

# GRADUATE HANDBOOK



WESTERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
2018-2019



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## From the Department Chair

Dear Current and Prospective Graduate Students:

The faculty in English at Western Michigan University consider it a vital distinction that ours is one of the very few departments in the nation that offers the opportunity to study, on equal terms, literature and language, creative writing, and the theory and practice of teaching English. We are immensely proud of our programs, and we are deeply impressed with the abilities our students bring to the mix. The vast majority of our graduate students are supported by teaching or research assistantships. Their work as teachers reach to the very core of our mission to provide a quality undergraduate education, while their accomplishments as professional teachers, researchers, and artists challenge and inspire us all. In a typical year our graduate students compile a record of publications, productions, presentations, and prizes that testifies to their impressive abilities and to the effectiveness of our faculty. We are immensely proud of our students, just as we are proud of our faculty's professional accomplishments and distinctions as well. Together, we believe, they make for a genuinely supportive and productive environment.

If you're reading this because you're interested in one of our programs, please know that we very much would welcome the opportunity to chat with you some more. And if you're already established in our department and have come here for clarification of our policies and procedures, we hope that the information provided in this *Handbook* has anticipated and answered your questions.

We are always ready and eager to talk if you have further questions or concerns. If you wish to discuss any aspect of our programs, feel free to get in touch with me or with Dr. Scott Slawinski, our director of graduate studies. Email and telephone contacts are equally welcome, and of course we will gladly meet with you on-campus as well. Just let us know how we can be of assistance.

Yours,

Nicolas Witschi  
Chair, Department of English  
Western Michigan University  
269.387.2571  
Nicolas.Witschi @wmich.edu

## Departmental Information

Location: 6th floor Sprau Tower  
Hours: 8:00AM - 5:00PM / Monday - Friday  
Telephone: 269.387.2572  
Fax: 269.387.2562  
Website: <http://www.wmich.edu/english>

## Contact Information

Dr. Nicolas Witschi  
Chairperson  
619 Sprau Tower  
269.387.2571  
[nicolas.witschi@wmich.edu](mailto:nicolas.witschi@wmich.edu)

Dr. Scott Slawinski  
Graduate Director  
625 Sprau Tower  
269.387.2584  
[english-graduate@wmich.edu](mailto:english-graduate@wmich.edu)

Dr. Meghann Meeusen  
Graduate Advisor  
625 Sprau Tower  
269.387.2584

Jeannine Hamilton  
Sr. Administrative Assistant  
618 Sprau Tower  
269.387.2573  
[jeannine.hamilton@wmich.edu](mailto:jeannine.hamilton@wmich.edu)

Pamela Mottley  
Office Associate  
611 Sprau Tower  
269.387.2574  
[pamela.mottley@wmich.edu](mailto:pamela.mottley@wmich.edu)

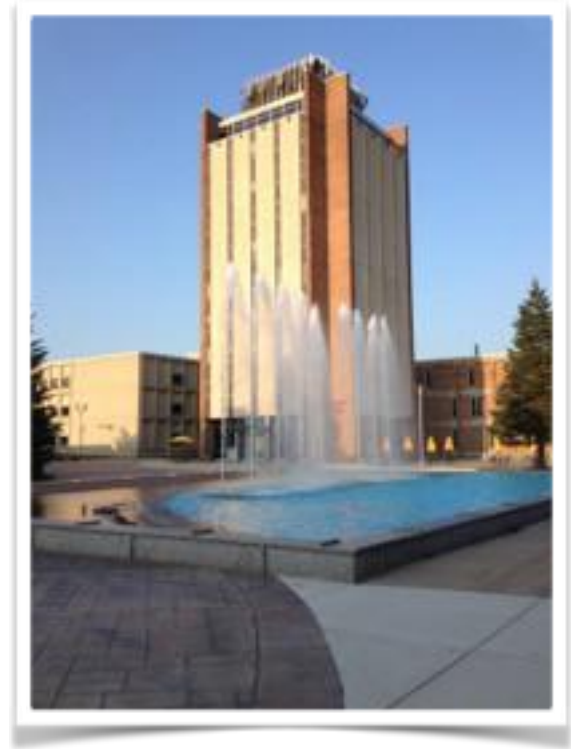
## Directions to Sprau Tower

### From I-94:

- Take exit 74B to merge onto US-131 north toward Grand Rapids.
- Drive 2.8 miles.
- Follow the directions below for US-131.

### From US-131:

- Take exit 36A toward Kalamazoo.
- Turn east onto Stadium Drive.
- Drive 2.0 miles.
- Turn left onto Howard Street at the light.
- Immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, take the first right onto Van De Giessen Road.
- Turn left at the stop sign onto Western Avenue.
- At the next stop sign, make a right onto Roell Drive.
- Proceed to the parking structure.



### Visitor Parking

Metered visitor parking is available inside the parking structure. Visitor parking is 25¢ per 10 minutes. An ATM is located near the entrance to the parking structure at Roell Drive.

