

**English Graduate  
Guidelines  
2012-2013**

**MA in English**

**Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma**



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## Graduate Program Personnel

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## Program Directors

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## Graduate Studies Committee

The Graduate Studies Committee consists of a representative from each of three areas:

<b>Area A: Literature</b> Edward Jones	744-7690	107B	edward.jones@okstate.edu
<b>Area B: TESL/Linguistics, Composition &amp; Rhetoric Professional Writing</b> An Cheng	744-9470	302B	an.cheng@okstate.edu
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**The Graduate Director** is a nonvoting member.

# The Graduate Faculty

See the English Department online faculty directory for office and telephone information: [english.okstate.edu/faculty/](http://english.okstate.edu/faculty/)

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<b>Jon Billman, MFA</b> jon.billman@okstate.edu Eastern Washington University	Creative Writing: Fiction, Creative Nonfiction
<b>Ron Brooks, PhD</b> ron.brooks@okstate.edu University of Oklahoma	Composition, Rhetoric, Literacy
<b>Nancy Caplow, PhD</b> nancy.caplow@okstate.edu University of California, Santa Barbara	Linguistics-Phonetics & Phonology
<b>An Cheng, PhD</b> an.cheng@okstate.edu Pennsylvania State University	Writing Theories & Practices, Applied Linguistics
<b>Amanda Cobb Greetham, PhD</b> amanda.cobb_greetham@okstate.edu University of Oklahoma	Native American Language and Literatures
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<b>Randi Eldevik, PhD</b> randi.eldevik@okstate.edu Harvard University	Early British Literature
<b>Richard Frohock, PhD</b> richard.frohock@okstate.edu University of California, Santa Barbara	18th-Century Studies , Early American Literature
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<b>Elizabeth Grubgeld, PhD</b> elizabeth.grubgeld@okstate.edu University of Iowa	British and Irish Literature Post 1900
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<b>Dennis Preston, PhD</b> dennis.preston@okstate.edu University of Wisconsin, Madison	Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Dialectology
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# Assistantships

The English Department employs a large number of graduate teaching assistants each year. Assistantships are thus available to most students who qualify for them and apply early. Depending on their levels of experience and areas of emphasis, teaching assistants may tutor in the Writing Center or teach their own sections of freshman composition, composition for international students, technical writing, creative writing, or literature.

**Teaching Methodology Courses:** All teaching assistants, regardless of experience, must take an appropriate pedagogy course or courses during their first year of teaching at OSU. Depending on the area of emphasis and teaching assignment, they may take:

- *ENGL 5213: Composition Theory and Pedagogy*
- *ENGL 5223: Professional Writing Theory and Pedagogy*
- *ENGL 5243: Teaching English as a Second Language*

**First-year Teachers:** Teaching assistants who have not previously taught English typically spend the first year of their assistantships as tutors in the Writing Center. During this year, they also take an appropriate pedagogy course (see above) and observe experienced teachers.

**Course Load:** Each fall and spring semester a teaching assistant teaches six credit hours (two 3-hour courses) or works twenty hours per week in the Writing Center. A few assistantships are available for students who assist with editing the *Cimarron Review* or with the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) program. Customarily, teaching assistants take no more than six to seven hours of graduate course work per semester. Some assistantships are available in the summer, during which a teaching assistant teaches three hours and takes three hours of course work.

**Tuition Waivers:** All students with assistantships pay in-state tuition rates; that is, the University waives the non-resident portion of their tuition. The University will also pay the remaining resident tuition for six hours of qualifying courses each fall and spring semester. In addition, teaching assistants also receive a monthly stipend during the academic year and single-person health insurance. Students are responsible for resident tuition for courses taken in excess of this limit and for all fees.

**Time Limits:** A teaching assistant not on strict academic probation is eligible for financial support under the following conditions. MA students receive three years of support. PhD students receive four years of support with an option for a fifth year of support. Support is contingent upon satisfactory progress toward the degree. If exceptional circumstances exist, MA and PhD students in the final

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year of financial support may petition the Head of the English Department for an additional year's support. Such cases will be judged on an individual basis and in light of Departmental policies and staffing needs.

