

Master of Arts in English

The M.A. in Literature and the M.A. in Literature & Literary Theory provide students with a broad knowledge of literatures in English across a range of time periods, as well as an introduction to the basic concepts and methods of the discipline. This program has special strengths in ecocriticism and posthuman studies, African American & African diaspora literatures, nineteenth-century U.S. literature, science fiction & fantasy, and Victorian literature.

The M.A. in Rhetoric & Composition provides students with a broad knowledge of writing and the teaching of writing, including the study of composing across multiple genres, media and situations. This program has special strengths in genre and language theory, multimodality and digital rhetorics, public rhetoric, and writing pedagogy.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission

To be admitted to any of the department's graduate degree tracks, a student must have a strong undergraduate record, particularly in the humanities. Applicants are expected to have some familiarity with British and American literary history and the work of the major writers in English. Applicants for graduate work in literary studies and rhetoric-composition studies should be able to demonstrate, with writing samples, their ability to produce advanced analytical and interpretive scholarly writing. For complete admission information, see the English department website (<https://english.ku.edu/>).

All applicants must submit their graduate application online (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). All supplemental materials (transcripts, writing samples, letters of recommendation, etc.) may be attached electronically and submitted with the online application. Those who cannot submit supplemental materials electronically may mail them to the department:

The University of Kansas
Department of English
Graduate Applications
1445 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 3001
Lawrence, KS 66045

M.A. Degree Requirements

While continuously enrolled, a student has a total of 7 years to complete the master's degree; however, the expected time to degree is 2.5 to 3 years. The candidate's program should be arranged in consultation with the director of graduate studies or a member of the departmental committee on graduate studies.

Students who elect to write a master's thesis must enroll in ENGL 899. M.A. candidates in Options 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b must take at least 18 hours of their course work, in addition to ENGL 800, at the 700, 800, and 900 levels.

Option 1a—Literature

1. A total of 30 hours in English courses carrying graduate credit. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. At least 6 hours must be taken at the 900 or seminar level. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. **Exam option** students will take 9 conventional courses (27 hours), plus 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) or another elective course. **Thesis option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours). **Portfolio option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 898.
2. 3 hours (1 course) on Methods or Theory appropriate to different areas of focus in Literary Studies: ordinarily 708, 709, 800, or another course appropriately designated by the Graduate Director. A 998 (Directed Reading) directly focused on questions of methods and theory can fulfill this requirement if approved by the Graduate Director.
3. 3 hours on Pedagogy: the 801-802 sequence (required for TAs), 780, or other appropriate course as approved by the Graduate Director.
4. 18 (6 courses with thesis option) or 21 (7 courses with exam option) distribution hours to be selected in consultation with advisors (Graduate Director during first year and thereafter advisors with whom students plan to move toward exam or thesis options). At least 1 course must be pre-1700; at least 1 must be 1700-1900; and at least 1 must be after 1900. 2 courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included in the 18 distribution hours with approval of the Graduate Director.
5. Exam option (3 hours): the student will generally enroll in 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) and must pass a 90-minute oral exam based on a 30-item exam list of literary and / or theoretical texts, including at least 6 items from before 1700; at least 6 items from 1700-1900; and at least 6 items from 1900-present. The student may opt to enroll in 1 additional 3-hour elective course instead of ENGL 897.
6. Thesis Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours) over 2 semesters of thesis work: (1) a first semester of work with the thesis director leading to polished proposal with a bibliography; and (2) a thesis semester of writing leading to defense of finished thesis.
7. Portfolio Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 898 (MA portfolio) over 2 semesters of work: (1) a first semester with the portfolio director, deciding on the shorter scholarly pieces to be included in the portfolio and drafting the cover essay (3-5 pages); and (2) a writing semester for crafting and revising the scholarly pieces, leading to the oral defense (90 minutes) of the polished portfolio (40-50 pages or the digital equivalent).

Option 1b—Literature and Literary Theory

1. A total of 30 hours in English courses carrying graduate credit. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. At least 6 hours must be taken at the 900 or seminar level. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. **Exam option** students will take 9 conventional courses (27 hours), plus 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) or another elective course. **Thesis option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 899

(MA or MFA thesis hours). **Portfolio option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 898.

2. 3 hours (1 course) on Methods or Theory appropriate to different areas of focus in Literary Studies: ordinarily 708, 709, 800, or another course appropriately designated by the Graduate Director. A 998 (Directed Reading) directly focused on questions of methods and theory can fulfill this requirement if approved by the Graduate Director.
3. 3 hours on Pedagogy: the 801-802 sequence (required for TAs), 780, or other appropriate course as approved by the Graduate Director.
4. 18 (6 courses with thesis option) or 21 (7 courses with exam option) distribution hours to be selected in consultation with advisors (Graduate Director during first year and thereafter advisors with whom students plan to move toward exam or thesis options). At least 1 course (3 hours) must be pre-1800; at least 1 (3 hours) must be post-1800. At least 2 courses (6 hours), besides the course used to fulfill requirement 2 (Methods or Theory) must focus primarily on Literary Theory. 2 courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included in the 18 distribution hours with approval of the Graduate Director.
5. Exam option (3 hours): the student will generally enroll in 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) and must pass a 90-minute oral exam based on a 30-item exam list of literary and / or theoretical texts, including at least 6 items pre-1800; at least 6 items post-1800; and at least 12 items in theory. The student may opt to enroll in 1 additional 3-hour elective course instead of ENGL 897.
6. Thesis Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours) over 2 semesters of thesis work: (1) a first semester of work with the thesis director leading to polished proposal with a bibliography; and (2) a thesis semester of writing leading to defense of finished thesis.
7. Portfolio Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 898 (MA portfolio) over 2 semesters of work: (1) a first semester with the portfolio director, deciding on the shorter scholarly pieces to be included in the portfolio and drafting the cover essay (3-5 pages); and (2) a writing semester for crafting and revising the scholarly pieces, leading to the oral defense (90 minutes) of the polished portfolio (40-50 pages or the digital equivalent).

