in English 595 and English 600, which are PhD courses related to preliminary exam preparation and the writing of a dissertation, and the grade of *DEF* in English 601, are not included in the above regulations.

1.2 Course Levels

See the current *Graduate Catalog* under "English" for course numbering and general descriptions. More detailed course descriptions, especially for 500-level seminars, appear each semester prior to registration. At the heart of the MA and especially the MFA and PhD

programs are courses numbered 500 to 599, which are seminars open to graduate students only. MA, MFA, and PhD students are encouraged to take as many of these intensive courses as possible. Courses numbered 400-499 are intermediary courses that afford training in tools and techniques of historical, critical, and theoretical knowledge, investigation, and expression that are applicable not only to the intensive subject matter of seminars but also to other areas in English language, literary research, and creative writing. 400-level courses are also open to advanced undergraduates.

English 502-Introduction to Graduate Study and Teaching College Composition

All graduate assistants who have not had previous college teaching experience must, in their first term as GAs, take English 502. The Director of Writing Studies is in charge of the teaching duties of all graduate assistants. Should a graduate assistant have prior teaching experience, the Director of Writing Studies will determine whether or not the student will be exempt from enrolling in English 502. All new graduate assistants are required to attend a pre-semester workshop-orientation to learn about the Department's policies, grading, syllabus preparation, teaching strategies, etc. Graduate students not serving as graduate assistants may elect to enroll in English 502 with the consent of the instructor.

Independent Study Courses: ENGL 499 and 589

PhD Students

- Students may include only one Independent Study course in their Program of Study.
- Students may take other Independent Study courses once the Program of Study has been submitted and approved in order to supplement coursework and prepare for the dissertation.
- Students preparing for preliminary examinations should take ENGL 595, rather than ENGL 589, Independent Study. (See *Graduate Catalog* for details about 595.)

MFA Students

- Students may take no more than nine-credit-hours of Independent Study total in the degree program (i.e., nine of the 48 total hours)
- Students may take no more than three-credit-hours of Independent Study with any one professor during the course of the degree program

MA Students

- Students may take Independent Studies only when they need a 500-level course to graduate but only 400-level classroom courses are offered. In such a case, the student will enroll in an Independent Study course but take the 400-level classroom course with the same professor

1.3 Department Policy on Reappointment of Graduate Assistants

The following conditions regulate the reappointment of graduate assistants:

- 1) A minimum GPA of 3.5 in the degree program
- 2) No more than one grade of *INC*

- 3) No need for an extension of more than 3 months of support beyond the regular 24 months for MA students, 36 months for MFA students, and 48 months for PhD students
- 4) No evidence in a student's record of problems with teaching performance

Department Policy on Appointment of Summer Graduate Assistants

Summer appointments are not guaranteed and are subject to enrollment and funding from the university. Graduate students seeking summer appointments must submit an application consisting of a CV and cover letter by 15 February. The letter should detail not only scholarly and creative progress in the applicant's graduate program, but also the ways in which a summer appointment can assist (and not hamper) this progress.

The following conditions regulate summer appointments for graduate assistants:

- 1) Summer assistantships shall be divided equally among eligible MA, MFA, and PhD applicants, when the number of applicants and specialized teaching demand permit (i.e., the principle of equal distribution shall not override MFA students' precedence in assigning creative writing courses). In those instances where there are too few applicants from a single program to permit an equal distribution, the remaining summer appointments shall be divided equally between the two remaining programs.
- 2) Applicants who have had no previous summer support within the time of their current programs shall have priority over applicants who have had previous summer support. If the number of applicants requires giving a summer assistantship to an applicant who has had previous summer support, (a) applicants who have had shorter appointments (1 or 1.5 months) shall have priority over applicants who have had longer appointments (2 months) and (b) applicants who have had less recent appointments shall have priority over applicants who have had more recent support. Support shall be defined as any contract paid through the Graduate School, whether or not in the Department of English, including interim appointments, ORDA-funded appointments, etc.
- 3) More than one *INC* shall disqualify an applicant for a summer GA.
- 4) A GPA below 3.5 shall disqualify an applicant for a summer GA.
- 5) After criteria 2-4, the graduate studies committee will determine appointments on the basis of an application packet consisting of a CV and cover letter (due 1 February). The graduate studies committee will evaluate applications according to the following criteria: 1) timely progress within the applicant's degree program in the department of English; 2) value of summer support for the applicant's prospects of thesis or dissertation completion; 3) scholarly, creative, and professional progress as demonstrated by publications and presentations.
- 6) An applicant's experience or training in a particular departmental site (computer lab, writing center, etc.) shall not be relevant in decisions on summer appointments.