**Non-native Speakers of English:** To be eligible for a teaching assistantship, students whose native language is not English must submit passing scores for the Speaking Skills section of the TOEFL iBT (26 or higher), or the Versant test (68 or higher) for their application to be considered. They must also attend the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) orientation, which is administered on campus before the beginning of each semester.

**To Apply:** Prospective students who wish to apply for assistantships should submit a Teaching Assistant application form with an attached résumé to the English Graduate Office. Offers of assistantships are mailed to students a week or two after offers of admission. Students who have already begun their graduate program at OSU should submit an application form to the English Graduate Office no later than March 1 for the following fall semester, or by October 15 for the spring semester. Most assistantships are awarded to recipients who apply by October 15.

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# Guidelines for the MA in English

The MA in English allows students to develop expertise in a variety of areas: British and American Literature, critical theory, screen studies, rhetoric and professional writing, linguistics, and teaching English as a second language (TESL). In consultation with their advisory committees, students devise an individualized curriculum that reflects their own intellectual interests and prepares them to enter a PhD program or to teach at the college level.

The MA in English consists of 30 credit hours (thesis plan, which includes six hours of thesis), or 32 credit hours (literature exam plan). In addition to these hours, students must demonstrate reading knowledge of a language other than English, pass the MA Qualifying Examination (unless choosing the literature thesis plan), and successfully defend a thesis. A description of the degree requirements and regulations appears on the following pages.

**Note:** Students who wish to concentrate only in TESL or Professional Writing should consult the sections of the *English Graduate Guidelines* that describe the MA in English degree with options in those areas.

## **Forms to File in 308 Morrill for the MA in English**

Departmental Advisory Committee Form: by the end of the first year of graduate study

Plan of Study (must go to Graduate Director for signature): before enrolling in the 18<sup>th</sup> hour

Notice of Intent to take Qualifying Exams (when applicable): by the end of the second week of classes in the semester in which exams will be taken

Thesis Prospectus (when applicable): no later than the beginning of the first semester of thesis hours

Notice of Intent to defend a Thesis (when applicable): by the end of the first three weeks of the semester in which the defense will take place

Results of Final Defense Form (when applicable): immediately following defense

# Summary Checklist

By the end of the second full semester of enrollment, you should have

- chosen an adviser in your major area of study
- chosen your advisory committee
- met with your committee and discussed your plan of study
- filed your plan of study
- taken the appropriate *ENGL 5013: Introduction to Graduate Studies* or, for Screen Studies students, *ENGL 5363: Critical Approaches to Screen Studies: Theory and History*

Before taking the MA Qualifying Examination, you must have

- fulfilled the language requirement
- maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above on all graduate course work
- filed an approved plan of study with the Graduate College and English Graduate Office
- submitted an Intent to Take Qualifying Examination form (where required) to the English Graduate Office by the end of the second week of classes

Before you are eligible to graduate, you must have

- filed a Graduation Clearance form (and a revised plan of study, if applicable)
- filed a Diploma Application

If you write a thesis, you must also have

- fulfilled the language requirement
- submitted the defense copy (Final Draft) of your thesis by the Graduate College deadline
- passed your oral defense (Final Examination) and turned in the signed Results of Final Defense form to the English Graduate Office
- submitted the final copy of the thesis in accordance with the format guidelines at <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis>

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## Application and Admission

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Admission to the MA program in English requires a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Other qualifications and application materials appear below. *Applicants should be mindful that meeting the minimum standards for admission does not guarantee admission.*

### Admission Qualifications and Application Materials

<b>GPA</b>	Applicants should have maintained an undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, particularly in English courses.
<b>Undergraduate Major</b>	Applicants must have an undergraduate degree appropriate to the specialization they will follow. For the specialization in Literature, they must have a minimum of 24 hours in English (excluding freshman composition).
<b>Recommendations</b>	Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation.
<b>Statement of Purpose</b>	Applicants must submit a written statement of approximately 250 words that identifies a proposed area of study, reasons for undertaking graduate study in this area, relevant work experience, and future career plans.
<b>Writing Sample or GRE Scores</b>	Applicants must submit one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing Sample: a 7- to 15-page paper recently written in an upper-level course in an appropriate area of study.</li><li>• GRE general and subject area scores.</li></ul>
<b>English Language Proficiency (non-native speakers)</b>	Applicants who are not native speakers of English must submit current scores from one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TOEFL iBT</li><li>• TOEFL and TWE</li><li>• IELTS</li></ul> Please see the English Department website for current score requirements.