### Sprau Tower

Sprau Tower is located northeast of the parking structure next to the large fountain.



# Admission Procedures



## Master's Degree Programs

All applicants to the master's degree programs must fill out the online Western Michigan University application. The application deadline for the M.A. and M.F.A. programs is **January 10**. Applicants will need to have submitted a completed application to the university before January 10. The Graduate Office typically informs applicants of their admission status in late winter or early spring.

Applicants to the Master's Degree Programs must provide:

- ✓ GRE general exam scores
- ✓ Writing sample
- ✓ Statement of purpose
- ✓ Three letters of recommendation
- ✓ Western Michigan University Graduate College Application

In order to apply for admission, applicants must present a 34-hour undergraduate major with a minimum 3.0 GPA. At least 20 hours of the student's undergraduate major must be in literature, including 15 hours of literature courses at the junior/senior level. If a student has taken substantial English coursework, but cannot meet the 20-hour literature course requirement, he/she may still apply for admission but may have to remedy any deficiencies through undergraduate or graduate coursework as determined in consultation with the Graduate Office.

**Please Note:** The M.A. with an emphasis in English education does not provide teacher certification. For information on teacher certification, please visit [www.wmich.edu/education/certification](http://www.wmich.edu/education/certification).

## Doctoral Programs Admissions

All applicants to the doctoral degree programs must fill out the online Western Michigan University application. The application deadline for all graduate programs is **January 10**. Applicants will need to have submitted a completed application to the university before January 10. The Graduate Office typically informs applicants of their admission status in late winter or early spring.

In order to apply for admission, most applicants **must** present an M.A. in English, an M.A.E.T., or an M.F.A. in creative writing with a minimum GPA of 3.0. In rare instances, a student may be admitted directly from the B.A. to the Ph.D. level, if he/she also has a great deal of professional or academic experience. Students with degrees in areas other than English, English education, or creative writing may have to take additional coursework to fill deficiencies in content.

Applicants to the doctoral program must provide:

- ✓ GRE general exam scores
- ✓ GRE literature exam score
- ✓ Writing sample
- ✓ Statement of purpose
- ✓ Three letters of recommendation
- ✓ Western Michigan University Graduate College Application

**Please Note:** The GRE literature test is offered only in April, September, and October.

## Non-Degree Seeking Students

Students who wish to take English department graduate courses for credit may do so under a system called permission to take graduate courses (PTG), now referred to by the Graduate College as non-degree seeking status. Up to nine hours of PTG courses will transfer to a student's graduate program at Western Michigan University. These courses will count toward the student's program and GPA. If a student wishes to transfer PTG credits to another graduate program, he/she should discuss the options with the Graduate Director of that program.

Students may take any 5000-level graduate course using PTG status. Enrollment in 6000- level literature, English education, or creative writing courses requires the permission of the Graduate Office.

To obtain PTG status:

- ✓ Download the PTG form
- ✓ Complete the form and return it to WMU admissions
- ✓ Pay a non-refundable, one-time fee

PTG status takes about five business days to process, after which you may sign up for courses.



## First-Year Orientation

All incoming students must arrive on campus in time to attend mandatory orientation sessions that take place approximately two weeks before Labor Day. Every new student must participate in the Graduate College orientation and the departmental new student convocation. Students will have an opportunity during this time to make changes in course registration, obtain parking permits and Bronco IDs, and familiarize themselves with the campus.

## Funded M.A.-Level Student Orientation

Students who are entering the M.A. or M.F.A. programs with a teaching assistantship teach one section of ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing during the fall and two sections during the spring semesters. Second- and third-year students teach two sections of ENGL 1050 in the fall and one section in the spring.

Students teaching ENGL 1050 must attend a multi-day orientation with the director of first-year writing. Students will learn:

- ✓ Pedagogical theory
- ✓ Syllabi construction
- ✓ Classroom management

The Graduate College orientation is a separate event requiring registration. The Welcome Lunch, and new student departmental convocation will conclude this weeklong orientation.

## Funded Doctoral Student Orientation

Doctoral students teach two sections each academic year.

**Please Note:** Assignment to ENGL 1100: Literary Interpretation or ENGL 2660: Writing Fiction and Poetry depends upon the number of unstaffed sections available.

Ph.D. students in literature teach ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing or ENGL 1100: Literary Interpretation during the fall and spring semesters.

Ph.D. students in English education teach ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing during the fall and spring semesters.

Ph.D. students in creative writing teach ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing, ENGL 1100: Literary Interpretation, or ENGL 2660: Writing Fiction and Poetry during the fall and spring semesters.

Students teaching ENGL 1050 must attend a weeklong orientation with the director of first-year writing. Students will learn:

- ✓ Pedagogical theory
- ✓ Syllabi construction
- ✓ Classroom management

All new and experienced instructors of ENGL 1050 *must* attend the final orientation session prior to the beginning of fall classes. ENGL 1050 instructors are also required to attend at least two professional development sessions during the academic year.