1.4 Master's Degree Requirements

For hours required and distribution of courses for the MA in Literature and the MA in Rhetoric and Composition, refer to the current *Graduate Catalog* or to the Pre-Advisement Checklists.

Master's Reading List and Master's Comprehensive Examination

Copies of past examination questions are on file in the Graduate Studies Office and will be made available to students preparing for the exam.

Students taking the MA Comprehensive Examination must have completed, with not less than a "B" average, at least 24 hours of graduate work toward the MA in English and must have satisfied all other degree requirements, including the foreign-language requirement. (Exceptions must be granted by the Director of Graduate Studies.) MA students must submit their six preferred areas of examination to the Director of Graduate Studies by **September 15 of their third semester in the program**. Applicants will choose six preferred areas from the list below:

1. Middle English Literature
2. Renaissance and 17th-Century English Literature
3. Restoration and 18th-Century English Literature
4. 19th-Century English Literature
5. American Literature before 1900
6. American Literature since 1900
7. Modern British Literature
8. Irish Literature
9. Literary / Critical Theory
10. Other [Chosen by the student with the consent of the Director of Graduate Studies]

The Director of Graduate Studies will narrow the list of six areas to three and, on November 1, inform the applicants of those three areas. Faculty examiners will have reading lists for the exam available by November 15. Each student should consult with the named examiner for each area, who will stipulate the readings on which the question for that area will be based. The three examination questions will be submitted to each student no later than March 1; the student will then have until the Monday after spring break to write the take-home examination, with each of the three answers 2,500 to 3,200 words in length.

The examinations will be evaluated by an MA Exam Committee of at least three members of the graduate faculty, and a majority vote determines pass or fail for the entire examination, with the Director of Graduate Studies interceding in the event of a deadlock. A student who fails the examination may take it a second time. A third examination may be allowed, but only by special permission of the Director of Graduate Studies. If the examination committee deems it useful, an oral examination may be scheduled after the written examination to determine the grade for the examination. The entire examination will be given a qualitative grade as follows:

- 1 – Pass with Distinction
- 2 – Pass

- 3 – Low Pass
- 4 – Fail

Number grades will be forwarded to students in the results letter along with a brief explanation of the grade's meaning. If the student has applied to the PhD program at SIU, the examination results will be placed in the student's file and forwarded to Graduate Studies Committee. The grades will have specific meaning when the Graduate Studies Committee reads the file:

- 1 – Equivalent to a "Strongly Recommend" endorsement
- 2 – Equivalent to a "Recommend" endorsement
- 3 – Equivalent to a "Recommend with Reservations" endorsement

Unless they also elect to write a thesis (see below), MA students must also file with the Graduate School a clean and properly formatted research paper which has earned the grade of B or better in a 500-level English course. For specific instructions and deadlines, please refer to the Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, and Research Papers, available via the Graduate School's website: <https://gradschool.siu.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation-researchpaper/>. The research paper must be cleared with Graduate School Records well in advance of the deadline.

Thesis

Students who wish to write an MA thesis in Literature must apply to do so. First, the student must constitute a complete three-person thesis committee, no later than their third semester in the program. **Students must then submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a thesis application by 1 November in their third semester in the program. The application must include a provisional title and short topic description, signatures of the three members of the thesis committee, as well as a letter of support from the thesis director/advisor.** The Graduate Studies Committee reviews all thesis applications. The Committee must approve a student's thesis application for the project to move forward.

MA students who have a GPA of 3.5 and no more than one grade of *INC* will be eligible to register for English 599 (Thesis) as long as they have constituted a Thesis Committee consisting of a Thesis Director and two readers. MA students are encouraged to form committees by the end of their second semester and begin writing during their first summer in the program.

The department recommends that MA students in rhetoric and composition also follow this schedule. **There is no comprehensive exam for rhetoric and composition. Students choose either the thesis or the portfolio option.**

Recommended Timeline

What follows is a general timeline for successful thesis completion:

Second Semester: Identify your thesis director and get his/her approval to direct the project. Some faculty may require you to prepare a preliminary proposal and bibliography before agreeing to advise your thesis. You should also have preliminary

conversations with the other two readers of your thesis. Ideally, you'll be able to spend some of the summer researching and writing for the thesis project. Set preliminary deadlines for thesis drafts in the fall semester. In other words, you should plan to begin research and drafting your thesis in your first summer in the program.

