English

Graduate Programs
2014-2015
Our Mission:
To educate students for a life of fulfillment and accomplishment.
To create and translate knowledge to meet global and societal needs.

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July 2014

Material subject to revision.
Faculty

Chair
Laura Green, PhD, University of California–Berkeley
*Fields: Victorian literature, women’s studies*

Professors

Samuel J. Bernstein, PhD, Brandeis University
*Fields: Dramatic literature, creative writing*

Francis C. Blessington, PhD, Brown University
*Fields: Seventeenth-century English literature, poetry writing, classics*

Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, PhD, University of California–Berkeley
*Fields: Early American literature, women’s studies, transatlantic literary studies*

Chris Gallagher, PhD, SUNY-Albany
*Fields: Composition and rhetoric, pedagogy, literacy studies*

Gary Goshgarian, PhD, University of Wisconsin
*Field: Fiction writing*

Carla Kaplan, PhD, Northwestern University
*Davis Distinguished Professor of American Literature*
*Fields: American literature, modern literature and culture, African American literature and history, feminist theory*

Kathleen Kelly, PhD, University of North Carolina
*Fields: Medieval literature, composition and rhetoric*

Lori Loeffelholz, PhD, Brown University
*Ruderman Professor of Jewish Studies*
*Fields: Jewish literature, Hebrew Bible, critical theory, feminism*

Mary Loeffelholz, PhD, Yale University
*Fields: Nineteenth-century American literature, critical theory*

Stuart S. Peterfreund, PhD, University of Washington
*Graduate Program Director*
*Fields: English romanticism, literature and science*
Janet Randall, PhD, University of Massachusetts  
*Field: Linguistic theory*

**Associate Professors**

Nicole Aljoe, PhD, Tufts University  
*Fields: Caribbean literature, postcolonial studies, the slave narrative, literatures of the African diaspora*

Elizabeth Britt, PhD, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
*Fields: Rhetorical theory and criticism, rhetoric of law*

Theo Davis, PhD, Johns Hopkins University  
*Fields: Nineteenth-century American literature, ethics, affect, aesthetics*

Neal Lerner, EdD, Boston University  
*Fields: Composition and rhetoric, pedagogy, literacy studies, writing program administration*

Marina Leslie, PhD, Yale University  
*Fields: Early modern literature and culture, gender studies*

Patrick Mullen, PhD, University of Pittsburgh  
*Fields: Twentieth-century British and Irish literature and culture*

Bonnie TuSmith, PhD, Washington State University  
*Field: Ethnic American literatures*

**Assistant Professors**

Erika Boeckeler, PhD, Harvard University  
*Field: Shakespeare, early modern literature and culture*

Kimberly Juanita Brown, PhD, Yale University  
*Fields: African American literature and culture, literatures of the African diaspora, visual culture of the Black diaspora*

Ryan Cordell, PhD, University of Virginia  
*Fields: Digital Humanities, nineteenth-century American literature*

Mya Poe, PhD, University of Massachusetts-Amherst  
*Fields: Composition and Rhetoric*
The Graduate Programs

The graduate program in English concompasses a spectrum of traditional literary fields from the medieval period to postmodernism, as well as rhetoric and composition, linguistics, and digital humanities. Research and teaching in interdisciplinary areas, including American studies, African American studies, gender studies, and cultural studies, are also well represented within the program. At Northeastern University, graduate students in English may take full advantage of the opportunities that the greater Boston area affords as the site of rich cultural and educational resources.

The Department of English offers both doctoral and master’s degrees. Students in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in English train to be productive scholars and teachers in their chosen fields. Coursework exposes students to the important texts, current issues, and critical methodologies of the discipline and is followed by a preliminary examination. Subsequently, comprehensive examinations require students to develop three defined areas of scholarly interest, and the dissertation provides an opportunity for designing a focused research project in consultation with a dissertation advisor. Throughout the program, faculty work closely with doctoral students to develop their scholarly and professional identities in preparation for careers in academia. The PhD program is for full-time study only.