Students teaching ENGL 1100 or ENGL 2660 must attend the departmental orientation workshop for their specific course.

The Graduate College orientation and the departmental new student convocation will conclude this weeklong orientation.

It is strongly recommended that doctoral students teach ENGL 1050: Thought & Writing at some point during their program of study. To be considered for an ENGL 1050 teaching assignment, doctoral students must do the following:

- Attend ENGL 1050 New TA Orientation prior to the start of classes during the fall semester
- Attend two First-Year Writing professional development workshops per academic year
- Enroll in ENGL 6690: Methods of Teaching College Writing during the fall semester.

ENGL 1050 teaching assignments are contingent on funding status and course scheduling availability.



## Responsible Conduct for Research (RCR) Elearning Course

The Graduate College requires new students to complete an online course as part of their training. Responsible research conduct and ethics training is a best practice in higher education and for careers outside of academia. Employers in the academy and the private sector consider such education a value added for employees, and federal agencies require this training of researchers for grant eligibility. The course can take several hours to complete, and students are urged to set aside time before the semester begins to meet this requirement. Failure to complete the RCR results in a hold placed on the student's account and an inability to register for classes.

## Registration, Courses, and Grades

### Michigan Residency



The graduate catalog details the definitions and procedures for declaring Michigan residency. This information can be found under TUITION AND FEES in the graduate catalog.

The graduate catalog defines a resident:

*A student may be considered domiciled in Michigan if the student is in continuous physical presence in this state for one year (12 consecutive months) immediately preceding the first day of classes of the term for which resident status is sought and intends to make Michigan his/her permanent home and has no domicile elsewhere. The year of continuous presence is never the only criterion used for determining in-state residency status and, by itself, will not qualify a student for residency status for tuition paying purposes at Western.*

### Initial Advising and Registration

Once a student is admitted into a graduate program, he/she will receive information about course offerings and will request classes through an online survey. Students are encouraged to contact the Graduate Office with questions prior to completing the survey. All course registration happens through the Graduate Office.

A permanent program is the official departmental record of the student's coursework and is set up and maintained by the graduate director. The permanent program helps students gain a solid understanding of the coursework requirements for their degrees.

If a student wishes to begin taking classes early, he/she can take up to nine hours of transferable course work under non-degree seeking status. Please see the PTG section (p. 8) of this handbook for instructions on obtaining PTG status.

## Registration Requirements

**Note:** Please consult the graduate catalog's policies on academic regulations and full-time/part-time status for information on the way that enrollment influences payment of fees to the university.

### **Full-Time / Part-Time Students without Funding**

Six hours constitutes full-time status during fall and spring semesters. Three hours constitutes part-time status during the fall and spring semesters and full-time status during summer sessions.

### **Funded Master's Students**

In order to maintain funding awards, Master's students must register for *at least* six hours during the fall and spring semesters. Funding covers up to nine hours during the fall and spring semesters. First-year students should consider taking only six hours in their first semester to ensure a balance among scholarship, teaching, and service.

### **Funded Doctoral Students**

Funded doctoral students must register for *at least* six hours during the fall and spring semesters. Funding covers up to nine hours during the fall and spring semesters. First-year doctoral students might consider taking only six hours in their first semester to ensure a balance among scholarship, teaching, and service.

### **Delayed Tuition Remission for Teaching Assistant Appointees**

Teaching assistants who do not use their full eighteen hours of credit during the regular academic year may apply those credits to summer coursework provided they apply for a [waiver](#) with the Graduate College. Any student applying for a waiver must consult with the graduate director about submission of a program of study. A student must have been a teaching assistant for the entire academic year to exercise this option.

### **All But Dissertation (ABD) Doctoral Students**

After completing all of their coursework (including the foreign language requirement) and qualifying examinations for the Ph.D., doctoral students must register for ENGL 7300: Dissertation Hours. Students must take *at least* one hour of ENGL 7300 during the fall and spring semesters until graduation for a minimum total of fifteen hours.

## Course Offerings

Graduate students should take courses at the 5000, 6000 or 7000 level. 5000-level courses include a mixed enrollment of advanced undergraduate and



graduate students. The call numbers for 5000-level courses are found in the course catalog for any given semester. Courses listed at the 6000 and 7000 levels are taken **only** by graduate students.

Before the registration process begins, faculty-authored descriptions of each semester's course offerings are posted under "[Advising](#)" on the English department's website.

## Independent Reading and Research Courses

Students may sign up for a maximum of four hours of ENGL 5980: Directed Reading during their entire time in their program.

Students may not take more than two sections of ENGL 7100: Independent Research during the course of their program of study, and they may not take more than one section in a single semester. A practicum may replace one or both ENGL 7100 sections for students at the master's level; students are still limited to two sections regardless of whether those sections comprise ENGL 7100 or ENGL 7130. Students who wish to enroll in ENGL 7100 or ENGL 7130 should discuss their plans with the graduate director or advisor.