Third Semester: Finalize your thesis committee and submit a thesis application to the Director of Graduate Studies by 1 November. Set preliminary deadlines for completing revisions of your thesis, keeping in mind that the departmental deadline for thesis defense is usually in week ten of the semester.

Fourth Semester: Finish writing/revising your thesis and prepare for your defense. Submit a final draft of your thesis to your committee by the fifth week of the semester, so that members can read and comment on the thesis prior to defense.

Human Subjects Committee's Rules for Research

Before beginning research for the thesis, the student must make sure that his or her plan of work is in full compliance with the stipulations of the Human Subjects Committee's rules for research. If the thesis involves any gathering of information from individuals through interviews, questionnaires or other means of oral or written communication, the researcher must seek the Graduate School's approval of the research plan before the actual research begins.

The Graduate School will not approve or accept theses that have not followed these rules.

Thesis Defense

Upon completion of the thesis and its acceptance by the Thesis Director and Thesis Committee, the student shall register a date agreeable to the members of the Thesis Committee with the Graduate Studies Office Manager for the defense of the thesis so that logistical arrangements for the defense and the necessary announcements can be made. The final draft of your thesis should be provided to committee members at least three weeks before the defense. **A defense may be scheduled no sooner than two weeks after delivery of the manuscript to the committee.** The defense of the thesis is public and may be attended by any interested parties.

The students should be aware of the application for graduation deadlines and thesis submission deadlines set by the Graduate School and should also make sure that the thesis follows the format prescribed in the Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, and Research Papers, available online. For general questions concerning graduation and fees, please contact the Graduate School. For details regarding online submission of theses, see the Graduate School Guide:

<http://gradschool.siu.edu/thesis-dissertation-researchpaper/etd-guidelines.html>

1.5 MFA Requirements

For hours required and distribution of courses for the MFA in Creative Writing, refer to the current *Graduate Catalog* or to the Pre-Advisement Checklists.

Candidacy Review

In the spring semester of a student's second year in the MFA program, all students undergo a formal candidacy review. By April 10, faculty in each subspecialty (fiction and poetry) will submit to the Director of Creative Writing a synopsis of each student's progress to date, as well as a finalized thesis committee. In those instances where the faculty finds that a student has not demonstrated satisfactory creative or professional progress and/or cannot form a thesis committee, the student will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies and all faculty members in the student's subspecialty to determine the nature of the deficiency. The faculty may recommend to the Director of Graduate Studies at this meeting that the student be required to complete remediation, that the student be allowed to continue in the program without sanction, or that the student be removed from the program. In the last case, the creative writing faculty will then submit a written recommendation for removal from the program to the DGS and the Graduate Studies Committee. Within five working days of receiving this recommendation, DGS will request a written response from the affected student. The student will have five days to respond in writing. Within five days of receiving this response, the Director will convene a meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee. Should the Graduate Studies Committee concur with the creative writing faculty's recommendation, the student will be removed from the program. This decision will then be subject to the Graduate School's academic grievance policy detailed in the *Graduate Catalog*.

Thesis Defense

Upon completion of the thesis and its acceptance by the Thesis Director and Thesis Committee, the student shall register a date agreeable to the members of the Thesis Committee with the Graduate Studies Office Manager for the defense of the thesis so that logistical arrangements for the defense and the necessary announcements can be made. The final draft of the thesis should be provided to committee members at least three weeks before the defense. **A defense may be scheduled no sooner than two weeks after delivery of the manuscript to the committee.** The defense of the thesis is public and may be attended by any interested parties.

1.6 PhD Requirements

Refer to the current *Graduate Catalog* for information detailing admission procedures, course of study, and research tool requirements.

The Pro-Seminar

All doctoral students must take a pro-seminar in their first year of doctoral study. The purpose of the pro-seminar is to provide thorough, extensive practice in research methods and bibliography and in the mastery of criticism and/or scholarship on some relatively narrow topic. The pro-seminar is not primarily a theory seminar. It therefore does not count toward the doctoral theory/cultural studies requirement. Rather, the pro-seminar will emphasize research techniques and the understanding of critical and/or scholarly writing. For PhD students in Literature, this requirement will be fulfilled by a single seminar offered each fall and designated as the doctoral pro-seminar. For PhD students in Rhetoric and Composition, English 501, offered each spring, will be the designated pro-seminar in Rhetoric and Composition. Any student wishing to take both the Literature and the Rhetoric and Composition pro-seminars may do so.

