University of Louisville

English Department

GRADUATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

UPDATED JANUARY 2003
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DEPARTMENTAL GRADUATE ADMINISTRATION

The English Department Faculty sets all policies of the Graduate program. The English Graduate Committee determines how policies apply in specific instances. The Graduate Committee supervises all facets of the Graduate Program, including admission, probation, dismissal, and appointment of Graduate Teaching Assistants (the last in consultation with the Director of Composition and the Director of Creative Writing). This Committee also approves prospectuses for theses and dissertations. All records for all English Graduate programs are kept in the Department Office (Bingham Humanities 315). The Director of Graduate Studies reviews the progress of every student at the end of every semester, or continuously throughout the semester, if the situation warrants it. Requests and petitions from graduate students should be put in writing and addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will then present them to the Graduate Committee. The Director of Graduate Studies also supervises graduate advising, submits examining committee slates to the Graduate Committee for approval, and supervises the examinations of master's and doctoral students to assure that they are administered according to English Graduate program policy. The Director of Graduate Studies also works along with the Department Chairperson to plan graduate course offerings.

GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED

The English Department offers two graduate degrees: The Master of Arts in Literature and the Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition.

MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) PROGRAM

Candidates for the M.A. degree must complete 30 semester hours. Those who choose the non-thesis option will take 30 hours of coursework, while those who choose to write a thesis will take 24 hours of coursework and 6 hours of Thesis Guidance (English 615). See page two for additional information.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) PROGRAM

Candidates for the Ph.D. degree must complete 51 semester hours, which must include at least 12 hours of Dissertation Research (English 690), devoted to the writing of the Ph.D. dissertation. See page five for additional information.

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING (M.A.T.) PROGRAM

In the Fall of 1992, the University of Louisville School of Education assumed full responsibility for all Masters of Arts in Teaching Programs. Students wishing to teach in Kentucky Secondary Education systems need to call 852-6431 for more details about these programs.
APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE M.A. PROGRAM:

M.A. application deadlines:
- M.A. (with GTA): February 1st (Fall admission only)
- M.A. (without GTA): At least two weeks prior to the start of the semester for which you are applying (Fall, Spring or Summer admission)

Applicants must send the following to the Office of Graduate Admissions; University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292:

1. Application for Graduate Admission (including fee).
2. Official Transcripts of all undergraduate work and any post-graduate work.
3. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores.
4. GRE Subject Test - Literature in English.
5. Two letters of recommendation from people familiar with your academic work.
6. Writing sample (critical writing that is evidence of your investigative and expository skills); a total of 10 pages or more for M.A. applicants.
7. GTA application (only if you wish to be considered for a GTA) - this should include references who can speak to the applicant's teaching ability. **The GTA application should be sent directly to the English Department (by February 1st):**

   Director of Graduate Studies
   Department of English
   Humanities Bldg. 315
   University of Louisville
   Louisville, KY 40292

When the credentials are complete, the Graduate Committee will read them, decide whether the applicant is accepted or denied admission; and if admitted, determine the candidate's status.

ACCEPTANCE STATUS
Students admitted to the English Department graduate program will be placed in one of the following categories:

1. Degree status. This is for students in good standing who are pursuing a specific degree.

2. Degree status with condition(s). This category may be used for students whose applications are incomplete, or whose credentials are not strong enough to allow them to be admitted to a degree program but are solid enough to warrant a one-semester trial period. Students in conditional degree status may count only six (6) of the hours they earn while in that status toward any degree, although they may take as many as fifteen (15) hours during that one semester. Students in a conditional degree status because of incomplete credentials must complete their credentials during that one semester.
M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - (30 graduate hours)

A. REQUIRED COURSES: 15 Hours
   • English 601: Introduction to English Studies - 3 hours
   • English 691: Theories of Interpretation - 3 hours
   • Pre-1800 literature - 6 hours
   • Post-1800 literature - 3 hours

B. ELECTIVES: 9-15 Hours
   Only nine (9) hours at the 500-level may count toward the M.A. degree. Creative writing courses (including six hours of thesis guidance) may total no more than 15 hours.

C. THESIS OR NON-THESIS OPTION:

   THESIS OPTION: (24 hours of coursework and 6 hours of Thesis Guidance)
   Students who choose this option will be expected to write a critical or creative thesis that is a genuine contribution to the field, shows an awareness of current academic practice, and employs methods appropriate to an extended academic project. Students may write either a Scholarly-Critical Thesis or a Creative Thesis. The student makes an oral defense of the completed thesis before a reading committee. For further information, see Procedures for Theses and Dissertations on page 15.