Students are admitted in particular areas of specialization. If a student wishes to move from one area of specialization to another, (such as from Literature to Rhetoric and Professional Writing), the student must submit an application to and receive approval for that change from the Admissions Committee. The

application must include a new statement of purpose and a new writing sample, which will be considered along with the rest of the student's graduate file. Since this application will be an internal English Department matter, students will not pay an application fee. If the Admissions Committee does not grant the request, the student will have the option of continuing in the area of specialization into which he or she was admitted.

If a student wishes to move from one degree program into another degree program, the student must submit a new application through the Graduate College.

## Graduate College Rules and Regulations

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There are many rules and regulations affecting graduate enrollment, tenure, examinations, theses, and dissertations that are made by the Graduate Faculty of Oklahoma State University rather than the English Department. Among the rules students should familiarize themselves with are those governing academic dishonesty or misconduct, especially those dealing with plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to become informed about all English Department, Graduate College, and University regulations.

The *Oklahoma State University Catalog* should be read closely by all those who are thinking about, or participating in, graduate studies in English at Oklahoma State University. Copies are available free to all incoming graduate students at the Graduate College, 202 Whitehurst, or online at:

<http://www.okstate.edu/registrar>.

## Adviser and Advisory Committee

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All graduate students select an individual adviser and an advisory committee to guide them in completing their degrees.

**Adviser:** Students should choose an adviser by the end of their first semester of course work, but if this is not possible, students should select an adviser by the end of their first year of graduate study. An adviser of an MA student may be any member of the graduate faculty of the English Department; in most cases, the adviser has expertise in the subject matter area in which the student plans to specialize.

**Advisory Committee:** The advisory committee will normally consist of the student's major adviser as committee chair and at least two additional members of the English Department's graduate faculty.

**Changes:** To change an adviser or advisory committee, a student must complete a Committee Change Request form, to be signed by all committee members and the Department Head, and submitted to the Graduate College.

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## Plan of Study

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A plan of study is a listing of course work the student intends to take for completion of the degree and an estimated time schedule. The student must develop the plan with his/her adviser and advisory committee. The Graduate College requires MA students to file a plan of study with the Graduate College before completing the 17th hour of graduate credit.

Students may download a plan of study form and instructions from the English Graduate Forms web page or the Graduate College downloads page. The student should consult with his/her adviser to complete a draft version of the form.

**Planning Meeting:** Prior to enrolling in the 18<sup>th</sup> hour of graduate study, students should schedule a meeting with their advisory committee. During that meeting, the student and advisory committee will discuss the student's preparation, professional goals, and plans for graduate study. The student and committee should agree upon:

- A plan of study
- Fulfillment of the language requirement
- Tentative plans for the MA Qualifying Examination (if required)
- Tentative plans for the thesis or creative component

**Creative Component:** The course used as a creative component must be designated with an asterisk on the plan of study.

**Submitting the Plan of Study:** The student will finalize the typed version of the plan, obtain signatures from all members of the advisory committee, and file the signed form with the English Graduate Office. The Graduate Director will review and sign the form, and file the completed form with the Graduate College. **The signed plan must be filed with the Graduate College before the student will be allowed to enroll in the 18<sup>th</sup> hour of graduate study.**

**Changes:** Changes to the plan of study can be made with the approval of the advisory committee. A revised plan should be submitted to the Graduate College at the beginning of the intended semester of graduation. Students make revisions on a copy of the approved plan stamped by the Graduate College. Specific instructions are included with the downloaded plan of study file.