The Prelim/Advisory Committee and the Program of Study Proposal

Following admission to the PhD program, and **before the completion of the second year (i.e., fourth semester) in doctoral residence**, a PhD student is required to form an academic advisory committee (hereafter referred to as the Preliminary Examination Committee) and to prepare a Program of Study Proposal. The Preliminary Examination Committee will consist of four members of the graduate faculty in English. The Chair of the Committee and one other member will normally represent the student's major area of interest; each of the remaining two members will normally represent one of the minor areas of interest. Within the limits of this distribution, the student may, usually upon consulting the Chair of the Preliminary Examination Committee, change the particular membership of the committee at any point. Normally the Preliminary Examination Committee will comprise the nucleus of the Dissertation Committee. As soon as the Preliminary Examination Committee is formed, it becomes the responsibility of all its members to oversee the student's program and academic progress.

If a student has not formed a preliminary exam committee by 15 April of their fourth semester in the program, then the student will undergo the formal candidacy review process detailed herein. The Director of Graduate Studies will first consult the student in question to determine the reason for the delay in constituting the preliminary exam committee. In those instances where the Director finds that the delay is the result of simple deadline mismanagement, they will take no action. In those instances where the Director finds that a student has not demonstrated satisfactory scholarly or professional progress and/or cannot form a dissertation committee, the student will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies and all faculty members in the student's area ("area" means either historical period or conceptual focus) to determine the nature of the deficiency. After this meeting, the faculty in the student's area may recommend to the Director of Graduate Studies that the student be required to complete remediation, that the student be allowed to continue in the program without sanction, that the student be granted an extra semester to complete the program of study, or that the student be removed from the program. The faculty in the student's major area will submit a written recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies. If the faculty recommend removal, this recommendation will go to the Graduate Studies Committee. Within five working days of receiving this recommendation, the Director of Graduate Studies will request a written response from the affected student. The student will have five days to respond in writing. Within five days of receiving this response, the Director will convene a meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee. Should the Graduate Studies Committee concur with the faculty's recommendation, the student will be removed from the program. This decision will then be subject to the Graduate School's academic grievance policy.

The Department offers interdisciplinary PhD studies on a co-operative basis with departments that deal with pertinent subject matter and are interested in such interdisciplinary co-operation: e.g., the Departments of Philosophy, Foreign Languages and Literatures, History, Fine Arts, Cinema and Photography, Communication Studies, Theater, Sociology, etc. Permission for an interdisciplinary course of study must be approved by the student's Preliminary Examination Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee and, if necessary, the Graduate School.

All PhD students should seek the advice of the Director of Graduate Studies and faculty members while composing their Program of Study. At least twice a year, PhD students should

meet with their committee members (or prospective members) to discuss their Program of Study, plans for future coursework, and research goals. Moreover, students should ask their committee members to visit their classrooms at various times during their degree program to ensure that committee members can address both scholarly and pedagogical development in letters of recommendation. Students should bring a draft of their Program of Study to the Director of Graduate Studies for review before requesting signatures from committee members.

The Chair's earliest official act will be to call the Preliminary Examination Committee together to approve, reject, or amend the student's Program of Study Proposal. The written proposal shall:

- 1) Summarize the student's graduate work to date, including course work already completed. For the major area, students typically complete at least six courses (including at least two at the 500 level); for the first minor, four courses (including at least one at the 500 level); for the second minor, three courses (at least one at the 500 level).
- 2) Indicate research tool preferences. Any research tool option, especially the substitution of a collateral field of knowledge or special research technique for one foreign language, must be approved by the student's Preliminary Examination Committee and by the Graduate Studies Committee.
- 3) List one major and two minor areas of study and propose a program leading to the Preliminary Examination. For concentrators in Literature, at least one of the minors should be closely related historically to the major.
- 4) The Graduate Studies Committee shall review and approve a student's Program of Study Proposal before it is considered official. A copy of the approved Program of Study Proposal will be filed with the student's academic record in the Graduate Studies office.