   NON-THESIS OPTION: (30 hours of coursework and a Culminating Project)
   Students who choose this option may, as a culminating project, choose one of their strongest seminar papers or creative writing projects to revise; the purpose of this project is to give students the opportunity to revise a seminar paper or creative writing project with publication in mind. To this end, the student will write a brief prospectus (2-3 pages), under the guidance of a faculty advisor (usually the instructor in whose class the original paper was written), indicating the intended place of publication and types of revisions they will make to the paper for that publication’s audience. Students should limit their final papers to no more than 25 pages (and thus choose the audience for the project accordingly).

   The prospectus, approved by the project advisor, must be submitted to the Director of English Graduate Studies at least eight weeks prior to the deadline for graduate students to submit theses/dissertations during the semester in which you plan to graduate (see the printed Schedule of Courses for deadlines). A prospectus-screening committee will then evaluate the prospectus, and if approved, the student will make the necessary revisions under the guidance of the project advisor. Once the project advisor approves the culminating project, the student and the project advisor will meet with the Graduate Committee at a time and date specified by the Graduate Director to discuss the project.

D. M.A. FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: The student must demonstrate reading proficiency in an approved foreign language. The foreign language requirement must be satisfied before the thesis can be defended. For more information, see page 13.
Ph.D. IN ENGLISH RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

The UofL English Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition prepares its students for research and teaching careers in the theory and practice of rhetoric and composition. Most students come to prepare for tenurable employment in colleges and universities; a few go to business, government or industry as writing consultants.

A master's degree, preferably in literary study, must be in hand at the time of admission. Students should bring with them the ability to do advanced work in literature and to work effectively in a research library. Anyone deficient in those areas may be asked to take additional courses.

Coursework in the doctoral program introduces the student to the teaching of writing, to current issues and research paradigms in rhetoric and composition, and to issues in literary studies. Students are also required to initiate and complete research in a specialized area of investigation. The department supports dissertations in rhetorical theory, the composing process, technology and composition, assessment, program administration and historical rhetoric, and offers special expertise in the rhetoric of professional discourse and in connections between rhetorical and critical theory. While taking courses, most students also do supervised teaching in the Freshman Composition program; some have an opportunity as well to teach advanced writing or introductory literature courses. As a result, the English Department offers a site for pedagogical development and for practical research in the teaching of writing. The student should finish the program able to teach, conduct research, and interact professionally on a variety of topics related to rhetoric and composition.
APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES FOR THE Ph.D. PROGRAM

The Graduate Committee considers applications to the Ph.D. program for Fall admission only. Ph.D. application deadline: **February 1st**

Applicants applying for admission to the doctoral program in English must send credentials to the Office of Graduate Admissions; University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292, and they must meet the following English Department requirements:

1. Application for Graduate Admission (including fee).

2. Official Transcripts of all undergraduate and post-graduate work. Applicants must already have an M.A. degree, preferably in literary study.

3. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores - applicants generally score at least in the 50th percentile or above in the general verbal section of the GRE. Such a minimal score is no guarantee of admission and will be considered in relation to other admission criteria as the English Department considers a candidate's application.

4. GRE Subject Test - Literature in English (recommended, but not required).

5. Three letters of recommendation - from persons qualified to judge the applicants academic and professional experience and potential.

6. Writing sample - applicants must supply a recent sample (15-20 pages) of their scholarly or critical writing that can stand as evidence of their investigative and expository skills.

7. Statement of Professional Goals - applicants must supply a written statement of no more than a thousand words detailing their professional goals in pursuing a doctoral program in English with a concentration in rhetoric and composition.

8. GTA application - this should include references who can speak to the applicant's teaching ability. **The GTA application should be sent directly to the English Department (by February 1st):**

   Director of Graduate Studies
   Department of English
   Humanities Bldg. 315
   University of Louisville
   Louisville, KY 40292

When the credentials are complete, the Graduate Committee will read them, decide whether the applicant is accepted or denied admission; and if admitted, determine the candidate's status.
ACCEPTANCE STATUS

Students admitted to either of the English Department graduate programs will be placed in one of the following categories:

1. **Degree status.** This is for students in good standing who are pursuing a specific degree.

2. **Degree status with condition(s).** This category is usually reserved for students who, at the time of admission, have not yet completed their M.A. degree. Students in conditional degree status may count only six (6) of the hours they earn while in that status toward any degree, although they may take as many as fifteen (15) hours during that one semester. Students in a conditional degree status because of incomplete credentials must complete their credentials during that one semester.

Applicants for admission should also realize that students are not formally admitted as a "Ph.D. student" until they have completed one semester of full-time graduate work (9 hours for Graduate Teaching Assistants and at least 12 hours for other students) and successfully completed the Diagnostic Interview, preferably also during their first semester of full time graduate work.