Only in unusual circumstances may students be allowed to exceed the limit of two 7100s per program, and only in consultation with and approval by the graduate director and the department chair. This option should be used infrequently and preferably no more than once during a program of study.

In order to arrange an ENGL 5980, ENGL 7100, or ENGL 7130 course a student should:

- ✓ Consult with Graduate Office explaining the need for an independent or research course.
- ✓ Find a faculty member in the area to supervise the project.
- ✓ Fill out the Permission to Elect Form *with* the supervising professor. The description of the independent research project should articulate how the section of 7100 differs from regular course offerings and how it contributes to the student's program of study. Be sure to include the faculty member's name as part of the description.
- ✓ Sign the form and collect signatures from the faculty member and the department chair.
- ✓ Submit the permission to elect form to the Graduate Office

Students should remember that ENGL 5980 and ENGL 7100 are for use when required courses are not available and other special circumstances that the student discusses with the graduate director or graduate advisor.



## Adding and Dropping Courses

You are responsible for informing the Graduate Office in a timely manner of your decision to add or drop classes.

The Graduate Office needs to know the enrollment of classes before the start of each semester and must update each student's permanent program accordingly.

Therefore, the graduate director or graduate advisor must add and drop your courses for you. After the course descriptions for the following semester have been

posted, but before registration opens, the Graduate Office will send a survey to students asking them to indicate which classes they would like to take. Students should still meet with the graduate director or graduate advisor to discuss course schedules.

According to the graduate catalog, students can add any course through the first five days of a semester or session. If a student drops a course through the fifth day of the semester, the course will not be reflected on his/her transcript. The Registrar publishes the final date for the drop/add period in the Academic Calendar.

Funded students **must** remain enrolled in *at least* six credit hours each fall and spring semester.

Students are allowed to drop courses without academic penalty, subject to the following provision:

*All withdrawals received after the first week's drop/add period and through Monday of the tenth week of the semester or the fifth week of Summer I or Summer II will be reflected on the student's academic record as a non-punitive 'W.'*

If a student suffers a hardship that requires him/her to drop a course after the last official day to add/drop, the student must file a written appeal that he/she can obtain from the Registrar's Office. As noted in the graduate catalog:

*An Appeals Committee to review late withdrawals will be appointed by the Provost. The Appeals Committee may request information from the instructors involved and from other appropriate sources. The Appeals Committee will rule upon the basis of the student's written application and any additional information received. The action of the Appeals Committee is final.*

Anyone who drops a course after having received a tuition waiver with a teaching or research assistantship will be asked to pay for the course. (Tuition waivers only cover *completed* coursework.) A student may file an appeal to have this charge waived, but he/she should consult with the Graduate Office prior to dropping the course and filing the appeal.

## Incompletes

Students receive incompletes when illness, family emergency, or other reasons beyond the control of the students prevent them from completing course requirements for a specific semester. To qualify for an incomplete grade, the student must have a passing grade in the course and have completed the majority of the course work. Incomplete grades given at the 5000 and 6000 level will convert to an E if they are not removed within one calendar year.

The graduate catalog stipulates that “students who receive an incomplete grade in a course must not reregister for the course in order to remove the ‘I.’”

## Grade Appeals

Students wishing to appeal a grade should read the [university policy](#).



# Policies and Procedures

## Student Academic Conduct

Please consult the graduate catalog for specific information regarding academic honesty and conduct in research.

## Policies Governing Funding

### Applicants

In January and February of every year, the graduate committee evaluates graduate program applications and ranks those applications prior to offering admission to prospective students. Once admissions decisions are finalized, the graduate committee uses the rankings, the financial means, and teaching needs to award assistantships. Because the department's budget and teaching needs vary each year, there is no set number of awards available in any given year.

### Enrolled Students without Funding

Students who have been admitted into a graduate program without an award may re-apply for an assistantship in any subsequent year. To be considered, students must:

- ✓ Be in good standing in the program
- ✓ Notify the Graduate Office that they would like to be considered for funding
- ✓ Update their Graduate Office file

The department announces new funding for current students concurrently with all other departmental awards during the Spring semester.

### Funded Students

Once students sign their contracts, they are bound to the terms of that contract for the upcoming academic year. At the end of each year, if the students have satisfactorily carried out their duties, they will receive another contract for the next academic year.

Doctoral students who receive awards directly from outside the department, such as from the Graduate College or the Writing Center, will move onto

departmental funding when these other awards have expired. Please be aware that the total years of funding that a Ph.D. student will receive, regardless of the origination of that funding, is four years.

- \* **M.A. students** are offered awards for two years.
- \* **M.F.A. students** are offered awards for three years.
- \* **Ph.D. students** are offered awards for four years.

