

MA Program in English

Handbook 2020-2021



Oregon State
University

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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.

Statement of Principles

The School of Writing, Literature, and Film affirms its commitment to supporting all students, including those who may face discrimination based on race, nationality, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, class, and immigration status. As scholars, writers, and filmmakers, we recognize the power of words and images to shape as well as challenge discourses that dehumanize minoritized populations. In the light of recent efforts to end DACA and to block immigration from Muslim-majority countries, as well as the resurgence of white supremacist movements in our community and around the US, the critical interrogation of such rhetoric and the material oppressions it produces matters more than ever. We remain committed to creating and maintaining inclusive and diverse spaces in which students can learn.

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)

MA Experience course guidelines.

MA Experience courses are taught by SWLF faculty and should:

- Employ a critical methodology(ies)
- Contribute to professional development
- Engage with current conversations in the field
- Ensure that primary and secondary sources offer a diversity of voices across race, ethnicity, gender, and other markers of identity and experience

Additional Requirements

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

Continuous enrollment (see OSU graduate catalog)

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
- 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.

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, 90% of health insurance for employees and their dependents, and a nine-month stipend 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 with a nine-month stipend.

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 to cover living expenses. We will make every effort to place students into positions relevant to their career goals.

Travel Funds

Travel funds of \$500 per student are available to all students who are presenting at an academic conference in their second year. The Center for the Humanities also offers graduate student travel funds with a rolling deadline. The Graduate School offers travel awards; I will notify all students via email when an opportunity to apply arises.

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 Diploma Application and Assessment of Graduate Student Academic Progress Report (with Advisor)
- Apply for graduation

Checklist for spring graduation

Heading into spring term, make sure that:

- you've submitted your [Program of Study](#) at least 15 weeks before desired defense date
- you're registered for at least 3 credits for spring term
- you've submitted your program of study form
- you have a [GCR](#) lined up
- you've reserved a room for your thesis defense
- you've [documented](#) your foreign language proficiency
- you file a [diploma application](#) by April 30

Two Weeks Before Your Defense:

- schedule your defense using the [online form](#)
- distribute copies of your thesis to your committee

Before your thesis defense:

- Prepare your presentation
- Prepare pretext pages using [Thesis Guide](#)

Deadlines

To walk in commencement and receive your diploma (spring graduation date):

- Defend, revise, and upload final document to ScholarsArchive by May 29. Schedule defense at least two weeks in advance of defense date.

To walk in commencement but receive diploma by mail (spring graduation date)

- Defend, revise, and upload final document to ScholarsArchive by June 12. Schedule defense at least two weeks in advance of defense date.

To walk in commencement but defend summer term (summer term graduation date)

- Complete all degree requirements, including defending, revising, and uploading final document to ScholarsArchive by September 3

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>

Graduate Course Designations and Appeal Process

Course designations (MA Experience, pedagogy, pre-1800 etc.) are made by the faculty. The decision to take a course outside of SWLF is made in conversation with the M.A. Director.

The M.A. Director is the first point of contact for petitions on curricular matters. If a student wishes to appeal the M.A. Director's decision, they can do so with the M.A. Committee, which is comprised of SWLF faculty and appointed each year by the SWLF Director. The M.A. Director will put the student in touch with the committee and will provide a statement explaining the decision but will not participate in the committee's decision-making process.

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

SWLF expects an environment free from discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, bullying, retaliation, and other forms of intimidation or misuse of power. SWLF recognizes that actions that threaten this climate may involve individuals in any position within SWLF.

As a graduate employee, an undergraduate may approach you with concerns about the classroom climate or to report their experience outside the classroom. Depending on the kind of concerns being reported, there are links below for next steps to take. In all cases, it is appropriate to contact a faculty member or SWLF administrator for guidance in taking these next steps. In some cases, graduate employees may be required to report concerns to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA).

As a graduate student, you may wish to approach a faculty member or administrator to report an experience of misuse of power or to get help resolving classroom climate issues. Depending on the situation, you may also report directly to EOA, to the Bias Response Team, to Student Conduct and Community Standards, and/or to our SWLF graduate representatives.

Sexual Misconduct

All individuals who are participating in university programs and activities have the right to do so fully, free from sexual discrimination, misconduct, and retaliation. The university prohibits sexual/gender-based discrimination and sexual misconduct of any kind. Sexual/gender-based discrimination can include discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity (including transgender), gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual activity, intimate partner violence, stalking and sexual exploitation are considered sexual misconduct and are prohibited. Such misconduct violates university policy and may violate state or federal law. When such misconduct occurs, the university will take steps to stop, prevent recurrence, and remedy the impacts of such behavior.

Under OSU's Responsible Employee policy, any employee receiving information that indicates sexual misconduct or discrimination has occurred is required to immediately report it to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access. The full Responsible Employee policy, including a link for reporting and FAQs, can be found here: <https://eo.oregonstate.edu/responsible-employee-policy>

Concerns involving sexual misconduct can be directly reported to EOA via this link: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=2

Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination, or Retaliation

Concerns that do not appear to involve sexual misconduct can also be reported to EOA by the impacted person when that person feels that harassment, bullying, discrimination, or retaliation has occurred. If a student approaches you, as a graduate instructor, with such a complaint, directing them to EOA is always a good course of action. The reporting form, which is the same for members of the University community in all roles, can be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=4

Bias

When any member of the University community believes that a bias incident has occurred, reports (anonymous or signed) may be sent to the University's Bias Response Team. This maybe done separately from, or in tandem with, the above actions, as circumstances suggest. The Bias Response Team performs assessment and takes action per the protocols detailed here, and may suggest that the impacted person file one of the reports described above. The Bias Incident Report Form may be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=10

Reporting Links

A useful website containing all the reporting forms and channels detailed above may be found here: <https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/reporting>

Support Options for Other Climate Concerns

When an individual's concerns center on climate but the reporting individual does not feel that discrimination, harassment, bullying, retaliation, or sexual misconduct has occurred, there are a number of options:

a) Raising the concern with an instructor, faculty member, or program/School administrator. These individuals (including faculty, staff, and GTAs) are often in a position to make informal and positive changes as pertains to a given situation, for instance in the case of dynamics involving classroom discussion. If you are in the position of hearing such a report from a student, it is always appropriate and welcomed to consult a faculty member or program director. If an informal conversation suggests that sexual misconduct in fact may have occurred, please remember that the Responsible Employee policy requires immediately sharing the information with EOA. If an informal conversation suggests that harassment, bullying, discrimination, or retaliation has in fact occurred, referral to EOA is the appropriate next step.

b) Report concerns directly to Student Concern and Community Standards, which may occur in tandem with (a) or not. This is especially appropriate when an individual feels a violation of the Code of Student Conduct has occurred. The reporting form may be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=1

Please note that in 2020 a separate reporting form for alleged violations by students of COVID-19 policies and protocols has been added: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.phpOregonStateUniv&layout_id=1

c) Report concerns to SWLF graduate student representatives, who could act as liaisons with SWLF administration.

(d) Consult the University Ombuds Office for support and assistance. <https://ombuds.oregonstate.edu/>

Important Links

OSU SWLF MA Page

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

OSU Graduate School

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

Cultural Resource Centers at Oregon State

<https://dce.oregonstate.edu/cultural-resource-centers>

Graduate Assistant Insurance Plan

<https://hr.oregonstate.edu/graduate-student-insurance-plans>

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/>