DEPARTMENTAL CLASSIFICATIONS FOR Ph.D. STUDENTS

A Master's degree, preferably in Literature, is prerequisite for admission to the Ph.D. program. Some students en route to the Ph.D. first earn their M.A. in this department. On completing the M.A. program, they then must apply for admission to the Ph.D. program.

The English Department has three classifications for Ph.D. students according to how far along they are in the program. These are:

a. **Ph.D. Conditional Student** - this is the status of all new students in the program until after the diagnostic interview, whether or not any specific conditions were attached to admission;

b. **Ph.D. Student** - until coursework is completed and comprehensive examinations have been passed; and

c. **Ph.D. Candidate** - until the dissertation is completed and accepted. Doctoral students may register for candidacy after completing coursework and successfully passing comprehensive examinations.
Ph.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - (51 graduate hours distributed as follows):

A. REQUIRED COURSES: 12 Hours
   • English 602, Teaching College Writing
   • English 620, Introduction to Research in Composing or another course in Research Methods
   • English 691, Contemporary Theories of Interpretation
   • English 689, Directed Reading for Comprehensive Preliminary Examinations

B. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: 15 Hours from the following categories:
   • Pedagogy and Program Administration - 3 hours
   • Rhetoric - 3 hours
   • Literature - 9 hours

C. ELECTIVES: 12 Hours from offerings in Pedagogy and Program Administration, Rhetoric, Linguistics, or Research Methods; one elective may be taken outside these offerings, including a course outside the department.

D. DISSERTATION (English 690): The program requires at least 12 hours of dissertation research.

E. Ph.D. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: Ph.D. students must satisfy the general foreign language proficiency requirements as they are described for the Ph.D. in English. Ph.D. students are required to take two languages. Options for fulfilling that requirement are described on page 13 of these Guidelines. Those who intend to specialize in some area of classical rhetoric are strongly advised to choose Latin or Greek as one of their foreign languages.

DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW

Students entering the Ph.D. program in Rhetoric and Composition are routinely admitted to the program in "conditional" status. Upon successful completion of the Diagnostic Interview, students are admitted to the program in "Ph.D. student" status.

The Director of Graduate Studies and members of the Graduate Committee conduct the Diagnostic Interview. The committee mainly wants to get a clear description of the student's graduate and professional goals and then, where necessary, suggest additional coursework and other preparation. Since the English Ph.D. is in Rhetoric and Composition, the questions will tend to center on research and the teaching of writing.

Upon completion of the interview, the committee members will file reports that describe in detail the direction the student should take in future semesters, including recommendations of coursework, foreign languages, examination areas, and independent research and reading.
COMPREHENSIVE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

When students have completed all coursework and dissertation hours, satisfied foreign language requirements, and received the approval of the English Graduate Committee, they may sit for the Comprehensive Preliminary Examinations, which are given every fall and spring semester. The Comprehensives are a series of three written specialist's examinations in:

I. Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric & Composition
   All students taking comprehensives in any given semester will take the same Rhetoric and Composition examination, which will be composed and evaluated by a three-person committee appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

II. Specified Research Area (SRA)
   The doctoral student, in consultation with the Director of Graduate studies, puts together a three-person committee, with one member designated as the director, to guide the student's investigation in an area of Rhetoric and Composition, which will lead to a specific research problem and a dissertation topic. This same committee will compose and evaluate a comprehensive exam for the student and, if possible, serve as the dissertation committee.

III. Specified Literature Area (SLA)
   The doctoral student, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, puts together a three-person committee, with one member designated as the director, to guide the student's investigation in an area of literary study that will best serve that student's research and/or teaching interests. This committee will compose and evaluate a comprehensive exam for the student.

Examinations are administered in three six-hour sessions on alternate days in a one-week period, during the fall and spring terms. Students should inform the Director of Graduate Studies of their intention to take these exams and turn in proposals and reading lists by the beginning of the semester in which they will sit the exams. These examinations are composed and read by committees made up of three English faculty members appointed by the Graduate Committee.

Students who fail one examination in a given sitting may retake that section in a following regularly scheduled sitting of the examinations. Exam dates can be found on the Graduate Program Calendar, available from the Graduate Program Assistant. Students who fail more than one examination in a given sitting must re-sit the entire set of three examinations. One may attempt these examinations twice. Those who twice unsuccessfully sit the comprehensive preliminary examinations or who twice fail a single examination must withdraw from graduate school and may apply for re-admission to the program no sooner than six months after the date of withdrawal. There is no guarantee of re-admission. A student who fails a set of comprehensives three times or a single comprehensive three times must leave the program permanently.