### **Fifth-Year Doctoral Funding**

The availability of additional funding beyond the fourth year of doctoral study depends upon a number of factors, including the admissions cycle, the departmental budget, and staffing needs for the coming academic year. These factors make awards of fifth-year funding often unlikely but not impossible. Doctoral students who wish to apply for an additional year of funding must submit to the Graduate Office via email a letter of application by January 10 outlining reasons for the request and progress toward degree. The Graduate Office will forward any requests to the appropriate review committees, where they will be considered alongside applications for funding from new students. Successful applicants will likely be assigned to teach ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing.

## **Academic Dismissal Policy**

### **Students with Funding**

Funding is subject to the terms and limitations in the letter of appointment. Student funding may be removed by the department chair on the recommendation of the director of graduate studies, graduate committee, dissertation advisor, and other relevant faculty. Reasons for removal of funding typically relate to the student's failure to make adequate progress toward completing degree requirements, which might include:

- ✓ Failure to meet language requirements
- ✓ Failure to meet deadlines in establishing committees or submitting required paperwork
- ✓ Accumulation of multiple incomplete grades
- ✓ Failure to maintain minimum GPA requirements

Evaluation of progress is based on a comprehensive review, which includes the department's annual review of students in accordance with the WMU Graduate College policy regarding annual reviews of graduate students. Violations of the WMU Student Code may also provide grounds for dismissal. Any appeal of the revocation of funding must begin with a written appeal to the graduate committee that includes a rationale and any appropriate documentation. The graduate committee will then review the appeal and make its recommendation to the department chair. Procedures for appeal beyond the department are provided in the graduate catalog and the student code. Procedures for, and appeals of, revocation of funding for reasons related to student performance as employees are provided by the TAU Agreement.

### **All Graduate Students**

Students may be dismissed from the English graduate program by the department chair on the recommendation of the director of graduate studies, graduate committee, dissertation advisor, and other relevant faculty members. Reasons for dismissal typically relate to the student's failure to make adequate progress toward completing degree requirements. These requirements might include:

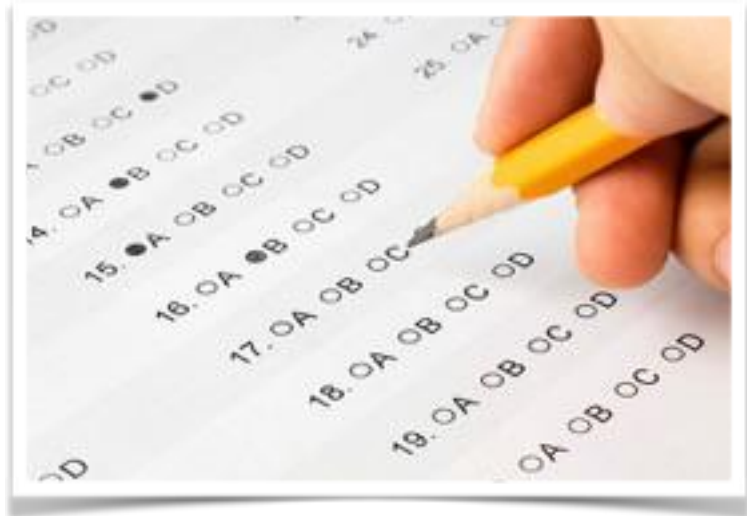
- ✓ Failure to meet language requirements
- ✓ Failure to meet deadlines in establishing committees or submitting required paperwork
- ✓ Accumulation of multiple incomplete grades
- ✓ Failure to maintain minimum GPA requirements

Evaluation of progress is based upon the department's annual review of students in accordance with the WMU Graduate College policy regarding annual reviews of graduate students. Violations of the WMU Student Code may also provide grounds for dismissal. Any appeal of the dismissal must begin with a written appeal to the graduate committee that includes a rationale and any appropriate documentation. The graduate committee will then review the appeal and make its recommendation to the department chair. Procedures for appeal beyond the department are provided in the graduate catalog and WMU Student Code.

## Annual Graduate Student Assessment

The Graduate College requires departments to administer an assessment to encourage graduate students to reflect upon their progress in the program and to enable faculty members to mentor graduate students better. In response to this requirement, the graduate committee has developed an assessment process designed to provide graduate students with the opportunity to self-assess their progress.

In the spring semester, each graduate student receives an email containing a link to a graduate student self-assessment survey. Usually, this link comes from Survey Monkey. **All graduate students** are required to fill out each section (general information, scholarship, teaching, and professionalism) and select two faculty members to submit evaluations on their behalf, one of which must be the faculty mentor or dissertation advisor.



The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that graduate students are making good progress. If the Graduate Committee thinks that a student is having difficulty, the student will be asked to meet with the department chair, the graduate director, and the major advisor. In this meeting, the student will help devise an action plan that will enable him/her to get back on track and

make good progress toward the degree. If a student's assessment report reflects problems in the next year, that student will again be asked to meet with the department chair and the graduate director to consider his/her options. Regardless of positive or negative reviews from the departmental assessment, the student must maintain the Graduate College's requirements for good standing, particularly the GPA requirement.

