Master of Arts

Program in English

Indiana University East
Department of English

Program Contact:
Edwina Helton, Director of Graduate Programs in English
edhelton@iue.edu
Master of Arts in English

The Master of Arts in English benefits those who are preparing for careers as professionals in writing, editing, or business and those who are preparing for a teaching career in a community college or university. Students who hold an M.A. in a field related to English and wish to study literature, writing, or composition and rhetoric would also benefit. Part-time college teachers seeking advanced training, and individuals who wish to strengthen their knowledge of writing, rhetoric and literary studies for other professional or personal reasons would benefit as well. Secondary English teachers can strengthen their content knowledge, a crucial part of meeting standards for educators and for teaching dual credit courses.

The program of study of the M.A. in English is designed to meet the needs of current holders of a bachelor's degree in English, Education, Communication, Humanities, or a related field. Some are full-time teachers. Students have the option of taking a full-time or part-time program. Full-time students complete the course work within four semesters, including one summer. Part-time students complete the course work within six to eight semesters, depending on the amount of summer work. The program is particularly attractive to students in our region who need a program that is close by.

The Faculty of Indiana University East's Department of English provide a visible aspect of uniqueness to a Master's candidate: an opportunity to work closely with professionals in the field who are active in their scholarly or creative pursuits and can act as mentors and guides to their graduate students and contributing to these fields in other prominent way which would benefit graduate students. Among the faculty's strengths is creative writing, boasting published faculty in fiction writing, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The faculty also has strengths in Composition and Rhetoric, Literature, and Children’s Literature with strong records in publishing, serving on national boards, and in other ways contributing to these fields in prominent ways in which might benefit graduate students. The department houses Tributaries, a journal of creative writing. Finally, graduate students can apply to positions where they might serve as Writing Tutors, assist in Writing Center administration, and learn the pedagogy of teaching writing.

Program Description

The M.A. in English offers students a program that can be shaped to individual goals. Students work closely with an English faculty advisor to develop a program of study created to meet particular goals. The Master of Arts in English requires the following:

1. The required foundational course ENG L506 Introduction to Methods of Criticism and Research,
2. Elective courses chosen from among literature, writing, and rhetoric in consultation with an advisor,
3. A capstone project completed in W609, and
4. A program final completion portfolio.

The degree provides structured learning, a supportive atmosphere, and scheduling sensitive to students' needs for evening courses, particularly for the region of the state we serve, where there are issues of distance preventing students from pursuing an M.A. program within commutable distances. The M.A. in English is evaluated through an ongoing assessment and revised in accordance with results for a program of continued excellence.
Degree Program Major Requirements

A. Students must complete 36 credit hours.
B. 28 hours of the degree must be earned from IU East courses.
C. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B).
D. Degree Requirements: 36 credit hours

1. Required Foundational Course: ENG L506 Introduction to Methods of Criticism and Research (4 cr.)

2. Elective Courses (28 credit hours)
   Under the careful guidance of their advisor, students select seven courses for a total of 24 credit hours. Students develop a schedule plan upon their admission to the program in consultation with an English faculty member advisor. In some circumstances a course from an outside discipline can be counted toward the degree program as appropriate to the student’s learning goals, and in consultation with the degree advisor.

3. Capstone course (4 credit hours)
   ENG W609 Independent Writing Project (4 cr.)

4. The Elective Courses provide depth in students’ area of study (28 cr.).

Admission Requirements

Admitted students must hold a baccalaureate degree in English or a related field. Students must document their degree by submitting transcripts from all institutions attended. All students in the M.A. in English program matriculate as regularly admitted Indiana University East students and meet the admissions standards applied by the Indiana University East Office of Admissions. To be admitted to the M.A. in English Degree program, the following are required:

- A bachelor’s or master’s degree from an accredited college or university, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in the student’s undergraduate major, documented by an official transcript. Applicants should have a degree in English or a related field such as Education, Communication, or Humanities. Admission also is considered for those who otherwise demonstrate the competency necessary to succeed in graduate work in English.
- Official transcripts from all previous undergraduate institutions.
- A recent writing sample that demonstrates the candidate’s analytical skills, writing abilities, and command of clear and fluent prose is evaluated using the department’s graduate level student writing rubric by the department admissions committee.
- A personal statement clearly explaining the candidate’s background in English studies and the reasons the candidate wishes to pursue the degree is evaluated by the department admissions committee for anticipated success in the program as well as preparation and fit.
- Three letters of recommendation from professors who have a good knowledge of
the candidate's work or, when necessary, from others familiar with the
candidate’s relevant work.
- The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required for admission to the program;
it is optional. Candidates may submit recent results of the GRE's general exam
and/or subject exam.