Successful completion of the Comprehensive Preliminary Examinations admits a student to formal candidacy for the doctorate.
Students who fail to make progress after successfully passing comprehensives may be required to re-sit the comprehensive examination:

A. Graduate School policy is that the candidate must complete all requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy within four calendar years after passing the comprehensive examination. In exceptional cases, the Dean of the Graduate School is empowered to grant limited extensions to this four-year period. Students who wish the Graduate committee to petition the Dean for such an extension must provide evidence that they are both keeping up with the field of Rhetoric and Composition and making substantial progress on the dissertation. After evaluating such evidence, the Graduate Committee can require the candidate to

1. re-sit the SRA examination to encourage progress on the dissertation, or

2. re-sit all three examinations.

If the Graduate Committee requires the candidate to re-sit an exam, the candidate must pass the exam before the Graduate Committee will petition the Dean for an extension.

B. The Graduate Committee may require a candidate to take a new SRA examination when the student significantly changes the topic of the dissertation after successfully taking comprehensives. If, upon reviewing the original SRA proposal, the original examination, the new proposal, and whatever other documents the candidate wishes to submit, the Graduate committee decides that the new dissertation area is a significant departure from the original SRA, it may require a doctoral student to take an SRA in the new area.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SLA AND SRA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

The doctoral student, in consultation with his or her committees, will prepare brief proposals for both the SRA and the SLA; these proposals should be submitted to the Graduate Committee no later than the first week of the semester in which the student intends to take comprehensives. Each proposal should contain the following:

1. A succinct description of the proposed comprehensive area, including a list of the major topics or issues the candidate will be responsible for; these issues should be reflected in the reading list attached to the proposal. If the proposed SRA is not in an area of rhetoric and composition, some statement explaining the relevance of this comprehensive to the field should be included. The description of the SRA should include an explanation of how this comprehensive will lead to a dissertation topic in rhetoric and composition, while the description of the SLA should include an explanation of how the comprehensive will serve the student's research and/or teaching interests.

2. A statement of the specific goals or objectives the candidate hopes to accomplish or the questions he or she wishes to answer while reading for the comprehensives. These reading goals should help structure the ensuing examination.
3. A preliminary reading list. While this list may easily be altered in the course of study as the candidate's knowledge evolves, the proposal should indicate the major categories of knowledge and texts the candidate will be responsible for in the examination.

4. A list of the members of the committee.

The proposal should be no more than two pages (not including the reading list).

**RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

The Graduate Catalogue requires at least one year to be spent in full-time residency at the University of Louisville before the doctorate is awarded. This requirement can be met by spending two years as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the doctoral program or one year as a University Fellow. All exceptions and special cases will go before the English Department Graduate Committee, which will forward its recommendation to the Graduate School.

**PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Sometime during their tenure in this program, students must participate in a yearlong supervised teaching-intern program. Fellowship holders must arrange their intern program with the Director of Composition before they sit the Comprehensive Examinations. Intern experience may include teaching in regular freshman and advanced writing courses and tutoring in the University Writing Center. Students who wish to complete their intern experience at another institution must arrange for supervision through the Director of Graduate Studies. Responsibility for approval of such arrangements resides with the English Graduate committee at the University of Louisville. Graduate Teaching Assistants automatically fulfill the professional requirement once they have completed one successful year as a GTA.

**DISSERTATION**

The final and most important part of doctoral training here is the dissertation, which is a scholarly-critical contribution to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Students should expect to devote at least a full year of graduate study to the dissertation alone. See page 15 for the Procedures for Theses and Dissertations.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

All graduate students in English are required to demonstrate reading proficiency in a foreign language, or, in the case of students in the Ph.D. program, two foreign languages. It is strongly recommended that students fulfill their foreign language requirement(s) as soon as possible. The M.A. thesis may not be defended before the foreign language requirement is satisfied; doctoral students may not take comprehensives until both foreign language requirements are satisfied.

The approved languages are French, German, Spanish, Italian, Latin, Greek, and Russian. The Graduate Committee may approve some other language upon demonstration of its relevance to a student's plan of study here. Proficiency in foreign languages may be demonstrated in the following ways:

1. DEPARTMENTAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
   Passing the departmental foreign language proficiency examination, which is given once each semester and once each summer. At the beginning of each semester, students receive a calendar that includes the time and place of the semester's foreign language examination. Students wishing to take this exam register for it in the English Office early in the semester (see the calendar for registration deadline). When they register for the examination, students must submit the grader's fee of $20.00 IN CASH to the Graduate Program Assistant in Bingham 315. The Grader's Fee is not refundable. The exam is usually given on a Saturday morning from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The examination requires that, during a period of three hours, the student complete a translation, with the use of a dictionary of a 500+ word passage (or a shorter passage in Latin and Greek) of critical prose. The passage will be of medium difficulty, of the sort one might reasonably expect to find in scholarly or critical articles and books on a literary subject in a foreign language. The translation need not be letter-perfect; but it is expected that the student will accurately grasp the sense of the passage. The aim of the examination is to demonstrate the student's capacity to read critical prose in another language well enough to further coursework and research. The proficiency examination may be repeated.