The graduate committee faculty believes that this assessment benefits graduate students in a number of important ways. Students will reflect on their progress and on their future professional goals, and it enables them to receive timely feedback and mentoring from the faculty. Students who have questions or concerns should contact the Graduate Office.

## Graduation Auditing

In order to graduate, a student must fulfill all of the requirements of his/her graduate program and must have gone through the graduation auditing process. During the semester **prior** to a

### GRADUATION AUDIT REQUEST DEADLINES

Graduation Semester	Last Day to Apply
Spring	December 1
Summer I	February 1
Summer II	April 1
Fall	August 1

student's anticipated graduation date, the student should meet with the graduate director or advisor to finalize his/her permanent program. At this point, the graduate director will sign and forward the permanent program to the Registrar's Office, and the student will need to make a formal request for a graduation audit.

The Registrar's Office will charge a \$45.00 processing fee to your student account when

you request a graduation audit. In the event you must request more than one audit, you will be charged for each request.

[Download the Graduation Audit Form from the Graduate](#)





## Association of Graduate English Students (AGES)

In Fall 2000, the department's graduate students formed the Association of Graduate English Students (AGES) as a registered student organization. Each spring, graduate students elect officers who serve for a one-year term. Officers appoint graduate students to serve on a variety of AGES subcommittees and departmental committees. The mission of AGES is to connect students in the graduate English program through social events, community service, and professional development. Programming includes general and executive board meetings, social outings and networking opportunities, and annual fundraisers benefiting the local community.

# Master's Degree Programs

## M.A. Transfer Credits

Incoming master's degree students are allowed to transfer six semester hours of credit earned from another accredited graduate program into their English department permanent program.

To transfer credits, a student should meet with the graduate director and fill out a transfer of credit form that will be sent to the Registrar's Office for approval. If the hours are approved, they are placed on the student's permanent program; the grades are recorded as CR (Credit) and do not factor into the student's overall GPA.

For courses to qualify as transfer credits, students must have:

- ✓ Paid for courses as graduate credits
- ✓ Received a B (3.0) or higher
- ✓ Earned the credits in the previous six years

## Master of Arts in English Requirements (33 hours)

The M.A. is a thirty-three hour degree. The required courses that all M.A. students must take are:

- ✓ ENGL 6150: Literary Criticism
- ✓ ENGL 6900: Scholarship and Writing in the Profession

ENGL 6900 should be taken during the last semester of a student's program of study. The additional courses required to fulfill the thirty-three hours are chosen in consultation with the Graduate Office.

In addition, students select one of the three tracks to pursue.

The **M.A. in English with an Emphasis in Literature and Language** requires 27 hours of elective credit.

The **M.A. in English with an Emphasis in Medieval Literature and Language** requires:

- ✓ ENGL 5300: Medieval Literature
- ✓ ENGL 5760: Introduction to Old Norse
- ✓ ENGL 6760: Old English
- ✓ Two of the following:
  - ✓ ENGL 5550: Major Writers (appropriate to the medieval period)
  - ✓ ENGL 5760: Icelandic Sagas in Translation
  - ✓ ENGL 5770: Advanced Readings in Old Norse
  - ✓ ENGL 5970: Studies in English (appropriate to the medieval period)
  - ✓ ENGL 6100: Seminar (appropriate to the medieval period)

- ✓ ENGL 6210: Seminar (appropriate to the medieval period)
- ✓ ENGL 6420: Studies in Drama (appropriate to the medieval period)
- ✓ ENGL 6770: Middle English
- ✓ 12 hours of elective credit

The **M.A. in English with an Emphasis in English Education** requires:

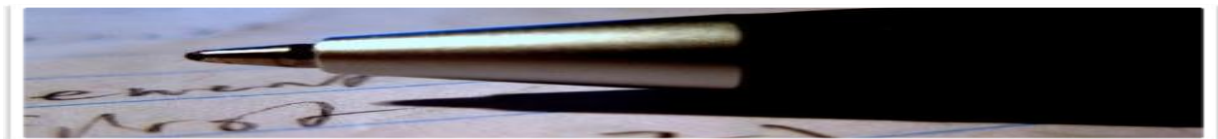
- ✓ A course in children's/adolescent literature
- ✓ 3 sections of ENGL 6780: English Education Seminar (topics vary)
- ✓ 15 hours of elective credit

## Master of Fine Arts Requirements (48 hours)

The M.F.A. is a forty-eight hour creative writing degree. The required courses for M.F.A. students depend on the student's area of specialization. The requirements for this degree are:

- ✓ Twelve hours of creative writing workshops selected from the following:
  - ✓ ENGL 5660 or 6660 in the area of specialization
  - ✓ ENGL 5660 or 6660 (3-6 hours) outside the area of specialization
- ✓ ENGL 6110: Literary Forms in the area of specialization
- ✓ ENGL 6110: Literary Forms in another genre
- ✓ At least six hours in literature from among 5000- and 6000-level courses
- ✓ ENGL 6990: M.F.A. Project (3-6 hours)
- ✓ Any additional electives to bring the total hours to 48
- ✓ A public performance of material selected from the student's M.F.A. Project
- ✓ The submission of an approved M.F.A. Project