**Ten-Year Rule:** A final plan of study may not include any course more than ten years old at the time of actual graduation.

## Checklist for Submitting a Plan of Study

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- Minimum of 30 hours for thesis plan (including six hours of thesis), or 32 hours for literature exam plan (including creative component), beyond baccalaureate degree
- Minimum of 16 hours in English
- At least 21 hours of course work at the 5000 or 6000 level at OSU
- All courses, including 4000-level, must be taken for graduate credit
- No more than 9 hours of course work taken as special student or transferred from another institution
- No course work may be used to complete requirements for another degree
- The plan of study must be signed by the adviser, committee members, and the Graduate Director

## MA Degree Plans

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The MA in English offers two degree plans: thesis, and literature exam. The following requirements govern these options.

**Thesis Plan:** Students take 30 semester hours (including six credit hours of thesis), pass the MA Qualifying Examination, and prepare either a traditional thesis embodying original research, or, for literature and screen studies students only, a portfolio reflecting scholarly development. Literature students choosing this plan do not sit for Qualifying Exams; screen studies students *do* sit for Qualifying Exams.

**Literature Exam Plan:** Students take 32 semester hours, including a one-credit hour Independent Study course. They write a creative component, an article-length paper or research project, as part of this course. Students choosing this plan must pass the MA Qualifying Examination.

## Course Requirements

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**Required Courses:** In order to provide the flexibility necessary for an individual student's emphasis in period or genre studies, screen studies, linguistics, or composition/rhetoric, the Department requires only one course of all general MA students, *ENGL 5013: Introduction to Graduate Studies* (for Screen Studies students, *ENGL 5363: Critical Approaches to Screen Studies*). The following requirements govern MA course work.

**Introduction to Graduate Studies:** Either *ENGL 5013: Introduction to Graduate Studies* or, for Screen Studies students, *ENGL 5363: Critical*

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*Approaches to Screen Studies*, is required of all students during their first year in the master's program. Students who believe that they have already taken a course equivalent to *ENGL 5013* or *ENGL 5363* may petition the Graduate Director to have this requirement waived. The student's petition should include a letter asking for the waiver and containing reasons for the request, a copy of the syllabus from the previous course, and any papers or assignments done for that course. The Graduate Director will then pass the request to those professors teaching *ENGL 5013* or *ENGL 5363* for an evaluation and request a written recommendation. Upon receiving the recommendation, the Graduate Director will affirm or deny the petition and notify the student and the student's adviser. Each case will be judged on its own merits, regardless of whether the same course number at the same institution has been recommended as an equivalent course before.

**Methods Course for Teaching Assistants:** Teaching assistants must take an appropriate pedagogy course or courses in their first semester of teaching at Oklahoma State University. These hours may be counted as part of the total hours of course work.

**Suggested Linguistics Curriculum:** In addition to other requirements, linguistics students are advised to take nine hours as a core on which to build further study. These courses include ENGL 5143 (Descriptive Linguistics), ENGL 5133 (Phonetics and Phonology), and ENGL 5153 (Syntax). Students who focus on applied linguistics normally include ENGL 5123 (Approaches to Language Acquisition) in their course work, and those who focus on Sociolinguistics normally include ENGL 5173 (Sociolinguistics). Students who have equivalent work in these areas at the undergraduate level need not duplicate it.

**Electives:** Students choose the remaining hours of course work in consultation with their advisory committees. Course selection should take into account the student's thesis subject, professional goals, and preparation for the MA Qualifying Examination (if required).

**Required Hours at 5000/6000 Level:** All MA students must complete at least 21 hours of course work at the 5000/6000 level; this 21 hours of course work may include six hours of credit for work on the thesis.

**ENGL 5990:** *ENGL 5990: Special Problems* limits enrollment (with permission from the Graduate Director) to students who elect the creative component rather than the thesis. The use of *ENGL 5990* is restricted to students who have completed course work and need to enroll in one or two hours in order to fulfill enrollment requirements.