The Master of Arts program gives students broad exposure to the current state of literary studies - its history, its methodologies, its ever-changing canon, and its production of new knowledge. The program offers study in all areas of English and American literature, and in rhetorical criticism, the teaching of writing, and the role of rhetorical practices in shaping disciplinary, institutional, and cultural knowledges and identities. The MA program is open to both full- and part-time students.

Special (non-matriculated) students may take graduate courses for personal enrichment, to sample a program, or to accrue credit that may be transferred to a graduate program at another institution or applied as credit in the event that the student is admitted to a graduate program in the Department of English at Northeastern University.
Admission

Applicants to both the PhD and the MA programs should demonstrate superior achievement in previous academic work. The application and materials are submitted online at www.northeastern.edu/cssh/graduate. The following materials are required: three letters of recommendation; a ten-to-twenty page sample of academic writing; GRE general examination scores; a personal statement of interest; and unofficial transcripts. All materials are submitted via the on-line Apply Yourself system except for the GRE Scores. The GRE Scores are provided to Northeastern University by Educational Testing Services if the applicant provides our institution code (3682) at the time the exam is taken. International applicants to both programs for whom English is not their first language must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). All application materials must be submitted online, not to the English Department.

Financial Awards

The PhD and MA programs offer admitted students several types of financial support. Stipended Graduate Assistantships are awarded to all admitted PhD applicants for the duration of their coursework. These awards provide a tuition waiver, stipend, and student health insurance. Stipended Graduate Assistantships may be available to PhD students who have completed all coursework toward the degree, passed the PhD Comprehensive Examinations, and are making satisfactory academic progress.

College of Social Sciences and Humanities Dean's Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to qualified admitted and continuing MA applicants. These scholarships cover a specified number of credits.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory progress means satisfying requirements in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities Graduate Programs General Regulations and in the regulations specified in the departmental booklet. The College sets minimum standards for all students to fulfill. Departments and programs may have additional requirements that exceed those of the College.

Each PhD student will have an annual review of his/her progress toward the degree.

Receipt of financial support administered by the Graduate Office is contingent on satisfactory academic progress toward the degree and on meeting department-specific guidelines. See the College of Social Sciences and Humanities Graduate Programs General Regulations for further details.
The Doctor of Philosophy Degree

English Graduate Degree Programs in Literature and Writing

The PhD program welcomes applications from students who hold either the BA or the equivalent, or the MA or the equivalent, at the time of entering the program. Students who hold the MA degree at the time of entry may receive credit for up to twenty-one semester hours of coursework (seven courses) toward the degree. All students who earn the PhD in English must receive credit for at least forty-two semester hours of coursework (fourteen courses); must pass a comprehensive examination; must complete annual progress reviews; must satisfy the PhD language requirement of proficiency in two languages (classical or modern) other than English; and must write and defend a dissertation. Students entering with the BA in hand will normally complete all coursework within three years. Students entering with the MA in hand will normally complete all coursework within two years. All students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.500 to qualify for and maintain degree eligibility.

PhD students must spend an academic year in residence, during which they take at least fifteen semester hours of coursework (five courses), as full-time graduate students. Students entering with the MA in hand must spend the first year in residence as full-time students prior to undertaking the preliminary examination. Students entering with the BA in hand may spend any full academic year prior to sitting for the preliminary examination in residence as full-time students. Students entering with the BA in hand must also take courses that fulfill the requirements of the MA Program described on page 10 by the time they have completed 30 semester hours of coursework, i.e. two years of full-time study. Additional coursework for students who enter with the BA in hand, as well as for students who enter with the MA in hand, should both fill any gaps in previous training and help to shape emerging areas of interest and specialization.

