

# MA Program in English

**Handbook**  
2018-2019



**Oregon State**  
University

## **Table of Contents**

Mission Statement - page 3

Learning Outcomes - page 4

Degree Requirements - page 5

Funding - page 6

Two Year Schedule - page 7

Grievance Policies - page 8

Important Links - page 9

## **Mission Statement**

The MA Program in the School of Writing, Literature, and Film trains its students to understand, appreciate, and critique the ways that language and culture shape our responses to the world beyond us. Balancing commitments to both scholarly rigor and academic outreach, the life of the mind and the practicalities of the job market, the program produces scholars skilled in the arts and sciences of communication, interpretation, pedagogy, and advocacy. In addition to these skills, the program also strives to promote a set of values crucial to leading meaningful, aesthetically engaged, and ethical lives.

## Learning Outcomes

University-wide Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs) for Master's Degree programs state the student shall:

- (a) Conduct research or produce some other form of creative work;
- (b) Demonstrate mastery of subject material;
- (c) Be able to conduct scholarly or professional activities in an ethical manner

Drawing upon the university-wide GLO language, the MA in English further specifies how these GLOs will be met in our program

1) demonstrate mastery of the discipline by detailing the development and current practices of literary studies, rhetoric, or film.

(a) In the literature and film concentrations, the student's knowledge of the medium will be sufficient to allow that student to contextualize and judge contemporary literature or film in a long continuum (as would be expected, for instance, of an editor, producer, or publishing professional); to describe literature or film in terms of major periods, practices, and/or genres (as would be expected, for instance, of a community college instructor); and to evaluate the significance of individual works in their cultural and intellectual contexts (as would be expected, for instance, of an archivist, curator, or bibliographer).

(b) In the rhetoric and writing concentration, the student's knowledge of the history, theory, and practice of the medium will be sufficient to allow that student to explain, evaluate, and practice divergent pedagogical methods (as would be expected, for instance, of a writing teacher); to describe rhetoric contextually and comparatively (as would be expected, for instance, of a rhetorical ethnographer); and/or to historicize and theorize emerging forms of composition and expression (as would be expected, for instance, of a professional in the ever-expanding world of digital communication).

2) demonstrate mastery of the discipline by characterizing, instantiating, and critiquing the dominant critical theories, methodologies, and practices in the field. Mastery will be achieved and represented by the successful completion of ENG 514, Introduction to Graduate Studies, and, thereafter, by the inclusion of substantial critiques of the relevant scholarly literature in end-of-term essays and in the thesis.

3) conduct research that leads to a substantial original thesis, written over the course of the second year, in a subfield of the student's choice. The thesis will be directed by a major professor in the subfield and additionally advised by two minor professors in related subfields.

4) conduct research that engages and responds to diverse audiences of scholars, students, and community members. This will be demonstrated through the thesis defense; through presentations at professional conferences; through internships and independent studies; through the use of research on pedagogical approaches to writing/literature/film in university teaching assignments; and/or through intellectual events within the School (including the annual graduate student conference, seminar presentations, and scholarly talks).

5) perform all activities in an ethical manner. This will be demonstrated at the disciplinary level by the student's ability, in coursework and in written essays, to recognize and to appropriately document the prior scholarly conversation informing any given line of research or argument; by the student's engagement, in coursework, with historically under-represented perspectives and a diverse canon of primary and secondary works in literature/writing/film; and by the use of unbiased language in written and oral scholarly conversation. Training in these areas will be provided by ENG 514, Intro to Grad Studies, by the varied research methods and subfields addressed in courses, and by a curriculum that includes historically marginalized works.

These programmatic GLOs contribute to OSU's three signature areas of distinction, which are defined as (1) Advancing the Science of Sustainable Earth Ecosystems, (2) Improving Human Health and Well Being, and (3) Promoting Economic Growth and Social Progress.