MFA students cap their degree by writing a thesis of approximately 20 to 80 pages (with the page length established by reasonable expectations in the genre and agreed to by the thesis director). During their final year of study – usually the third year – students form a thesis committee, submit the MFA Project Committee Declaration Form, and register for three to six hours of English 6990: MFA Project. A thesis committee usually consists of three members: the director of the thesis, another member of the creative writing faculty, and a non-creative writing faculty member, such as a member of the literature faculty. Students should select a thesis director and establish a committee in the fall semester of their third year. Then, in the opening weeks of the spring semester, the student should establish with the thesis director a deadline or series of deadlines for completion of the thesis project. These deadlines should be acceptable to the entire committee, and provide adequate time for all committee members to read and respond to the work. The final draft of the thesis should be approved by the committee no later than a week before the end of the spring term. Once the thesis is approved, each committee member completes the Thesis Approval Form and turns it in to the Graduate Office.



# Doctoral Programs

## Ph.D. Transfer Credits

Upon entering the Ph.D. program with a master's degree, students are credited with up to thirty hours toward the ninety hour credit total requirement for graduation. If a student has earned more than one master's degree, or if he or she presents a particularly compelling professional record of service within academia or the professions, the Graduate Office may grant up to 45 hours towards the 90-hour total. However, this is the exception, not the rule.

Once the Graduate Office has determined the number of transfer hours to be credited, he/she will meet with the student to see whether his/her previous coursework can be used to fulfill Ph.D. requirements. Courses that are used in such a manner are marked CR (Credit) and are not counted towards the student's overall GPA.

## Doctoral Course Requirements

### Ph.D. in English with an Emphasis in Literature and Language Requirements

In order to receive the Ph.D. in English with an emphasis in literature and language, the student must fulfill through transferred or WMU-earned credits the following requirements:

#### **Required Courses:**

- ✓ ENGL 6150: Literary Criticism
- ✓ A course in the student's area of specialization
- ✓ 24 hours of elective credit

#### **Teaching Component:**

Students must take two courses in teaching and pedagogy. This component can be fulfilled by taking six hours elected from courses or practica in the teaching of composition, literature, creative writing, or English language. Practica are taken in classes at and below the 4000-level. Students teaching ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing for the first time **must** enroll in ENGL 6690: Methods of Teaching College Writing during the semester in which they teach.

#### **Area of Specialization:**

Beyond their required courses, students will select an area of specialization in preparation for their dissertation.

**Doctoral Readings:**

Ph.D. in literature students must take 3-9 hours of ENGL 7110: Doctoral Readings in preparation for their dissertation prospectus defense examination.

**Dissertation Hours:**

Students must take fifteen hours of ENGL 7300: Dissertation Hours. Once a student has enrolled for ENGL 7300, he/she must continue to enroll in ENGL 7300 for at least one hour during each fall and spring semester until graduation.

## Ph.D. in Creative Writing Requirements

In order to receive the Ph.D. in English with an emphasis in creative writing, the student must fulfill through transferred or WMU-earned credits the following requirements:

**Required Courses:**

- ✓ ENGL 6150: Literary Criticism
- ✓ One forms course in the student's genre
- ✓ A course in contemporary literature in the student's genre
- ✓ At least 12 hours of specialization (i.e., workshop)
- ✓ 9 hours of elective credit

**Teaching Component:**

Students must take two courses in teaching and pedagogy. This component can be fulfilled by taking six hours elected from courses or practica in the teaching of composition, literature, English language, or creative writing. Practica are taken in classes at and below the 4000-level. Students are encouraged to complete practica out of their area of specialization, either in non-creative writing courses or in creative writing courses outside of their genre. Students teaching ENGL 1050: Thought and Writing for the first time **must** enroll in ENGL 6690: Methods of Teaching College Writing during the semester in which they teach.

**Doctoral Readings:**

Ph.D. in literature students must take 3-9 hours of ENGL 7110: Doctoral Readings in preparation for their dissertation prospectus defense examination.

**Dissertation Hours:**

Students must take fifteen hours of ENGL 7300: Dissertation Hours. Once a student has enrolled for ENGL 7300 he/she must continue to enroll in ENGL 7300 for at least one hour during each fall and spring semester until graduation.

## Ph.D. in English with an Emphasis in English Education Requirements

In order to receive the Ph.D. in English with an emphasis in English education, the student must fulfill through transferred or WMU earned credits the following requirements:

### Required Courses:

- ✓ ENGL 6150: Literary Criticism
- ✓ A course in children's/adolescent literature
- ✓ 3 sections of ENGL 6780: English Education Seminar (topics vary)
- ✓ ENGL 6690: Methods of Teaching College Writing
- ✓ EMR 6480: Qualitative Research Methods
- ✓ 12 hours of elective credit

### Teaching Component:

Students must take six hours of credit in graduate practica (ENGL 7130), one in English education and another in an area of the student's choice. Practica are taken in classes at and below the 4000-level.