The table below illustrates how both those students who enter with a BA in hand and those who enter with an MA in hand make progress toward the PhD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entering degree</th>
<th>BA or equivalent</th>
<th>MA or equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours required</td>
<td>At least 42 sh (14 courses)</td>
<td>At least 21 sh (7 courses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses required</td>
<td>MA reqs (including ENGL 5103 and ENGL 7392) + 12 sh (4 courses) electives</td>
<td>ENGL 5103, ENGL 7392 + 15 sh (5 courses) electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual progress review</td>
<td>Spring semester</td>
<td>Spring semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency requirement</td>
<td>1 year, At least 15 sh (5 courses)</td>
<td>1 year, At least 15 sh (5 courses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses taken in/comp Exam</td>
<td>3 years or less/By the end of third year</td>
<td>2 years or less/By the end of second year</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max time to degree</td>
<td>Within 5 years of candidacy</td>
<td>Within 5 years of candidacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Degree Candidacy**

After completing coursework and passing the PhD comprehensive examinations, students attain degree candidacy. Degree candidates register for Doctoral Dissertation for each of the first two semesters of work on the dissertation. Thereafter, candidates enroll in Dissertation Continuation each term. The General Regulations booklet outlines registration policies for doctoral candidates.

Students must complete the dissertation within five years of establishing degree candidacy. The defense of the dissertation will be conducted in accordance with the regulations of the College.

**Transfer Credit**

Students may transfer from another accredited U.S. institution no more than the equivalent of nine semester hours of graduate course work credit in English, provided such course work has earned a minimum grade of B (3.000) and the course work has not been used toward another degree. Within this limit, graduate courses in other fields may also be transferred if their relevance to the student's program can be demonstrated. Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee.

A student should consult with the Graduate Program Director before taking extramural courses for credit.

**Annual Progress Review**

During each Spring semester, all doctoral students are required to meet with their faculty advisors for an annual progress review. The reviews will be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee, which will determine whether satisfactory progress is being made and students are eligible to proceed to complete their graduate work.

**PhD Comprehensive Examination**

A PhD student must complete the PhD Comprehensive Examination by the end of the third year of studies if entering with the BA and by the end of the second year of studies if entering with the Master’s. During examinations, students enroll in ENGL 8960 Exam Preparation - Doctoral or ENGL 9986 Research.
PhD students must complete this examination no later than one calendar year after completing course work. (Incomplete grades do not stop the clock.) The Comprehensive Examination consists of three field papers, each supervised and graded by the appropriate member of the examining committee, and one two-hour oral examination in which all members of the committee participate.

The student initiates the process of the PhD Comprehensive Examination by forming a committee of faculty in the relevant discipline(s). Examination areas should be chosen with a view to their coherence and fit with the student’s intellectual interests; they might include focus on an author, a genre, a topos, or a theoretical or methodological approach. The student should also give some consideration to how s/he intends to present his/her areas of expertise and competence in relation to the categories of the job market.

**PhD Language Requirement**

A PhD student must demonstrate reading proficiency in two languages other than English. For each language this may be done by passing a reading examination (set by the department and offered once each Fall and Spring semester), by presenting evidence of having passed a comparable examination during MA study, by presenting evidence of B work or better in at least two intermediate-level college literature courses in the language (or the equivalent in the case of signed languages), or by another method approved by the advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee. Students may also petition to have proficiency in a native language other than English count toward satisfying the requirement.

**Dissertation**

As soon as possible after completing the PhD Comprehensive Examination, a PhD student forms a dissertation committee and designates its director. In consultation with this committee, the student writes a dissertation prospectus. The prospectus must be approved by the dissertation committee and submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee within six months from when a student attains degree candidacy. Within one year of achieving candidacy, the student must give a public presentation of either the prospectus or first chapter. The dissertation is written with the guidance and under the supervision of the dissertation committee, and, is prepared in accordance with the instructions found in the current edition of the Guide to the Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations issued by the Graduate Office. The dissertation must be completed no more than five years after attaining degree candidacy. Upon completing the dissertation, a PhD student participates in a dissertation defense consisting of a public lecture, followed by a question-and-answer session.
The Master of Arts Degree

All students earning the MA in English must complete the MA Core Curriculum, pass the MA Comprehensive Examination, and satisfy the MA language requirement. All students in this program must complete thirty semester hours of coursework.