## **Degree Requirements**

### **Course Requirements**

4 credit hours: ENG 514 (Introduction to Graduate Studies)

12 credit hours: ENG/WR 503 (thesis)

16 credits of grad-only courses designated "MA Experience"\*

4 credit hours: pre-1800 literature\*\*

12 additional credit hours in a concentration area (Literature & Culture; Rhetoric, Writing, & Culture; or Film and Visual Culture)

### **For English Department TAs:**

2 credit hours WR 517 (WR 121 teaching practicum)

1-2 additional credits of a second teaching practicum (ENG 507 Literature Practicum and/or WR 599 Argumentation Practicum)

4 credit hours from a pedagogical course on foundations in writing and rhetoric (if this course is 500-only, it may count toward the 16 required hours in graduate-only seminars listed above)\*\*

Total Minimum Credits for Degree: 45 credits for Accelerated Master's Program Students, 48 credits for non-GTA students, 51 credits for GTAs

\*MA Experience courses are designated as such, term by term, in their course descriptions. They include secondary readings (critical and/or theoretical) tied to a substantial written research project.

\*\* These classes may count toward the fulfillment of multiple requirements (e.g. a pre-1800 course could also count as an MA Experience course if the course receives both designations)

### **Thesis**

There are two thesis options:

a single document of 40-60 pages, presenting a sustained argument and generally broken into closely related chapters or sections;

or

(2) two article-length essays developing arguments on distinct but related topics, each 20-25 pages, with a framing introduction that addresses their relationship. Digital projects can be understood as a variant on the two article option, with one part fulfilled by a digital-first project and the other fulfilled by a written document related to that project; together, these items must present a sustained argument that situates the project within a body of scholarship.

Thesis committees, arranged by the end of the student's first year of study, include one major and two minor professors. Work on the thesis is directed principally by the student's major professor. All committee members must be members of the MA faculty or affiliate faculty members, with the major professor possessing significant expertise in the area of the student's thesis project. Other committee members' roles should be determined by the committee as a whole on a case-by-case basis; if a student chooses the second thesis option, for example, a committee member might oversee one essay while the major professor oversees the other essay and the framing introduction.

### **Oral Examination**

A two-hour oral examination will be given in the student's final term of study. The first 15-25 minutes of the examination will be a public description of the project and a brief question and answer session. The remaining hour and a half will be a private examination carried out by the thesis committee and will measure a student's ability to carry out sustained research in his or her concentration. Students should submit the completed thesis in hard copy or electronically to their committees at least 2 weeks before their scheduled defense. Students are responsible for scheduling the defense room with assistance from the Graduate Program Assistant.

### **Additional Requirements**

Proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to a second-year university course (see OSU graduate catalog)

Continuous enrollment (see OSU graduate catalog)

## **Funding**

To enable our School to fully fund our non-AMP students, the MA Program offers the following 2-year financial support package:

### **Internal GTAships**

All students admitted to the MA in English Program will automatically receive a standard Graduate Teaching Assistantship contract during their first year, which provides full tuition remission, 88% of health insurance for him or her and his or her dependents, and stipend of approximately \$12,300.00 to cover living expenses as compensation for teaching 4 classes for us (1-2-1 or 1-1-2). First-year GTAs will teach WR 121, OSU's first-year composition course. Based on School needs, first-year GTAs who have taken a practicum course (ENG 507 or WR 599: Practicum) will be eligible to teach selected sections of advanced academic writing, to lead a discussion section for a lower-division literature course such as ENG 104 or ENG 106 (Intro to Fiction or Intro to Poetry), or serve as graders in large film or literature courses.

All second-year students will be considered for internal GTAships similar in nature to the standard GTA contract in year one. These GTAships will include a suite of courses pertaining to their training and will be compensated at approximately \$12,330.00 / 9 months.

### **Tailored GTAships**

Second year students will also be considered for external GTA and GRA positions in academic and professional units beyond the School of Writing, Literature, and Film. These positions provide full tuition remission and a stipend of between \$12,300 and \$16,000 per year to cover living expenses. We will make every effort to place students into positions relevant to their career goals.

### **Fellowship Package**

Students who are awarded a Provost Fellowship upon acceptance to the program will receive a \$22,000.00 stipend disbursed in four installments (every quarter) beginning in the summer before their first year.

### **Travel Funds**

Travel funds are also available to all students who are presenting at an academic conference in their second year.