All prospective students are advised to consult with a faculty member serving as program
advisor prior to submitting an application. Prior to admission to the M.A. in English
program, an advisor reviews the advising form and program requirements with the
applicant. Students in the M.A. in English degree program are required to maintain a 3.0
grade point average.

Course Descriptions

Required Courses (8 credit hours)
ENG L506 Introduction to Methods of Criticism and Research (4 cr.)
An examination of the importance of the notion of the text for contemporary literary
theory. L506 is the core literature course for the M.A. in English.

ENG W609 Independent Writing Project (4 cr.)
Enables students to work on a writing project that they initiate, plan, and complete under
the direction of an English department faculty member. Students must take at
least one course in the area of the project; students wishing to complete an
independent writing project in creative writing must take at least one workshop in
the genre in which they intend to write the project.

Elective Courses (28 credit hours)
ENG D600 History of the English Language (4 cr.)
Survey of the evolution of the English language from its earliest stages to the present,
with reference to its external history and to its phonology, morphology, syntax, and
vocabulary.

ENG G500 Intro. to the English Language (4 cr.)
An introduction to English linguistics, the course covers the principal areas of linguistic
inquiry into the English language: sounds (phonetics and phonology), words
(morphology), sentences (syntax), and meaning (semantics).

ENG G552 Linguistics and the Teacher of English (4 cr.)
Topics in applied English linguistics, intended for English teachers at all levels.

ENG G652 English Language Sociolinguistics (4 cr.)
A survey course in American and British sociolinguistics, this course investigates the
theoretical bases, the major works, and the methodological approaches of
current sociolinguistics.

ENG G660 Stylistics (4 cr.)
Survey of traditional and linguistic approaches to the study of prose and poetic
style. Attention centers on the description of the verbal characteristics of texts, what
those characteristics reflect about the author, and how they affect the reader.
ENG L590 Internship in English (4 cr.)
Arranged course.

ENG L608 History of Literary Criticism from 1750 to 1960 (4 cr.)
A survey of the history of literary criticism and theory from the late Enlightenment or early Romantic periods to 1960, including a variety of modern literary critics and theorists.

ENG L612 Chaucer (4 cr.)
Critical analysis of The Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde, and selected shorter poems.

ENG L625 Shakespeare (4 cr.)
Critical analysis of selected texts.

ENG L631 English Literature 1660-1790 (4 cr.)
Extensive reading in poetry and nonfictional prose.

ENG L641 English Literature 1790-1900 (4 cr.)
Extensive reading in poetry and nonfictional prose.

ENG L649 British Literature since 1900 (4 cr.)
Extensive reading in all genres.

ENG L651 American Literature 1609-1800 (4 cr.)
Intensive historical and critical study of all genres from John Smith through Charles Brockden Brown.

ENG L653 American Literature 1800-1900 (4 cr.)
Intensive historical and critical study of all genres from Washington Irving through Frank Norris.

ENG L655 American Literature and Culture 1900-1945 (4 cr.)
Study of American Literature and culture from the turn of the century to 1945.

ENG L666 Survey of Children's Literature (4 cr.)
A survey of literature written for children and adolescents from the medieval period to the present.

ENG L680 Special Topics in Literature (4 cr.)
L680 is a variable subtitle course designed to offer students a range of critical approaches to the study of literature at the graduate level. Reading in sociological, political, psychological, and other approaches to literature. Sample topics include: Mark Twain, Intro to 18th Century Studies, Caribbean Women Writers, Intro to Cultural Theory, Victorian Britain 1820-1900.