2. SATISFACTION OF REQUIREMENT AT ANOTHER INSTITUTION
   Submitting proofs of proficiency that have been used to satisfy graduate foreign language requirements at another institution. The Graduate Committee will decide cases in which a question arises concerning submitted credentials.

3. SUPERIOR WORK IN A 300-LEVEL LANGUAGE COURSE
   Pass, with a grade of "A", a 300-level University of Louisville undergraduate course in an approved language. Courses taught in English translation will not qualify. The English Graduate Committee must approve these courses.

OPTIONS FOR FULFILLING THE TWO FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH

OPTION ONE: Satisfy both language requirements by transcript or translation of a printed passage.
OPTION TWO: The student must pass the requirement for the first language by transcript of a language used for the M.A. degree the student arrives with, or by doing a translation of a printed passage here. Then the student may demonstrate the ability to use that language at an advanced level in his/her research. The Director of Graduate Studies in English will negotiate with the Department of Classical and Modern Languages for participation by a member of that department who can certify this ability. That formal certification will count for what is now the second language requirement. Or, the student can satisfy that second language requirement by taking a course at the 500 or 600 level taught in that language and attaining at least a "B". The Department does not guarantee that a member of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages will always be available to certify this advanced level of ability; then the 500 or 600 level course taught in that language will be the student's only way to demonstrate that level of proficiency.

OPTION THREE: This is a combination of language requirement and research or retrieval skills. The student would satisfy the first language requirement by transcript or by translating a printed passage. Then for (or in place of) the second language requirement, the student may do one of the following, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in English and the student's Specified Research Area Committee:

1. Take an advanced (500+ level) statistics course.

2. Take a computer language course which will have a clear function in the student's plan of research. This would be done in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in English, a faculty mentor, and the student's Specified Research Area Committee.

3. In consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and a faculty mentor, propose and carryout a technology project which have either pedagogical or research applications.

PROCEDURES FOR THESES AND DISSERTATIONS
Ph.D. candidates and M.A. students must follow specific steps in working on their theses or dissertations:

**First**, the student must gain the sponsorship of a member of the graduate faculty of the department who agrees to act as advisor of the specific project the student is proposing. It will be up to the thesis or dissertation director and the student to see to it that all required procedures are followed.

**Second**, the student composes a prospectus; the advisor should supervise the preparation of the prospectus and give final approval. Specific guidelines for the prospectus are given in the next section. The prospectus is then submitted to the Graduate Committee, **along with a proposed slate of readers.** Readers for an M.A. thesis include the advisor, one additional member of the English Graduate Faculty, and (if possible) a member of the graduate faculty from outside the Department. Readers for a doctoral dissertation include the advisor, three additional members of the English Graduate Faculty, and a member of the Graduate Faculty from outside the Department. The Graduate Committee must approve all prospectuses and committees, and the prospectus must be approved at least three months prior to the final oral examination. As soon as your committee has been approved, arrange with the Director of Graduate Studies to submit a **Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee form** to the Graduate School.

**Third**, the student writes the thesis or dissertation, allowing readers to comment on its progress **CHAPTER BY CHAPTER**, typewritten. Specific directions for the format of dissertations and theses are available from the Graduate School.

**Fourth**, after the advisor and each reader have approved the thesis or dissertation in its entirety, the advisor schedules the final oral examination, a defense of the work. Each reader must receive a final typed copy of the paper at least two weeks before the scheduled oral defense. Also, the student must arrange with the Director of Graduate Studies to submit a **Thesis/Dissertation Final Oral Examination Schedule form** to the Graduate School listing the paper's title, student's social security number and the time and place of the oral defense **at least two weeks prior to the defense**. All members of the graduate faculty of the University will be invited to attend the defense, but only the members of the committee have a voice in approving the project. To be passed on this examination, the dissertation may not receive more than one abstention or dissenting vote.

**Finally**, two weeks before the end of the semester in which the student expects to be awarded the degree, he/she must produce the following: one unbound signed copy for the Graduate School, one bound copy for the advisor, and one bound (hard cover) copy for the English Department. Ph.D. dissertations must also include a five hundred word abstract; M.A. theses must include a 150 word abstract.

**Ph.D.: PROSPECTUS FOR A DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**
The prospectus communicates to the members of a prospectus approval committee the student's desire to write a dissertation on a given topic and demonstrates that this topic can result in a successful piece of research and scholarship. The prospectus can also be valuable in job and grant applications. A prospectus for the Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition consists of approximately 15 pages, plus a bibliography. It usually describes a project that can be completed in a year and a half to two years. Like any proposal, a prospectus is a persuasive document. In general, its rhetorical goals are to persuade the reader:

1. that the proposed project addresses a problem or question worth pursuing (i.e., that the question or problem is important--one relevant to the discipline with significant implication for research, theory, or pedagogy).