**4000-Level Courses:** Only those 4000-level courses marked by an asterisk in the OSU *University Catalog* are available for graduate credit. All graduate course work should include a research paper or other appropriate project. In the instance of a 4000-level course that may not require such a paper or project, the

student should, with the consent of the instructor involved, arrange for such a paper or project to supplement the assigned work. Because 4000-level literature courses are designed primarily for undergraduates, the Literature Faculty strongly suggest that all graduate courses for students in the literature specialization be at the 5000/6000 level.

**Transfer Hours:** Students may transfer up to nine graduate hours from another university granting a master's degree in English. A student's advisory committee shall determine the number of hours of transfer credit to be awarded. If a student uses the hours for a degree at the previous institution, the hours are not applicable to the MA degree at OSU.

**Independent Study:** Independent Study courses may be occasionally arranged with an instructor when no regular graduate course on the desired topic is available during the student's expected tenure. Each of the two course numbers (*ENGL 5210* and *6210*) may be used for up to six credit hours per semester, and no more than nine hours total per course number. All students requesting an Independent Study course must hold a meeting with their advisory committee and receive approval by the members of the committee. Special forms must be used by those who wish to enroll in such courses. Available from the English Graduate Office, these forms should be submitted no later than the end of the first week of graduate enrollment prior to the semester in which the Independent Study course is taken. A student who has completed the 17<sup>th</sup> graduate credit hour in a degree program but who does not have an approved plan of study on file in the Graduate College may not arrange an Independent Study course.

The Graduate Studies Committee will evaluate applications for Independent Study in accordance with the following criteria and procedure:

1. Has the student's advisory committee approved the course?
2. Has the student taken regularly offered courses related to the subject?
3. Is the Independent Study unlikely to have a negative impact on enrollment in concurrent or immediately subsequent course offerings?
4. Does the Independent Study fill a gap in the student's curriculum? Or is the specific course content unlikely to be offered during the student's expected tenure?
5. Are the text materials clearly listed?
6. Is the work appropriate for the number of credit hours requested?
7. Is the list of assignments and percentages awarded to each clearly explained?
8. Is the schedule of conferences sufficiently specific?

If all eight questions may be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will send a written notice of acceptance to the proposed instructor, who will then inform the student.

If one or more questions cannot be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will contact the proposed instructor in an effort to clarify and/or resolve the problem(s). If no resolution can be reached, the Graduate Director will inform the proposed instructor of the denial and the reason(s) for the denial in writing. The proposed instructor will then inform the student.

**End-of-Semester Evaluations:** All graduate students will be evaluated in writing at the end of each semester by the professors with whom they have taken courses. These evaluations are kept on file in the English Graduate Office and are available for students to read.

**Grade of "Incomplete":** The following regulations apply to students who receive what at OSU is termed the "composite incomplete" grade ("IB," "IC," "ID," or "IF") for any of their course work within the English Department:

- Students must complete course work within one calendar year, after which time the preliminary grade (expressed by the second letter of the composite) becomes permanent in accordance with University policy. Individual faculty members, however, may establish a shorter time limit for completing course work. Faculty will identify time limits in the "remarks" dropdown of the electronic grade sheet.
- Teaching assistants or associates having more than three incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for reappointment.
- Teaching assistants or associates having any incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for summer employment.

Students should familiarize themselves with Section 6.2 of the University Academic Regulations found in the *University Catalog* for a full explanation of University policy governing incomplete grades.

## Language Requirement

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In order to fulfill the language requirement for the MA in English, students must demonstrate *reading knowledge of one language other than English* by either passing a translation test or taking course work. Students may choose from among the following languages: French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Old English, Russian, and Spanish. It is important that students complete their language requirement early in their course of study so that they may take advantage of relevant scholarship. The language requirement must be fulfilled prior to taking the MA Qualifying Examination or defending the MA Thesis.

**Petition for Alternative Languages** Students may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for approval to fulfill the language requirement with languages other than those listed above. The petition must show that another language better serves the purposes of the research proposed. This petition must

have the support of the student's advisory committee. If the proposed language is the student's primary language, no translation test will be required.