MA Curriculum:
• ENGL 5103: Proseminar
• Two “Theories & Methods” courses
• Two Rhetoric or Composition courses
• One course in each of the following groups:
  Medieval/Renaissance
  17th Century/Restoration/18th Century
  19th Century/20th Century
• Two electives
• MA Comprehensive Exam or Thesis

Transfer Credit

Students may transfer from another accredited U.S. institution no more than the equivalent of nine semester hours of graduate coursework credit in English, provided that such coursework has earned a minimum grade of B (3.000) and the coursework has not been used toward another degree. Within this limit, graduate courses in other fields may also be transferred if their relevance to the student’s program can be demonstrated.

Directed Study

A student may apply for a maximum of three semester hours of Directed Research Project (ENGL 8405) or Directed Writing Project (ENGL 8406), not including a thesis or Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies course. Students must obtain the written consent of the instructor who will direct the study. A course proposal must be developed, outlining the works to be covered, the general requirements to be met, and the semester hours of credit for which the study is offered. Such a proposal must be submitted for approval to the student’s faculty adviser and to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Directed study is not permitted when a course in the same subject is offered during the academic year. Directed study should not be substituted for regular course offerings.

In addition to the three-credit directed study options, there is a one-credit option, Teaching Practicum (ENGL 8407), which fosters professionalization by allowing a graduate student to observe a faculty member who is teaching an undergraduate elective.
MA Comprehensive Examination or Thesis

A comprehensive examination is required of all students in the Master's program. After earning at least twenty-one semester hours of course credit with a GPA of at least 3.000 (typically, by the end of the third semester of coursework for a full-time student), a student becomes eligible to take the MA comprehensive examination. This examination is offered in three written formats: Master's thesis, pedagogy thesis, and timed examination. A student may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for permission to take an oral exam in lieu of the written examination. At the point of eligibility, the student must declare the method of examination to the student's advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee.

A student who has a GPA of 3.500 or higher may choose to write a Master's or pedagogy thesis for the comprehensive examination requirement. The student will enroll in ENGL 7990: Master's Thesis, and, upon the successful completion of the thesis, earn three semester hours toward the degree in lieu of coursework. The thesis should be prepared and submitted according to the College of Social Sciences and Humanities Graduate Office guidelines, available at www.northeastern.edu/cssh/graduate/commencement/.

MA Language Requirement

An MA student must demonstrate reading proficiency in one language other than English. This may be done by passing a reading examination (set by the department and offered once each Fall and Spring semester), by presenting evidence of having passed a comparable examination during MA study, by presenting evidence of B work or better in at least two intermediate-level college literature courses in the language (or the equivalent in the case of signed languages), or by another method approved by the advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee. Students may also petition to have proficiency in a native language other than English count toward satisfying the requirement.

Annual Progress Review

During each Spring semester, all Master's students are required to meet with their faculty advisors for an annual progress review. The reviews will be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee, which will determine whether satisfactory progress is being made and students are eligible to proceed to complete their graduate work.

Grades

To qualify for the MA Comprehensive Examination and for the degree, a student must achieve a minimum cumulative average of 3.000. Students who receive more than two Cs in their first two semesters in residence may be dropped from the program.
Graduate Certificate in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

A four-course graduate certificate program in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies may be combined with either the PhD or the MA. The award of the certificate is noted on the student’s transcript. Information regarding this certificate program may be accessed at the following site: www.northeastern.edu/wgss.

Sample Course Listing

The following is a sample listing of departmental course offerings. Please refer to www.northeastern.edu/registrar for course descriptions and relevant prerequisites.

Course Name
Proseminar
Topics in American Literature
Topics in Nineteenth Century American Literature
Topics in Twentieth Century American Literature
Topics in Twentieth Century Literature
Topics in Shakespeare
Topics in Medieval Literature
Topics in Victorian Literature
Eighteenth-Century Novel
Topics in Criticism
Topics in Literary Study
Topics in Rhetoric
Writing and the Teaching of Writing
Topics in Writing
Graduate Program Director
Department of English
405 Lake Hall
Northeastern University
360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA
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