2. that the proposed project offers a practical and potentially successful response to that problem or question that can be completed in a timely manner (i.e., that the proposal writer has the qualifications to pursue the project, that the proposed project is well thought out and will answer the question or solve the problem in a feasible manner, and that the project can be completed in the requisite amount of time.)

The information you will include in order to achieve these goals depends, to some extent, on the nature of the study being proposed. Below is a list of segments commonly found in a prospectus. These can be combined and divided as necessary.

- **INTRODUCTION.** What is the context, purpose, and organization of your proposal? What background information does the reader need to understand the proposal? This section orientes the reader to the ensuing document.

- **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OR DEFINITION OF THE TOPIC.** What specific problem(s) or topic(s) will your research treat? What rationale can you offer for this project? Why is this problem or topic significant? Who is interested in it? What is the scope of your treatment? What areas or questions will you cover and what will you exclude? This section helps the reader see what your problem is and why it's important.

- **RESEARCH QUESTION(S)–CLEARLY STATED WITH OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS AS NEEDED.** What are the precise goals or objectives of your study? What specific questions do you plan to answer? This section gives the reader a clear sense of what your project will achieve. (It may repeat, in a concise form, material included in previous sections.)

- **REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE (USUALLY WITH A LENGTHY BIBLIOGRAPHY APPENDED).** What previous research is relevant to your project? How does your project relate to what has been done by others? What kinds of gaps or dissonances have you discovered in previous research? What areas of previous research support your work? This section makes a space for your project in the research base of your field. A proposal must convince the reader 1) that the project is connected closely enough to established knowledge to be relevant to the discipline's interests; and 2) that the
The prospectus may also, of course, include additional information that will assist the committee in estimating the value and practicality of the topic. Remember that a proposal is a persuasive document, seeking approval for a project; clarity, conciseness, and completeness are key criteria.

The graduate faculty emphasizes strongly that the prospectus is not simply a formality but an essential first step in producing a successful dissertation. Proposals should not be thought through in isolation, but with the help of committee members and colleagues who can help anticipate problems and suggest solutions.

The prospectus should be written as soon as the student completes the preliminary reading and research necessary to define the topic and plan of research. The director should help the student develop the prospectus. When both the director and student are satisfied, the director should
forward the prospectus to the Graduate Director, who will submit it to a prospectus approval committee.

**M.A. - PROSPECTUS FOR A SCHOLARLY-CRITICAL THESIS**

The prospectus for a scholarly-critical Master's thesis should be no longer than ten pages, including bibliography. It usually describes a project that can be completed in one semester, of a length between 60 and 75 pages, for which the candidate may claim six hours. The M.A. prospectus introduces and describes the topic of investigation and the primary and secondary sources to be used, outlines the major critical assumptions behind the study and gives a tentative line of argument, and finally discusses the potential worth of the project, when completed. The bibliography should list the most relevant primary and secondary material.

**M.A. - PROSPECTUS FOR A CREATIVE THESIS**

The prospectus should consist of two major parts: (1) a brief essay describing and providing a context for the thesis project and (2) a sample of the student's writing--five or six poems, or a short story or play, or an equivalent selection from a longer work of poetry, fiction, or drama. Both parts of the prospectus should be submitted (in double-spaced, typed format) to the student's advisor, who will then pass the prospectus to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee for comments and approval.

1. **The essay:** The purpose of the essay is to show that the student has a clear working conception of the thesis. Therefore, the essay must provide a tentative plan for the thesis, including some sense of its genre, its structure, and perhaps its subject matter or content. The student may wish to emphasize generic, formal, technical, or thematic considerations, but in any case the essay must place the work in the context of contemporary writing. The essay should be from 800 to 1500 words in length.

2. **The sample:** The purpose of the sample is to demonstrate the student's competence to undertake the project. Therefore, the sample should contain some of the student's best writing, as determined by the student and the advisor. The sample need not be a part of the proposed thesis, but should demonstrate the student's ability to work in the proposed genre. While the sample may be part of the thesis, at least half of the thesis itself should consist of new work.

**FINANCIAL AID**
UNIVERSITY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowships are awarded competitively through all the graduate programs of the University, upon a recommendation from the home department. Fellowships carry full tuition remission, with no teaching duties except those required for teaching while completing an internship. They are annually renewable for two years upon a recommendation from the home department. The 2002-2003 University Graduate Fellowship carries a first-year stipend of $18,000.