**Reading Knowledge** may be demonstrated in any of the following ways:

- Reading knowledge can be demonstrated by passing a *translation test*. The test shall consist of a total of three 250- 300-word passages in the language, two from scholarly articles in the humanities and one from a primary literature text. For Latin, Greek, or Old English, the test will consist of three primary literature texts. With access to a dictionary, students must translate any *two* of the passages. *The test for reading knowledge must be completed within three hours.*
- Reading knowledge can be demonstrated by taking one three-credit-hour upper-division undergraduate course in which the instruction and readings are primarily in the language or by taking one three-credit-hour graduate language reading course. Students must receive a grade of "B" or better in the specified course to fulfill the requirement.
- A student who holds a Master's degree from another university may fulfill the reading knowledge requirement by providing written proof that he or she has satisfactorily completed a language requirement for the Master's degree at the awarding institution; the language must be acceptable under the current *English Graduate Guidelines*. This documentation should be in the form of either (a) a specific posting of the language requirement having been met on the student's transcript or, (b) a letter from an appropriate official at the institution that awarded the Master's.

**Scheduling the Translation Test:** Translation tests are arranged by the Graduate Director. They are offered three times a year, at the beginning of the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Fall and spring tests typically are held the third Wednesday of the semester. Summer tests are held the Wednesday after the last day of the spring semester. Notices of Intent to take the test are due no later than two weeks prior to the test. The test fee is \$30 and must be paid by check or money order (payable to the English Department) prior to the test date. Sample tests are available from the English Graduate Office.

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## MA Qualifying Examination

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MA students (except those choosing the literature thesis plan) take one five-hour qualifying examination that is administered on a single day. It is given each September and February, on the fifth Saturday of the semester. Students must submit a signed Notice of Intent to take the examination by the end of the second week of classes. The Notice of Intent will indicate the areas of study over which the student wishes to be examined. Students normally elect at least two but no more than three areas, and they must take the exams on the Stillwater campus. No exams are offered during the summer.

**Exam Areas:** The twelve subject areas for the MA Qualifying Examination are

- British Literature: Old English to 1660 (including Milton)
- British Literature: 1660-1900
- American Literature: Colonial to 1900
- Literature in English post 1900
- Critical Theory
- Screen History
- Screen Theory
- Composition and Rhetoric
- Professional Writing
- General Linguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Teaching English as a Second Language

**Prerequisites:** In order to take the MA Qualifying Examination, students must

- have fulfilled the language requirement
- have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work taken beyond the baccalaureate degree. All courses carrying graduate credit, including transfer hours on the approved plan of study, will be calculated in this grade point average
- have an approved plan of study on file with the Graduate College and with the Graduate Director
- submit a Notice of Intent to Take Qualifying Examinations form to the English Graduate Office before the end of the second week of classes

**Exam Format:** The MA Qualifying Examination will consist of three essay question choices in each of the areas that have been selected on the Notice of Intent form. Students must respond to a total of **three** questions, and at least one question must be chosen from each area selected on the Notice of Intent form.

**Preparation:** The *English Graduate Office* has reading lists for all areas. Students should be aware that the reading lists are suggested, not required. The English Graduate Office has copies of past exams available upon request. Students should consult with their adviser and advisory committee when preparing for the MA Qualifying Examination.

**Evaluation:** Each question will be evaluated by three readers from the specific subject area covered by that section of the exam. Student anonymity will be maintained. If a student answers two questions in a single area, the readers in that area will evaluate each question separately. All readers evaluate exam questions individually before meeting as a committee to discuss student performances and provide a rating of "Pass with Distinction," "Pass," "Pass/Terminal MA," or "Fail" for each question. To be eligible for the MA in

English, students must pass all three questions; these questions must be in at least two areas.

**Notification of Results:** The Graduate Director will notify students of the results of their exams no later than five weeks after the exams were taken. The English Graduate Office will mail the results to the student's home address and send a copy of them to the student's adviser.