ENG W500 Issues in Teaching Writing (4 cr.)
Consideration of fundamental issues in the teaching of writing and the major approaches
to composition instruction. Specific topics include teaching invention and revision, diagnosing errors, teaching style and organization, making assignments, and evaluating student writing.

ENG W501 Teaching College Writing (4 cr.)
The study of teaching reading and writing. The course focuses on composition and rhetoric research methodologies. The course explores researching a range of teaching technologies.

ENG W507 Graduate Creative Nonfiction Writing (4 cr.)
W507 is a workshop in the craft of creative nonfiction, with special attention given to defining the genre and its craft, as well as looking at, analyzing, and imitating works in specific subgenres of creative nonfiction such as memoir and travel writing.

ENG W511 Advanced Fiction Writing (4 cr.)
Study and practice in the writing of fiction. Analysis of examples from contemporary literature accompanies class criticism and discussion. Course may be taken twice for M.A. credit.

ENG W513 Writing Poetry (4 cr.)
Poetry writing workshop on the study of prosody and form (including formal elements of free verse) in the context of writing by class members. Course may be taken twice for M.A. credit.

ENG W620 Advanced Argumentative Writing (4 cr.)
In this workshop format course, we engage in the advanced study of rhetorical theories of argument. Students explore the history of rhetorical theories of argument and its application to the teaching of writing, use writing to reflect on argument theories, writing strategies, and classroom practice, and gain application of composition research methods to argumentation projects. While much of the course centers on studying theories of argument, you also gain practice in argumentative writing through a number of writing projects including a seminar paper.

ENG W680 Craft of Writing (4 cr.)
The goal is to explore new approaches in your own work. Students may write in any genre or form—poetry, prose poetry, short fiction, prose nonfiction, or the novel. There are exercises and a final project to present to the class. The final project may be a series of prose poems, the opening of a novel with an outline, a set of mini stories, a long poem in blank verse, or a creative nonfiction work.

ENG W682 Special Topics: Rhetoric & Composition (4 cr.)
In this workshop, we engage in the advanced study of teaching reading and writing. While much of the course centers on studying scholarship, you also gain practice in connecting reading and writing through a major seminar paper on a topic developed in consultation with your professor. Students shape reading and writing activities to their interests and learning goals.

Note: Other courses may apply toward the degree as approved by the degree
program advisors.

Schedule Planning

The program offers flexible completion times. Students may complete the program over one or two years. Sample schedule plans are offered below. Your degree program advisor can assist you in creating a plan specific to your goals. You may enroll in classes during the first week of registration. Contact the Director of Graduate Programs in English anytime with questions.

Sample course sequences:

Fall: L506, Literature Electives, G500 (odd years), G552 (even years), W501
Spring: W609, W682, G660, Literature and Creative Writing Electives
Summer: W500, L506, Literature and/or Creative Writing Elective

Applying to the Program

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis; however, prospective students must apply by December 1 or April 15 for fall admittance. See “Guidelines for Application” provided on our web page or request a copy through the Office of Graduate Programs in English at edhelton@iue.edu.

Mentoring and Advising

Faculty teaching courses for the program also provide mentoring for students in the program, making themselves available for questions. Admitted students work closely with a program faculty adviser to assist in developing a program of study, scheduling classes, and planning for after graduation.

Degree Program Learning Outcomes

Program learning outcomes are listed below:
A. Ability to demonstrate knowledge of the methods and practices of English Studies.
B. Ability to construct academic and/or creative writing forms and genres within English Studies.
C. Ability to select and to analyze a growing body of interdisciplinary knowledge within English Studies.
D. Ability to apply theoretical issues to a wide range of practices related to English Studies.
E. Ability to write for future publication under the supervision of graduate faculty.

Performance goals for students on the completion of their degree are below:
A. Gaining experience in selection and use of appropriate strategies for pursuing practice in English Studies.
B. Practicing preparation of texts in a range of genres.
C. Demonstrating knowledge of the theory and history that informs an understanding of
English Studies.

D. Developing ability to apply theoretical issues related to English Studies.

Assessment
The Director of Graduate Programs in English supervises the assessment process. The overall goals for the M.A. in English program, course goals and objectives are assessed in accordance with the English Department Assessment Plan. A full program review is completed every five years.