Applicants who wish to be considered for a Fellowship must have all materials in by February 1st, and preferably earlier.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

GTAships are awarded competitively to M.A. and Ph.D. candidates. Until they have completed eighteen (18) hours of graduate work in English, M.A. GTAs are assigned to the University Writing Center. Most other GTAs teach two sections of first-year composition each semester. Graduate Teaching Assistants are eligible to apply for several administrative positions in the Department and Writing Center. GTA administrators teach one course per semester and do ten hours of administrative work each week. GTA stipends for 2002-2003 are $12,500.

Graduate Teaching Assistants receive tuition remission for 24 credit hours a year. To be considered full-time students, English GTAs must take nine (9) hours of coursework in both the Fall and Spring semester and six (6) in the Summer. This is regarded as a full load and in the English Department constitutes full-time student status.

Applications for Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Applications for GTAships must be made to the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible after December 1, and no later than February 1. Announcements of GTA awards or of an applicant's status in the competition will be made by April 1. An agreement among graduate schools nationwide requires that students accept or reject such offers by April 15.

Responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants

Responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants are outlined in the letter of agreement from the Department Chairperson that is sent with the offer of the GTAship. GTAs are required to carry a full load of academic work to remain eligible for support. For GTAs in English, "full load" means a total of at least 24 hours of coursework taken over Fall, Spring, and Summer. Graduate Teaching Assistantships are awarded to support the student's graduate work and cannot continue beyond the end of the semester in which the student has satisfied the requirements for the degree.

New GTAs assigned to the Writing Center must take English 604: Writing Center Theory and Practice during the Fall semester.

New GTAs, who are not be assigned to the Writing Center, must take English 602: Teaching Reading and Composition, currently offered during the mid-July to mid-August summer term
before the fall semester when they begin to teach here. Tuition remission is provided for this course and also a Training Stipend of $500 in addition to the regular stipend for teaching assistants. Student duties as GTAs also require that they attend Department and University orientation sessions and participate in staff development sessions. The Director of Composition will send more information about these activities early in the summer.

Exceptions to the 602 requirement may be granted by the English Graduate Committee upon the recommendation of the Director of Composition for either of the following reasons:

1. A comparable graduate course taken at another university.
2. Supervised teaching experience in an English Graduate Program that provided experience similar to English 602.

The student should present the request for such exceptions in writing to the Director of Composition, who will forward a recommendation to the Graduate Committee for approval or denial.

**Renewal of Graduate Teaching Assistantships**

Initially, GTAships are awarded by the Graduate Committee on the basis of academic record, GRE scores, writing samples, and letters of recommendation from people who know the applicant's academic work well. GTAships for students pursuing the M.A. may be renewed once; GTAships for students pursuing a doctorate may be renewed three times. It is possible for students to hold GTAships for two years while pursuing a Master's degree, then hold GTAships for four more years as doctoral students. Years spent as a University Fellow or as a GTA for other academic units count against the years of eligibility for an English Department GTAship.

GTA renewals are not automatic; renewals depend on an evaluation of the candidates' academic record and on their performance of their GTA duties. The Graduate Committee, in consultation with the Director of Composition, makes this evaluation. Current GTAs will receive a renewal letter during the Spring semester. Students who wish to be considered for a GTA renewal must return the renewal letter by the given deadline to the Director of Graduate Studies.

**PART-TIME TEACHING**

Sections in the Composition Program are sometimes available to graduate students at part-time rates. Graduate students who do not hold GTAships or fellowships may teach up to three sections of composition at part-time rates.

These sections are awarded according to amount of previous teaching experience, progress toward graduate degrees, and recommendations and evaluations of teaching and specific program needs. Graduate students may not teach more than three sections a semester, regardless of the program or level at which they are teaching or taking classes.

Occasionally one or two advanced and experienced graduate students may be asked to teach other courses in the English Department and/or Humanities Division. These courses are awarded to
students who are close to completing their Ph.D. degree requirements, usually to those who are at work on dissertations.

**SUMMER TEACHING**

The summer teaching schedule, like all scheduling decisions, is the responsibility of the Chair or those persons to whom the Chair delegates responsibility. During the summer terms, the English Department offers a limited number of courses. Often requests for teaching exceed the number of courses available.

In distributing assignments, the Department will, as much as possible, take into account seniority and contributions to our programs and will give priority to doctoral students.

**PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM**

The Graduate Program in English at the University of Louisville offers students who demonstrate a special interest in writing program administration several opportunities to serve as administrative interns in the Composition Program.

These internships are meant to provide graduate students who are interested in careers as writing program administrators in colleges and universities professional experience that will help them to secure permanent jobs after graduation. All things being equal, priority in selecting individuals for these positions will be given to doctoral GTAs who have indicated by past academic, administrative, or teaching experience a career interest in the teaching of writing and the administration of composition programs.
ADDITIONAL M.A. and Ph.D. POLICIES
ADVISING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Committee, supervises all graduate registration. The Director of Graduate Studies advises all English graduate students. Each semester, students must schedule an advising appointment with the Director of Graduate Studies before they can be cleared to register for classes. Students who register for English graduate courses on their own must take full responsibility for any mistake about degree requirements.