**Retakes:** Students may take the MA Qualifying Examination only twice. Students who fail one or more questions the first time must retake only the number of questions failed. When sitting for the exam a second time, students may not have to answer questions in the same area they did not pass at their first sitting; however, they must pass three questions in total, and the retaken questions combined with those questions originally passed must be in at least two areas. Students are also allowed to retake the exam or parts of the exam in the next major semester in order to improve an original rating of "Pass/Terminal MA." Students retaking part of the exam will have two hours to answer one question, three hours to answer two questions, and four hours to answer three questions.

**Appeals:** Normally, a second failure on any section of the MA Qualifying Examination will result in termination of the student's work toward the degree. However, when course work has been of exceptionally high quality, a student may, after a second failure, petition the Graduate Studies Committee for permission to take the exam a third and final time. In order to petition, the student must have a grade point average of 3.50 or higher in graduate courses taken at OSU. In addition, the student's petition must be supported by favorable end-of-semester evaluations from at least three professors.

## Thesis

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The candidate for the MA degree normally prepares a study embodying original research for the six hours of thesis credit. It is possible for the student to convert a course paper of high quality into a thesis with additional research.

**Prerequisites:** In order to defend a thesis, whether traditional or portfolio, students must

- have fulfilled the language requirement.
- have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work taken beyond the baccalaureate degree. All courses carrying graduate credit, including transfer hours on the approved plan of study, will be calculated in this grade point average.
- have an approved plan of study on file with the Graduate College and with the English Graduate Director.
- submit a completed Intent to Defend form in the first three weeks of the semester in which they intend to defend
- meet all Graduate College deadlines and requirements.

The thesis should be a serious effort of publishable quality. Literature and Screen Studies students may choose either the traditional thesis format or the Literature or Screen Studies Portfolio format

### 1. Traditional Thesis Format

This consists of 24 hours of coursework, plus six hours of *ENGL 5000: Thesis*, leading to a traditional thesis and defense. The thesis will be expected to be approximately 50-60 pages long.

### 2. Literature or Screen Studies Portfolio Format

This consists of 24 hours of coursework, plus six hours of *ENGL 5000: Thesis*, leading to an academic portfolio and defense.

Instead of the thesis, the student will compile a portfolio to be submitted to his or her advisory committee. The portfolio will be treated as a traditional thesis in terms of a defense:

The portfolio will consist of the following materials:

- Seminar papers, or the equivalent, from at least six courses (Literature) or three courses (Screen Studies) taken as part of the MA program.
- A statement of approximately 1000 words which should discuss the questions, research strategies, and critical or theoretical thinking that have informed the student's work throughout his/her graduate career, as evidenced by the work presented in the portfolio. In discussing the revised essay, the

student should explain its strengths and identify a target journal, providing a full justification for the choice and explaining what specific revisions have been done toward publication.

- One of the above seminar papers substantially revised for submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. The revision of this paper should be done under the supervision of the adviser. The paper should demonstrate full knowledge of the secondary work done in the chosen field, as well as the theoretical assumptions governing the field. The revised paper will be submitted as a thesis to the Graduate College and be subject to all Graduate College deadlines and requirements.

**Thesis Committee:** Unless a student requests a change, the advisory committee serves as the thesis committee. Once constituted, a thesis committee may not be changed except for serious reasons stated in writing to the Graduate Director and then approved by the Graduate College.

**Prospectus:** MA candidates writing a thesis should submit a prospectus (approximately 1000 words) no later than the beginning of the first semester they register for thesis hours. Literature students should have a GPA of 3.0 or above in order to enroll in thesis hours. The prospectus must be approved by the candidate's committee. Committee members must be notified in writing if an approved prospectus differs significantly from the submitted thesis (if, for example, the topic of the thesis changes or the authors or texts to be treated are altered or the number or character of the chapters changes). Students must provide a copy of the approved prospectus to the Graduate Director.

**Reading Procedure:** At the time that the prospectus is approved, the candidate and the committee members should agree upon a reading procedure for the individual chapters or papers. Matters to be discussed in reaching this agreement might include which chapters each member of the committee needs to see as they are completed by the candidate; whether individual committee members wish to see the chapters serially or all at once; and how much time committee members will need to finish reading a chapter or the entire thesis. Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading fewer than two weeks before the defense.