### **Summer Stipend**

Summer teaching or related work may be available for interested MA students. In the last two years, for example, we have been able to support summer teaching appointments for five MA students through a partnership between Beijing Normal University and OSU. We anticipate similar funding opportunities in Summer 2019.

## Two-Year Schedule

### Year One

#### *Summer*

- Sign up for ONID account
- Join MA Working Group (MAWG) listserv
- Register for classes
- Contact MA Ambassadors for housing assistance
- Apply for health Insurance through OSU <<http://studenthealth.oregonstate.edu/insurance/graduate-fellow-insurance-plan>>

#### *Fall*

- Take pre-term pedagogy training
- Take ENG 514 "Intro to Graduate Studies"
- Attend Critical Questions and Center for the Humanities talk(s)
- Attend MA Symposium
- Determine language requirement plan

#### *Winter*

- Take ENG 507 or WR 599: Practicum
- Begin / Continue discussions with potential thesis committee members
- Begin to Check UPenn CFP Site for potential conferences
- Submit to spring MA Symposium
- Draft CV for Second-Year GTAships
- Submit thesis committee preference form to Graduate Director
- Attend CQ and CFTH talk(s)

#### *Spring*

- Schedule first meeting with Primary Advisor to discuss prospectus
- Schedule Committee prospectus meeting
- Attend MA Symposium
- Attend CQ and CFTH talk(s)
- Draft conference paper abstract
- Complete Assessment of Graduate Student Academic Progress Report (with Advisor)
- Submit to Fall MA Symposium
- Finalize summer employment plans

### Year 2

#### *Fall*

- Attend Critical Questions and Center for the Humanities talk(s)
- Attend MA Symposium
- Complete Program of Study form
- Meet with Advisor to discuss thesis progress and career preparation
- Seek out relevant volunteer opportunities
- Apply for Graduate Council Representative for thesis defense

#### ***Complete Draft of Chapter I (or First Article) of Thesis Draft Conference Paper Abstract***

#### *Winter*

- Complete draft of Chapter II (or Second Article) of thesis
- Volunteer as MA Ambassador for accepted MA students
- Pursue other volunteer opportunities
- Revise CV
- Attend Critical Questions and Center for the Humanities talk(s)
- Begin job search

#### *Spring*

- Schedule thesis defense date and room
- Complete thesis
- Continue job search
- Attend Critical Questions and Center for the Humanities talk(s)
- Attend MA Symposium
- Complete Assessment of Graduate Student Academic Progress Report (with Advisor)
- Apply for graduation

## Grievance Policies

An important goal of Oregon State University is to maintain harmonious relations among students, faculty, and staff. To this end, candid and informal discussions between graduate students and others in the University are encouraged as a means of achieving harmony and of arriving at mutually satisfactory solutions to graduate student problems. Graduate education is based upon a mutuality of interests and respect among faculty and students. It is important that this mutual concern for the quality of education and the persons involved be fostered and preserved.

If the informal discussions of a grievance between a graduate student and his or her supervisor break down, the use of or participation in a grievance procedure shall not subject the graduate student, any witness, or any graduate student's representative to reprisal in any way by the supervisor, the department, the major professor, the student's graduate committee, or the University. Nor shall participation in the grievance procedure be reflected in any way in efficiency ratings, grades, evaluations, promotion opportunities, or graduate student employment relations.

More information regarding OSU's Graduate School Grievance Policies is available at the following link:

<https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/progress/grievance-procedures>



## Important Links

OSU SWLF MA Page

<http://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/ma>

OSU Graduate School

<https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/>

Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity at Oregon State

<http://main.oregonstate.edu/equity-inclusion-and-diversity-oregon-state-university>

Graduate Assistant Insurance Plan

<http://studenthealth.oregonstate.edu/insurance/graduate-assistant-insurance-plan>

Counseling and Psychological Services

<http://counseling.oregonstate.edu/>

OSU Jobs

<https://jobs.oregonstate.edu/>

Higher Ed Jobs

<https://www.higheredjobs.com/default.cfm>

Chronicle of Higher Education

<https://www.chronicle.com/>

Calls for Papers

<https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/>

Oregon Department of Transportation

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Pages/index.aspx>

City of Corvallis

<https://www.corvallisoregon.gov/>