CANDIDACY REGISTRATION

Master's students who have completed all required coursework and thesis hours (thesis option only) must register for Master's Candidacy (MAST 600) every semester (Fall, Spring & Summer) until the thesis or culminating project is completed.

Doctoral students who have passed comprehensive exams must register for Doctoral Candidacy (Doct 600) every semester (Fall, Spring & Summer) until the dissertation is completed.

DEGREE APPLICATION

The Application for Degree form should be approved and signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and then submitted to the Graduate School. Degree Applications and deadlines are available in the English Department Office or in the Graduate School. There are minor graduation fees involved for all degrees. These fees vary slightly from year to year.

INCOMPLETES

Instructors are warranted to grant an "Incomplete" only when students are unable to complete the final portion of a course because of severe illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The grade of Incomplete will not be counted as normal progress toward a degree. The work must be completed by the end of the student's next term of enrollment, or the course-grade will be changed from an "I" to an "F".

INDEPENDENT STUDY (ENGLISH 613 and 614) APPROVAL

Forms for requesting an independent study are available from the graduate program assistant in the English Office, room 315; they must be filled out and signed by both the student and professor before they are submitted to the Graduate Committee for approval. The English Graduate Committee requires that proposals for Independent Study adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Independent study proposals must not duplicate regular graduate courses; the committee views independent study courses as opportunities for faculty and students to work together on research projects that could not be worked on as parts of existing courses.
2. The Independent Study Application must explain how the proposal will fit into the
   graduate student's overall course of study.

3. All applicants must be told that independent studies must be approved by the Graduate
   Committee before the student may register. The Graduate Committee will check to
   insure that the proposal does not duplicate existing courses or conflict with the objectives
   of the student's program.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS TOWARD THE DEGREE

Satisfactory progress toward the degree requires successful performance of a number of
activities, including such matters as the following: regular enrollment in graduate courses,
consistent satisfaction of course requirements within the time limits of the semester in which the
course is taken, and maintenance of an appropriate grade point standing (minimum 3.0). Failure
to pursue the coursework for the degree on an orderly schedule consistent with the student's other
duties, a history of incompletes in courses, or the acquisition of two or more grades of "C" or
below (offsetting "A"s to the contrary notwithstanding) will be cause for a review of the student's
records by the Graduate Committee with the aim of determining whether or not the student
should continue, be placed on Probationary Status, be withdrawn from the program, or be
encouraged to transfer to some other academic program. After moving to candidacy status, Ph.D.
students should take no longer than six months to get approval for a dissertation prospectus and
the dissertation should normally be finished within the next twelve months. Usually M.A. theses
are done while students are also completing other courses.

The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the thesis or dissertation director, decides
whether or not a student is making satisfactory progress. The Graduate School Catalogue states
that the candidate must complete all other requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
within four calendar years after passing the Comprehensive examinations. In exceptional cases,
the Dean of the Graduate School is empowered to grant limited extensions of this four-year
period.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR COURSEWORK

Coursework taken more than six years ago at this or another institution cannot be counted toward
the M.A. or Ph.D. degrees. In special circumstances, the student may petition the English
Department Graduate Committee for an exception to this general policy. Submit petitions of this
sort to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will forward them with his/her recommendation to
the English Graduate Committee.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Students may be permitted to transfer up to six hours of comparable coursework from other
graduate institutions toward a graduate degree. This means that at least twenty-four hours at the
Masters level and forty-five hours (33 hours of coursework plus 12 dissertation hours) at the
Doctoral level must be completed at the University of Louisville. Students who wish to transfer
course credit must first be admitted, then petition the English Department by describing in detail
the courses for which they wish to receive transfer credit (including a general course description, a transcript, and a syllabus or reading list describing the course or courses to be transferred). Final decisions on awarding transfer credit will be made by the English Department Graduate Committee.

**UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT APPROVAL IN 600-LEVEL COURSES**

1. Normally, undergraduates are not admitted into 600-level courses.

2. Exceptions are made only for students who have completed upper-level undergraduate courses in the area covered by the 600-level course that the student is petitioning to take.

3. Exceptions will be approved only when the instructor of the 600-level course supports, with a letter, the student's petition. This letter should address the issue of the student's ability to do the kind of research normally expected in a 600-level course.

4. Students should be told that both the 600-level course instructor's and the Director of Graduate Studies' signatures (as certification of Graduate Committee approval) are required before the Graduate School will allow the student to register.
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