Option 2a—Rhetoric and Composition

1. A total of 30 hours in English courses carrying graduate credit. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. At least 6 hours must be taken at the 900 or seminar level. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. **Exam option** students will take 9 conventional courses (27 hours), plus 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) or another elective course. **Thesis option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours). **Portfolio option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 898.
2. 3 hours (1 course) on Methods or Theory appropriate to different areas of focus in Rhetoric and Composition, ordinarily 780 (Composition Studies), or another course appropriately designated by the Graduate Director. A 998 (Directed Reading) directly focused on questions of methods and theory can fulfill this requirement if approved by the Graduate Director.
3. 3 hours on Pedagogy: the 801-802 sequence (required for TAs), 780, 781, or other appropriate course as approved by the Graduate Director.
4. 18 (6 courses with thesis option) or 21 (7 courses with exam option) distribution hours to be selected in consultation with advisors

(Graduate Director during first year and thereafter advisors with whom students plan to move toward exam or thesis options). At least 6 hours in English Language Studies courses (including at least 1 seminar) beyond the courses used to fulfill requirements 2 (Methods and Theory) and 3 (Pedagogy).

5. 6 hours of elective courses
6. For students selecting the exam option, 6 hours in second exam area (rhetoric and composition, literature, literary theory), including at least 1 seminar.
7. 2 courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included in the 18 distribution hours with approval of the Graduate Director.
8. Exam option (3 hours): The student will generally enroll in 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) and must pass a 90-minute oral exam based on 2 lists developed in consultation with advisors: a) a 15-item exam list of works in English Language Studies, and b) a 15-item exam list of works in a second area: literature, literary theory, or rhetoric and composition. The student may opt to enroll in 1 additional 3-hour elective course instead of ENGL 897.
9. Thesis Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours) over 2 semesters of thesis work: (1) a first semester of work with the thesis director leading to polished proposal with a bibliography; and (2) a thesis semester of writing leading to defense of finished thesis.
10. Portfolio Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 898 (MA portfolio) over 2 semesters of work: (1) a first semester with the portfolio director, deciding on the shorter scholarly pieces to be included in the portfolio and drafting the cover essay (3-5 pages); and (2) a writing semester for crafting and revising the scholarly pieces, leading to the oral defense (90 minutes) of the polished portfolio (40-50 pages or the digital equivalent).

Option 2b—English Language Studies

1. A total of 30 hours in English courses carrying graduate credit. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. At least 6 hours must be taken at the 900 or seminar level. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. **Exam option** students will take 9 conventional courses (27 hours), plus 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) or another elective course. **Thesis option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours). **Portfolio option** students will take 8 conventional courses (24 hours), plus 6 hours of ENGL 898.
2. 3 hours (1 course) on Methods or Theory appropriate to different areas of focus in Rhetoric and Composition, ordinarily 780 (Composition Studies), or another course appropriately designated by the Graduate Director. A 998 (Directed Reading) directly focused on questions of methods and theory can fulfill this requirement if approved by the Graduate Director.
3. 3 hours on Pedagogy: the 801-802 sequence (required for TAs), 780, or other appropriate course as approved by the Graduate Director.
4. 18 (6 courses with thesis option) or 21 (7 courses with exam option) distribution hours (6 courses) to be selected in consultation with advisors (Graduate Director during first year and thereafter advisors with whom students plan to move toward exam or thesis options). At least 6 hours in Rhetoric and Composition courses (including at least 1 seminar) beyond the courses used to fulfill requirements 2 (Methods and Theory) and 3 (Pedagogy).
5. 6 hours of elective courses

6. For students selecting the exam option, 6 hours in second exam area (rhetoric and composition specialty, English language studies, literature, literary theory), including at least 1 seminar
7. 2 courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included in the 18 distribution hours with approval of the Graduate Director.
8. Exam option (3 hours): The student will generally enroll in 3 hours of ENGL 897 (exam preparation hours) and must pass a 90-minute oral exam based on 2 lists developed in consultation with advisors:
a) a 15-item exam list of works in rhetoric and composition, and b)
a 15-item exam list of works in a second area: literature, literary theory, English Language Studies, or specialty within rhetoric and composition. The student may opt to enroll in 1 additional 3-hour elective course instead of ENGL 897.
9. Thesis Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 899 (MA or MFA thesis hours) over 2 semesters of thesis work:
(1) a first semester of work with the thesis director leading to polished proposal with a bibliography; and (2) a thesis semester of writing leading to defense of finished thesis.
10. Portfolio Option (6 hours): The student must enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 898 (MA portfolio) over 2 semesters of work: (1) a first semester with the portfolio director, deciding on the shorter scholarly pieces to be included in the portfolio and drafting the cover essay (3-5 pages); and (2) a writing semester for crafting and revising the scholarly pieces, leading to the oral defense (90 minutes) of the polished portfolio (40-50 pages or the digital equivalent).