To graduate from the program, progress toward degree completion is monitored in a number of ways: Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B), student papers are evaluated for the performance-based knowledge and skills, and students take a capstone course and complete a substantial capstone project on a topic in literature, creative writing, or rhetoric and composition under the guidance of an English faculty member. Also as part of the assessment of the M.A. in English, in the semester prior to taking the capstone course, students complete a program portfolio that is evaluated by at least two full-time faculty members in English.

Evaluation Benchmarks for Student Success.

1. Stage one: Course Related Assessment
   These strategies include writing projects, written activities, and practical demonstrations as appropriate to the specific course. Individual course faculty develop and implement these assessment procedures, which focus on outcomes of student learning.

2. Stage two: Program Portfolio
   In the semester prior to beginning the capstone course, students begin preparation of a portfolio consisting of three sample projects from courses taken with an introductory memo for program assessment. The portfolio is reviewed by a committee of at least two faculty members, ideally with one member planned to be the student’s capstone course instructor. The portfolio is evaluated using the English Department rubric for program portfolio evaluation.

3. Stage three: Course Embedded Capstone Project
   All students are required to complete a capstone project. The project is a culmination of the students’ program and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. The M.A. in English capstone project may involve academic research, creative work, or an article for potential future publication:

   a. Traditional Academic Research Project. Original research or analysis including a literature review of relevant scholarship. The project must be written in scholarly format, with appropriate citation style and appropriate references. The literature review developed for the proposed project should serve as the initial component of the project. Typical project length: 50 to 100 pages.

   b. Creative Project. Students may complete a creative project. The creative
work must be accompanied by an explanatory essay encompassing material from a range of research consistent with the project itself. The explanatory essay must be in scholarly format, with appropriate citation style and appropriate references as appropriate for the project. The literature review developed for the project may serve as the basis for the explanatory essay. Typical length of explanatory essay: 20-35 pages.

c. Potential Publication. Students may direct their culminating project toward a potential peer-reviewed publication project intended to appear in a professional forum. Examples include articles in a scholarly journal, investigative creative nonfiction published in a major press, or a book draft prepared for publication. The work must be accompanied by an explanatory essay encompassing material from scholarly research. The explanatory essay must be in scholarly format, with appropriate citation style and references as appropriate for the project. The literature review developed for the project may serve as the basis for the explanatory essay. Typical length of explanatory essay: 20-35 pages.

The capstone project is evaluated by a committee of three with the faculty capstone project instructor as one of the members. Capstone course projects are evaluated using the English Department rubric.

Placement of Graduates
The English Department oversees student transition to a professional career or to further graduate education. M.A. candidates can apply to serve as Writing Tutors, assist in Writing Center administration, and learn the pedagogy of teaching writing, all beneficial to future career prospects or further graduate education. The existing English Department internship initiative, the campus Office of Career Planning and Placement, and the campus Internship Program support M.A. candidates. The Office of Career Planning and Placement assist with placing graduates at Ivy Tech Community College, area secondary schools and other institutions seeking teachers and other professionals with the English M.A.

Program Faculty and Administrators.
Brian Brodeur, Ph.D. Creative Writing, Poetry, American Literature, Literary Theory.
Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, Ph.D. Victorian Literature, Medieval Literature, Children’s Literature, Young Adult Literature, Literary Theory, and Composition.
Margaret Evans, Ph.D. Technical Writing, Rhetorical Theory, and Composition
Jean Harper, M.F.A. Creative Nonfiction, Fiction, Composition.
Sarah Harris, Ph.D. Rhetorical Theory, Composition, Creative Writing.
Edwina Helton, Ph.D. Linguistics, History of the English Language, Rhetorical Theory, Contemporary Minority Literatures, and Romantic Literature.
Laverne Nishihara, Ph.D. 20th Century British Literature, Postcolonial Literature, and Composition.
Steven Petersheim, Ph.D. 19th Century American Literature, Ethnic American Literature, Poetry, and Composition.
Eleni Siatra, Ph.D. Composition and Rhetoric, Literary Theory, Early American Literature, and Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Literature.
Margaret Thomas Evans, Ph.D. Composition, Rhetorical Theory, Women’s Studies, Technical Communication.