The residency requirement for the PhD must be fulfilled after admission to the PhD program and before formal admission to doctoral candidacy. The residency requirement is satisfied by completion of 30 semester-hours of graduate coursework on campus as a doctoral student within a period not to exceed four calendar years. No more than six hours of deferred dissertation credit may be applied toward fulfillment of the 24-semester-hours residency requirement. **No doctoral student will be permitted to sign up for more than six hours of dissertation credit until candidacy has been achieved.** Any dissertation hours registered for above the six permitted prior to candidacy will not be counted toward completion of the doctoral degree.

Preliminary Examinations

To be admitted to PhD candidacy, the student must pass the three-part preliminary examination. Students on a fellowship or a teaching assistantship will be expected to take this examination no later than seven semesters (or three and one-half years) after entering the PhD program. No student can be admitted to candidacy by the Graduate School before passing all parts of the preliminary examination and completing all course and research-tool requirements. A student is eligible to take the preliminary examination upon completing the prescribed residency requirement and course of study beyond the MA degree, including all required courses, fulfilling the research-tool requirement, and receiving the approval of the Preliminary Examination Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee.

The preliminary examination is prepared and graded by the student's Preliminary Examination Committee. The major-area examination may consist of one six-hour written exam or a comparable take-home literature review essay ("literature review" encompasses both primary and secondary texts). A minor area examination may consist of a three-hour written examination or a comparable take-home literature review essay. The choice of exam format shall be negotiated between the student and the examination committee. **Regardless of format, all preliminary exams conclude with an oral defense.**

In the major-area examination, the student is expected to show a thorough mastery of the historical period and/or subject matter in breadth and depth: major and minor works, bibliography, historical and intellectual background, and the relevant critical and theoretical scholarship. Appropriate examinations for each of the two minors depend upon the specific material to be covered. The identification and definition of the minors is left to negotiations between the student and the committee (e.g., Renaissance drama for a student preparing to specialize in the Restoration; Romantic and Victorian literature for a student preparing to specialize in Modern British; Victorian literature for a student preparing to specialize in modern fiction, etc.).

The individual sections and the entire examination will be given qualitative grades. Each member of the Preliminary Examination Committee may assign different grades for each section. However, the entire committee must agree upon one grade for the entire examination:

- 1 – Pass with Distinction
- 2 – Pass
- 3 – Low Pass
- 4 – Fail

The committee may require the student to complete further work or testing for any section receiving a "Low Pass" grade. The committee **must** require further work or testing for an entire examination that receives a "Low Pass" grade. The student will be informed of the committee's decision only after the committee reaches consensus on the grades. A student who fails the preliminary examination may request to take it a second time.

Dissertation

A dissertation showing high achievement in independent and original scholarship shall be submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PhD program. While the student is working on the dissertation, he or she must register for English 600. The student is encouraged to dedicate at least one academic year of full-time work to complete the dissertation. In any case, the student must register for at least 24-semester-hours of dissertation credit. The dissertation must be completed within no more than five years after admission to candidacy.

Preliminary Choice of Dissertation Topic and Adviser

Since the major area of the Preliminary Examination must cover the field in which the candidate's dissertation is to be written, the student has to decide fairly early in the program on the general area of the dissertation topic. As early as practicable, the student should seek the consent of a member of the graduate faculty to serve as Dissertation Director and should secure

the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee of that arrangement through the submission of the Program of Study Proposal.

Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee will consist of the Dissertation Director and four other members of the graduate faculty, including one from outside the Department of English. This arrangement complies with the Graduate School's requirement of a five-member Dissertation Committee. The Committee will be chaired by the Dissertation Director. In the following paragraphs, "Dissertation Director" may also mean co-directors if a Dissertation Committee is set up to be co-directed by two members of the graduate faculty of the Department. If it is an interdisciplinary dissertation, one of the co-directors may be from another department.

Human Subjects Committee's Rules for Research

Before beginning research for the dissertation, the student must make sure that his or her plan of work is in full compliance with the stipulations of the Human Subjects Committee's rules for research. If the dissertation involves any gathering of information from individuals through interviews, questionnaires or other means of oral or written communication, the researcher must seek the Human Subjects Committee's approval of the research plan before the actual research begins. The Graduate School will not approve or accept dissertations that have not followed these rules.

Dissertation Prospectus

Before undertaking the dissertation, the candidate must submit a prospectus written under the guidance of the Dissertation Director to the five members of the Dissertation Committee. All copies should be signed to show approval of the prospectus by the Dissertation Director and Committee members.

