

MA in English

The full-time MA program is a two-year program; part-time students can take up to 8 years to complete the MA degree. Coursework builds on a student's Bachelor's-level knowledge of their field to provide a broad perspective on literature and culture while allowing for specialization and advanced research work. The MA can be completed in an online modality. It is possible to begin the PhD in English prior to obtaining an MA degree; see under PhD in English (<https://catalog.missouri.edu/collegeofartsandscience/english/phd-english/>) for further information.

Degree Requirements

30 hours total of coursework of which 15 hours must be at the 8000 level; these 15 hours at the 8000 level may include up to 6 hours of ENGLISH 8090 (thesis hours), and by permission of the DGS, 3 hours of Independent Study (ENGLISH 8095). The remaining hours may be either 7000 or 8000 level.

Required Courses

ENGLISH 8060	Seminar in Criticism and Theory	3
or ENGLISH 8050	Contemporary Critical Approaches	
or ENGLISH 8070	History of Criticism and Theory	
ENGLISH 8090	Masters Thesis Research	3-6

For students concentrating in Literature, the following 8000-level courses are required in addition to the required courses. Students may substitute a 7000-level course for one of these requirements.

- One course concentrating in a period before 1900
- One course concentrating in a period including or after 1900
- On other literature course in any period

For students concentrating in Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition, or Language and Linguistics, the following 8000-level courses are required in addition to the required courses. Students may substitute a 7000-level course for one of these requirements.

- Two literature courses concentrating in any period
- One course in their area of specialization

Students can take up to 9 hours outside the English Department with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

The MA Thesis includes up to 6 hours of ENGLISH 8090. Students generally take 3 hours in the fall and then 3 more in the spring semester.

Thesis

The thesis requires independent research at the graduate level in a sustained consideration of a critical or creative project. The MA thesis may build on work produced in coursework but must also include significant new work.

Students present and defend their theses to a committee (composed of two members in the department and one outside member) in an oral defense.

Required length: 40-60 pages

The successful thesis in Literature will:

- support an argument with insightful textual analysis.
- show a command of clear academic prose.

- demonstrate awareness of current critical, theoretical trends and/or historical contexts relevant to the project.
- use library resources to locate and select critical and/or historical sources, and connect them meaningfully to the central text(s).
- show proficiency in documentation and bibliography.

The successful thesis in Creative Writing will:

- constitute a polished piece or collection of creative work in the candidate's genre of specialization.
- demonstrate a nuanced understanding and practice of the genre and/or form in question.
- by including an annotated bibliography of at least 10 entries or a critical introduction of no more than 15 pages, demonstrate a critical engagement with the practice, history, and/or theorization of creative writing.

The successful thesis in Language and Linguistics will:

- identify and investigate a problem or question that is relevant to current debates in the field.
- situate the investigation within the relevant scholarship with appropriate citation of the literature.
- demonstrate command of methodological and analytical tools suitable for the investigation.
- demonstrate command of effective writing in an appropriate academic register.

The successful thesis in Rhetoric and Composition will:

- identify and articulate (with the possibility of transforming) a problem or question situated in current critical, historical, theoretical, methodological, or pedagogical conversation(s) in the field of rhetoric and composition studies.
- demonstrate a critical engagement with the theory, practice, and/or history of rhetoric and/or composition by situating the inquiry within relevant scholarship.
- apply methodological, analytical, and/or creative approaches suitable for the inquiry.
- demonstrate awareness of conventions through appropriate language, writing, and citation choices.

In their first year, students should discuss possible thesis topics with the Director of Graduate Studies and faculty members likely to constitute the student's MA Thesis Committee.

The MA Thesis includes up to 6 hours of ENGLISH 8090. Students generally take 6 hours of thesis credit in one semester while doing research and writing. Some will take 3 hours in the fall and then 3 more in the spring semester if they are working closely with an advisor at the outset of the second year.

Students can pursue the MA either part time or full time, but all students must complete the MA program in the eight-year time limit mandated by the Graduate School.

Admission Criteria

Please apply by the appropriate deadline, as listed below.

MA

To be admitted to the MA program, a candidate should have majored in English as an undergraduate, with at least 18 hours in upper division courses in literature or linguistics. Students with other undergraduate

majors may be admitted provided their background in English studies is suitable and provided they complete an appropriate course of preliminary study. The candidate should have an overall undergraduate average of at least a B (3.0), with a higher average in courses in the major.

Application Process and Materials

Apply online through the Graduate School (<https://gradschool.missouri.edu/admissions/apply/>)

- The University requires an application fee and one set of transcripts from all colleges or universities you have attended.
- If already enrolled as a PBS student or as an undergraduate student at MU, you must file a change of major form with the admissions office.

The following items are needed to complete your application for the MA.

- One transcript from all colleges or universities you have attended.
- Two letters of recommendation. These may be written either by people familiar with your academic and creative work (such as a professor or academic advisor), or by professional contacts (such as supervisors or colleague), who can speak about the qualities relevant to your success in graduate school. Such recommenders may wish to consult the "Guidelines for Writers of Letters of Recommendation" on the English Department's FAQ page (<https://english.missouri.edu/grad/application-process-and-materials/>).
- CV
- List of any previous graduate classes taken.
- The Statement of Purpose should present information not emphasized in other portions of your application. It should give a sense of your intellectual interests and of your academic and professional qualifications and goals. Specifically, it should include:
 - Your plans for graduate work
 - Research interests
 - Creative specialties (for Creative Writing applicants)
 - Your preparation for graduate study in the field(s) you intend to pursue.
 - Reasons you feel the graduate program in English at the University of Missouri, specifically, will help you to meet your goals
- In addition, candidates may wish to include some of the following:
 - Past research, teaching or creative accomplishments, such as theses, conference presentations, publications or relevant professional experience.
 - An indication of how you would contribute to diversity and inclusion in the department, such as any experience in building diverse and inclusive learning communities.
 - Resources at the University of Missouri, including specific faculty members, that could support your academic and professional goals.
- Writing Sample: One 15-20 page scholarly paper for students applying for emphases in Literature, English Language and Linguistics, or Rhetoric and Composition. Creative Writing applicants should submit this scholarly paper and *also* submit one of the following: a sample of your fiction (15-30 pages), creative non-fiction (15-20 pages), or poetry (15-20 pages).

Your application cannot be read until all of these materials have been received. All materials, *including letters of recommendation*,

must be received by the appropriate application deadline.

Application deadlines for the MA degree:

- January 1 to be admitted for summer or fall of the same calendar year
- April 1 to be admitted for fall of the same calendar year

Admission Contact Information

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