



Master of Arts in English

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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I. ADMISSIONS

Individuals with at least a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an approved undergraduate institution may apply for admission to the English MA program. Normally the MA is a terminal degree. Should they wish to continue graduate studies in our department, MA students may apply for admission to the PhD Program. (See section VII below.)

MA students are not eligible for funding through the English department. The Department will only consider applicants for admission to the Master of Arts who, in addition to meeting the admissions committee's academic criteria, bring with them a guaranteed source of external funding upon application, such as an employee tuition benefit from the University of Pittsburgh. Family financial support is not considered to fulfill this requirement. Students considering the MA program should contact the Director of Graduate Studies before applying to discuss their application.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each student must complete 30 credits of coursework for the MA in English.

REQUIRED COURSES

MA students must successfully complete two required courses with a grade of B or better to count towards degree requirements:

1. ENGLIT 2993 (Introduction to Graduate Studies), ordinarily taken during a student's first semester in the program (1 credit)
2. One core programmatic course in Composition, Film, or Literature (3 credits)

III. MASTER'S RESEARCH PAPER

MA students must successfully complete a Master's Research Paper in the context of one of their elective English graduate seminars. The following constitute the procedures and minimal criteria for the Master's Research Paper:

LENGTH

The Master's Research Paper should be of professional article length, defined by the Modern Language Association as 6,000-8,000 words (generally 25-30 pages), not including documentation of sources.

RESEARCH

Students must engage in primary source research beyond course readings and/or what is ordinarily required for a seminar paper, and the Master's Research Paper must reflect that research. In addition, students must use accepted bibliographic conventions.

INSTRUCTION & EVALUATION

The Master's Research Paper must be prepared in the context of a particular graduate seminar, either during the semester or as a revision to a seminar paper produced after the seminar concludes. The instructor for the seminar will be solely responsible for evaluating the paper.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the specific requirements a seminar instructor may establish for Master's Research Papers undertaken in their seminar, the primary criteria for evaluating the Master's Research Paper include coherent textual analysis, historical contextualization (where appropriate), and the incorporation of primary research into a cogent scholarly argument. The Master's Research Paper must be double-spaced, have numbered pages, be printed on one side of the page only, and be hard-bound or spiral-bound.

GRADING

In order for the Master's Research Paper to count toward earning the MA, a student must receive a grade of B or better on the paper and as a final grade for the course for which the paper was completed.

SUBMISSION

The final version of the Master's Research Paper must be completed and turned in to the Graduate Administrator no later than the last day of the spring term of a student's second year, the fourth term in residence, or the term in which graduation is planned. A signature page signed by the major advisor must accompany the paper. The signature page can be obtained from the Graduate Administrator. All completed Master's Research Papers will be placed in the Crow Room.

IV. LANGUAGE STUDY

It is important for scholars in the humanities not to be monolingual, as knowledge of languages can be important to MA students in a number of ways. MA students planning to pursue a PhD are especially encouraged to pursue language study as part of their MA, since many PhD programs require additional language skills. The English department encourages students to advance their knowledge of at least one language other than English as part of their graduate studies, especially any language relevant to the student's graduate work or to the anticipated conditions of future scholarship and teaching. Students may wish to develop a reading knowledge of one language, undertake the advanced study of a language, or begin learning a new language. Additional language study is not required to earn the MA in English.

V. TRANSFER OF CREDITS

A maximum of six graduate credits earned at another institution may be transferred, with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, toward the fulfillment of the MA credit requirements. Any transfer of credit, however, depends on a course-by-course evaluation by the Director of Graduate Studies regarding the relevance and comparability of each course to our MA program and its curriculum. Students are not guaranteed a transfer of graduate credits. Transfer of credit will not be approved for courses in which a grade lower than B or its equivalent was received.

VI. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

Full-time students must complete all requirements for the MA degree within four calendar years of the student's first registration for graduate study. Students who are working on their degree on a part-time basis must complete all requirements for the MA within six calendar years of the student's first registration for graduate study.

VII. ADMISSION OF UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH MAS TO THE PHD PROGRAM IN CRITICAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

The MA in English is a separate degree from the PhD in Critical and Cultural Studies, and MA students should also be aware that admission to the PhD program is extremely competitive and that an MA degree from our department does not in any way lead to guaranteed acceptance into the PhD program. If admitted, students may transfer, with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, up to 24 credits from courses taken during their study for the MA degree in our department toward fulfillment of the PhD credit requirements. Transfer of credit will not be approved for courses in which a grade lower than B or its equivalent was received. Students should be aware that any credit applied toward the PhD degree may affect the number of years of funding they can expect from the department and may also affect the pace at which they need to pass certain milestones towards the degree.