The prospectus shall contain:

- 1) The tentative title of the dissertation
- 2) A statement of the central problem to be solved
- 3) A review of literature and materials relevant to the scholarly investigation of the subject
- 4) A sketch of the project's central thesis and argument, however provisional

After the members of the Dissertation Committee have stated their suggestions and comments to the candidate's Dissertation Director, the Committee will meet with the student to discuss the prospectus. When it receives final approval, a copy of it and a letter of approval signed by all Committee members are sent by the Dissertation Director to the Director of Graduate Studies to be placed in the student's academic file.

Changes in Membership of Dissertation Committees

Once the five-member dissertation committee has been formed and the official notice of the dissertation committee has been approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School, any changes in the membership of the committee should be made only for the most compelling reasons. If a student wishes to replace the chair of his or her dissertation committee, the student will first meet with the chair of the committee to discuss the change.

- 1) If this meeting is conclusive, the replaced chair of the committee will notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of this fact, after which the student has the responsibility for enlisting another member of the faculty as the new chair of the committee. That accomplished, the new chair will inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the full membership of the dissertation committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.
- 2) If this meeting is inconclusive, the Director of Graduate Studies will meet with the student and the chair of the committee in an attempt to resolve the problem. If this second meeting does not resolve the problem, the student has the responsibility for enlisting another member of the faculty as the new chair of the committee. That accomplished, the new chair will inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the full membership of the dissertation committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.

If the chair of a dissertation committee wishes to withdraw from that role, he or she will first meet with the student to discuss the withdrawal.

- 1) If this meeting is conclusive, the withdrawing chair will notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of this fact, after which the student and the remaining four members of the committee will meet to decide upon a plan for replacing the chair of the committee. The replacement accomplished, the new chair will inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the full membership of the dissertation committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.
- 2) If this meeting is inconclusive, the Director of Graduate Studies will meet with the student and the chair of the committee in an attempt to resolve the problem. If this second meeting does not resolve the problem, the student and the remaining four members of the committee will meet to decide upon a plan for replacing the chair of the committee. The replacement accomplished, the new chair will inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the full membership of the dissertation committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.

If a student wishes to replace one of the other members of his or her dissertation committee, or if a member of the committee wishes to withdraw from the committee, the student, the chair of the committee, and the committee member will first meet to discuss the change. The chair of the committee will then notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of this fact and of the full membership of the new committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.

Service of Emeritus or Adjunct Faculty on Dissertation Committees

According to the Operating Paper of the Graduate School:

Emeritus and adjunct faculty may serve on or co-chair students' theses and dissertation committees, serve on students' program committees, and/or evaluate students' preliminary examinations, upon the request of their respective department chair or director of graduate studies and the approval of the Graduate Dean. No more than one

emeritus or adjunct faculty shall serve on such committees except on cooperative agreements with other universities. (§2.I.A.k)

If a retirement makes it necessary to replace the chair of a dissertation committee, the retiring chair of the committee will notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of this fact and of the full membership of the new committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.

If a retirement makes it necessary to replace one of the other members of a dissertation committee, the chair of the committee will notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of this fact and of the full membership of the new committee so that a revised notice can be submitted for Graduate School approval.

Submission of the First Draft of the Dissertation

When the draft of the dissertation is acceptable to the Dissertation Director, the candidate is to submit the draft to each member of the Dissertation Committee for suggestions and comments. The members of the Committee should read the draft within a reasonable period of time. Critical reactions to the draft should be sought and discussed in individual conferences with Committee members and, ultimately, with the Dissertation Director. The candidate should revise the draft according to the cogency and validity of suggestions from Committee members, seeking the Dissertation Director's guidance in these as in all related matters.

Preparation of the Final Draft of the Dissertation

When the revised draft is fully approved by the Dissertation Director, the candidate is to prepare the dissertation in the format prescribed in the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, and Research Papers*, available online, although it is of course possible that further suggestions for or requirements of changes may be made in the dissertation defense.

The Dissertation Director should contact the Director of Graduate Studies and department staff to schedule a time for the Dissertation Committee to convene for the candidate's defense of the dissertation. As soon as final copies of the dissertation are ready, the candidate is to submit these to the members of the Dissertation Committee, in no case later than two weeks before the scheduled defense.