**Deadlines:** Students submitting theses must adhere to deadlines established by the Graduate College and by the English Department.

**Style:** The student must write the thesis according to the guidelines in the current *Graduate College Style Manual*, available from the Graduate College or at: <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/default.html>.

**Defense Copy (Final Draft).** The defense copy of the thesis should contain all of the chapters in a completed form and full documentation.

**Final Copy:** If, as a result of the defense, revisions to the thesis are required, committee members will not sign the thesis until they are satisfied with the revisions.

## Final Examination: Thesis Defense

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A thesis defense will consist of a public, oral examination by the thesis committee. It will be no less than 45 minutes, but in many instances, it will be longer. The candidate submitting a research thesis will answer challenges to the thesis argument as well as questions on the scholarly, historical, and/or cultural backgrounds of the thesis subject. The candidate submitting a portfolio will answer challenges to the arguments of the six papers and to the statement of scholarly development, with particular focus on the revised paper. The thesis defense occurs after the student has submitted a complete draft of the thesis or portfolio to all committee members.

**Intent to Defend Form:** Candidates will file a nonbinding Intent to Defend form with the Graduate Director within the first three weeks of the semester in which they expect to defend the thesis. Each member of the committee will sign this form before it is filed with the Graduate Director. If a student does not defend in the semester when the Intent to Defend form is filed, he or she should resubmit the form when he or she is prepared to defend.

**Scheduling of Oral Defense:** Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading fewer than two weeks before the defense. The English Graduate Office must be notified no less than two weeks before the oral defense of the day, time, and location of the defense, and the title of the thesis. No thesis defense will be held during the summer.

## Student Tenure

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Students must complete all requirements for the MA degree within seven years from their first enrollment in courses for the MA program.

## Length of Financial Support for Teaching Assistants

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A teaching assistant who has not been placed on strict academic probation and who is making satisfactory progress toward the degree is eligible for financial support for a maximum of three years. A student who obtains an MA in English

at OSU and then enters the PhD program is eligible for an additional four years of support.

If exceptional circumstances warrant, a student in the final year of financial support may petition the Head of the English Department for an additional year's support. Such exceptional cases will be judged on an individual basis and in light of Departmental policies and staffing needs.

## **Ineligibility for the MA Degree**

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The Graduate Director may upon proper cause declare a student ineligible for a degree from the English Department at Oklahoma State University. Upon determining that such cause exists, the Graduate Director will immediately notify the student's adviser, who will discuss the matter with the student and respond to the Graduate Director within fifteen working days. Should the Graduate Director still believe that proper cause exists, he or she will write a letter to the student indicating the reasons for the decision. The student may then appeal to the Graduate Studies Committee within ten working days for a hearing.

The Graduate Studies Committee will review the appeal and report its findings to the Graduate Director, who will notify the student. The student may then appeal that decision to the full Graduate Faculty of the English Department. The decision of that group shall end the Departmental appeal process.

## **Appeals and Petitions**

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All appeals involving grades or charges of academic dishonesty or misconduct must be directed to the OSU Academic Appeals Board. Contact the Provost's office (101 Whitehurst) for information and forms. Petitions involving teaching assistantships must be directed to the Department Head.

All other petitions or appeals must be directed in writing to the Graduate Director, who will then forward the petition to the appropriate body, usually one of the following: the Graduate Studies Committee (for special requests as described within the *English Graduate Guidelines*), the English Graduate Faculty (for exceptions to English Department policy), or the Graduate Council (for exceptions to OSU policy). Students are urged to discuss matters with their advisers and with the Graduate Director before making a formal petition or appeal.

If the Graduate Director does not act upon a student's written request within a reasonable amount of time, a student and/or adviser may appeal directly to the Department Head. If a student has exhausted all appeals procedures within the

Department and is still not able to resolve the problem, he or she may appeal to the Graduate College.