Dissertation Defense

The Dissertation Committee will examine the candidate orally, primarily on the methods, presentation, and conclusions of the dissertation as presented in its final draft form. Since the defense is open to interested parties, its date will be published within the Department and University at least one week in advance of the date of the defense itself. The Dissertation Director, as chair of the Dissertation Committee, will see to it that all assessment and rating forms will be available for members of the Dissertation Committee and that they be signed and returned to the office of the Director of Graduate Studies immediately after the conclusion of the defense. The Dissertation Director is also responsible for the implementation of changes recommended or required by the Dissertation Committee before the dissertation is submitted in its final version to the Graduate School and the Department.

Final Dissertation Copy

According to Graduate School stipulations, the dissertation must also contain an abstract of 350 words or fewer and a brief curriculum vitae. Arrangements concerning copyright and microfilming must be made with the Graduate School. **Students do have the option of preventing their dissertations from being published in SIUC's open-access repository, even though they must submit the dissertation electronically.**

For general questions concerning graduation and fees, please call (618) 453-4523. For details regarding online submission of dissertations, see the Graduate School's Guide:

<https://gradschool.siu.edu/currentstudents/thesis-dissertation-researchpaper/>

1.7 Degree Checklists

M.A. CONCENTRATION IN LITERATURE (Fall 2025)

_____ 30 semester hours required, with 15 in 500-level courses at SIUC

Retention: 3.0 GPA, with 3 hours below B permitted. 4-9 hours below B must be replaced by an equal number of hours of A or B in addition to maintaining 3.0 GPA (until maximum of 36 hours). All INC s must be removed by end of next term in residence (exceptions petition to GSC) 6+ hours INC prohibits registration for more course work until INC is reduced to 3 hours or fewer. Number of transfer credits (up to 15 hours of 400-level course work only):

COURSE WORK

_____ 502 (first-time Graduate Assistants) or elective (permission Director of Writing Studies)

Three Courses from Group I (two different periods):

_____ Old/Middle English literature (402, 404, 405, 506) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Ren/17thC English literature (412, 460, 471, 472, 473, 510) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Rest/18thC English literature (413, 414, 451, 462, 516) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ 19thC English literature (421, 422, 452, 530) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

Three Courses from Group II (two different periods):

_____ American literature before 1900 (426, 458, 533) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ American literature after 1900- (427, 459, 468, 494, 539) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Modern British literature (423, 453, 464, 494, 550) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Modern Continental literature (425, 455, 465, 494) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

Two electives, one of which should be a literary criticism/theory course (494; 495; 579; 598), and one of which may be 599 (Thesis):

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Fourth semester: Questions from faculty examiners March 1; Answers due Monday after spring break

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

One of the following:

_____ Two years college-level, one language, with B average

_____ FL 488

_____ Passed translation exam through Dept of Foreign Languages

_____ Score of 350+ on WebCape proficiency exam on-line.

_____ 506, when offered

THESIS

_____ Thesis (599; Graduate School will count maximum of 6 hours)

M.A. CONCENTRATION IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION (Fall 2012)

_____ 30 semester hours required, with 15 in 500-level courses at SIUC

Retention: 3.0 GPA, with 3 hours below B permitted. 4-9 hours below B must be replaced by an equal number of hours of A or B in addition to maintaining 3.0 GPA (until maximum of 36 hours). INC must be removed by end of next term in residence (exceptions petition to GSC) 6+ hours INC prohibits registration for more course work until INC is reduced to 3 hours or fewer.

COURSE WORK

_____ 501

_____ 596

_____ 597

One of the following:

_____ 401

_____ 490

_____ 491

_____ 581

_____ Special Topics Course (approved by RC Area Head)

_____ 502 (first-time Graduate Assistants) or elective (permission Director of Writing Studies)

Two Courses from Group I (two different periods):

_____ Old/Middle English literature (402, 404, 405, 506) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Ren/17thC English literature (412, 460, 471, 472, 473, 510) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Rest/18thC English literature (413, 414, 451, 462, 516) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ 19thC English literature (421, 422, 452, 530) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

Two Courses from Group II (two different periods):

_____ American literature before 1900 (426, 458, 533) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ American literature after 1900- (427, 459, 468, 494, 539) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Modern British literature (423, 453, 464, 494, 550) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

_____ Modern Continental literature (425, 455, 465, 494) also (493, 499, 589, 593)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

One of the following:

_____ Two years college-level, one language, with B average

_____ FL 488

_____ Passed translation exam through Dept of Foreign Languages

_____ Score of 350+ on WebCape proficiency exam (online).

_____ 402 and 506, when offered

THESIS/PORTFOLIO

One of the following:

_____ Thesis (599; Graduate School will count maximum of 6 hours)

_____ Portfolio (papers from three graduate-level courses; a revision of one paper for potential publication; 15-25 page reflective essay)

MA in English Studies (Fall 2025)

_____ 36 credit hours required, with at least 15 credit hours at the 500-level

At least one course from seven of the following areas:

- _____ Old/Medieval English Literature and Culture (504, 505, 506; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Renaissance/17th Century British Literature and Culture (510, 512, 560, 571, 573; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Restoration/18th-century British Literature and Culture (513, 514, 516, 551, 562; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ 19th-century British Literature and Culture (521, 522, 552, 530; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Early American Literature and Culture (526, 533, 558; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Modern American Literature and Culture (527, 539, 559, 568, 594; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Modern British Literature and Culture (523, 550, 553, 564, 594; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Modern Continental Literature and Culture (525, 555, 565, 594; depending on topic: 593)
- _____ Composition and Rhetoric (501, 596, 597; depending on topic: 593)

Electives totaling 15-credit-hours (which may be taken outside the English Department)

- _____ Elective
- _____ Elective
- _____ Elective
- _____ Elective
- _____ Elective

Students in this degree program may request a graduate assistantship provided they receive all GA training required by the English Department. Priority, however, is given to students in Research Track programs.

M.F.A. IN CREATIVE WRITING

Name _____

_____ 48 semester hours required, with
_____ 15 in 500-level courses at SIU Carbondale

Retention: 3.0 GPA, with 3 hours below *B* permitted. 4-9 hours below *B* must be replaced by an equal number of hours of *A* or *B* in addition to maintaining 3.0 GPA (until maximum of 36 hours). *INC* must be removed by end of next term in residence (exceptions petition to GCS). 6+ hours *INC* prohibits registration for more coursework until *INC* is reduced to 3 hours or fewer. Number of transfer credits (up to 15 hours of 400-level coursework only).

CORE REQUIREMENTS

_____ **592** Primary genre workshop
_____ **592** Primary genre workshop
_____ **592** Primary genre workshop
_____ **592** Primary genre workshop
_____ **592** Secondary genre workshop or 594 second forms course
_____ **594** Forms

RECOMMENDED AND ELECTIVE COURSES

_____ **502** (first-time GAs) **or elective (permission DFYC)**
_____ **581** Problems: Teaching Creative Writing **or alternative:**
_____ **498** *Crab Orchard Review* internship **or alternative:**
_____ **Elective:**
_____ **Elective:**
_____ **Elective:**

THESIS

_____ **599** (3 hours)
_____ **599** (3 hours)
_____ Oral Examination over Thesis and Coursework

Ph.D. Checklist (Fall 2025)

Retention: 3.0 GPA, with 3 hours below B permitted. 4-9 hours below B must be replaced by an equal number of hours of A or B in addition to maintaining 3.0 GPA. INC must be removed by the end of next term in residence (exceptions petition to GSC). 6+ hours INC prohibits registration for more course work until INC is reduced to 3 hours or fewer.

Timeline

Program of Study Proposal signed by committee to Graduate Studies Committee for approval no later than the seventh semester of the Ph.D. program

Residency: 1) 30 hours of course work before Preliminary Examinations within four calendar years or 2) 24 hours of ENGL 600.

Preliminary Examination: for fellowship students, no later than three years after matriculation; for teaching assistants, no later than four years after matriculation.

Course of Study

- Pro-Seminar in first year of study
- Two graduate courses in literary theory or rhetorical theory or cultural studies
- Any advisory committee requirements
- At least one 500-level course at SIU in first minor
- At least one 500-level course at SIU in second minor

Students should determine their three areas of specialization as soon as possible and seek the advise of potential committee while taking courses.

Major Area (6 courses)

First Minor (4 courses)

Second Minor (3 courses)

Research Tool Requirement

One of the following:

- Command of one language demonstrated by examination in the Foreign Language Department.
- (International students may specify their native language as long as they demonstrate fluency in English as well.)
- FL 488 (or its equivalent) with at least two more courses at the 300- or 400-level.
- Score of 500+ on WebCape proficiency exam (online).
- Reading knowledge of one foreign language demonstrated by a minimum three years course work (or its equivalent) at the college level in one language with a no grade lower than a "B."