### Doctoral Readings:

Ph.D. in literature students must take 3-9 hours of ENGL 7110: Doctoral Readings in preparation for their dissertation prospectus defense examination.

### Dissertation Hours:

Students must take fifteen hours of ENGL 7300: Dissertation Hours. Once a student has enrolled for ENGL 7300, he/she must continue to enroll in ENGL 7300 for at least one hour during each fall and spring semester until graduation.

## World Language Requirement

The Department of English requires Ph.D. students to have reading proficiency or its equivalent in one world language. Proficiency in a modern language allows students to read scholarship and literature in another language, thus keeping abreast of new developments in a particular field. Doctoral students should meet this requirement prior to taking their qualifying examinations. Since not all doctoral students have the same need to read scholarship in another language, however, the department has several ways that students can meet this requirement.

### Translation Exam

Students who have studied a world language before may wish to choose this option. The Department of World Languages and Literature (WLL) and the Spanish Department will offer language exams twice a year, once in October and once in March.



To take the translation exam, a student will:

- ✓ Contact the appropriate faculty member to schedule an exam.
- ✓ Provide the examiner with three primary texts (book length collections of literature) and three secondary books (i.e., scholarly or critical ones) – all originally written in the language of choice.
- ✓ Pay a fee of \$50.00.

The exam will consist of two passages, each 300-400 words. All English department students will be asked to translate a primary text (a piece of literature) as well as a secondary text (a commentary, an essay, and/or a scholarly article). Creative writing students **must** translate a literary piece within their genre of specialization. The student will have three hours to translate the texts and should bring a hard-copy dictionary to the exam.

The WLL will post information on their department website with information about the exam, including exam dates and registration deadlines.

The Graduate Office will notify students about their results once the exams have been graded by the appropriate language professor(s). In the case of a marginal performance, the Graduate Office will consult further with the faculty member who graded the exam to determine whether the student should pass.

### Previous Course Work, Language Exams, and Language Study



Students who earned a major or a minor in an approved world language during their undergraduate years or students who passed a world language examination at the graduate level from another institution may have their world language requirement waived, if the work was carried out within the last seven years and if the student earned a B or above

in the courses or on the examination. Students who believe they have met the requirement in this or another manner (such as study abroad experience or fluency in a language other than English) should set up an appointment with the Graduate Office to discuss their status. The student might be asked to consult with and have their skills evaluated by an appropriate world language faculty member.

## Course Work

There are several options for students to fulfill the language requirement through course work while at WMU.

1. Reading French and German courses (5000/5010) are offered in the summer, one language sequence each summer. These courses are designed for graduate students who have little to no previous experience in the respective language. If a student passes 5000 and 5010 with a B or better, then he/she will have fulfilled the requirement. Students should be aware that each class is 3 credits and that, unless funded in the summer, they will pay for these classes on their own.
2. The English department offers a one-year sequence in Old English and in Old Norse-Icelandic in alternating years. If a student passes both semesters with a B or better, then he/she will have fulfilled the requirement. For students in English education and creative writing, the Old English sequence may be worth considering since studying the development and vocabulary of the English language would supplement crucial skills for teaching and writing in English.
3. The World Languages and Literature Department and the Spanish Department offer undergraduate classes in Ancient Greek, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Latin, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish. Students who wish to take course work may do so by taking the online placement exam and registering for 5020 (French, German, Latin, and Spanish, for instance) for three credit hours in the appropriate undergraduate introductory class. Students may use 5020 more than once to complete their world language requirement. Forms and permission to register for 5020 must be obtained from the WLL or Spanish Departments. Funded graduate students may take one language class during each semester of the academic year (fall and spring) paid for by their assistantship. Since the English Department requirement asks for reading proficiency, students ultimately have to pass the appropriate reading class (3160 in French or German, for instance) with a grade of B or better to fulfill the requirement.

## Ph.D. Residency Requirement and Timeliness to Degree

As stated in the Graduate Catalog, “the general residency requirement for doctoral students is one academic year (two consecutive semesters) of full-time study on campus.” From the beginning of his/her program, a student has seven years to complete his/her degree. Please consult the Request to Extend Time of Program section of this manual for information on how to request an extension.

# Doctoral Qualifying Examinations

## Requirement and Eligibility

All doctoral students must pass qualifying examinations prior to advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree. Students should begin selecting examination areas and reading from the core lists mid-way through their coursework (e.g., the Summer after their first year in the program); drafting of specialty lists should be completed no later than the semester preceding the one in which the student intends to test. To take the qualifying examinations, a student **must** have satisfied the foreign language requirement and is expected to have completed all of his/her course work.

## Structure and Scheduling

The qualifying examination format consists of three distinct exams, each covering a different field. Students write exams in three sittings, usually over the period of a week to ten days. Examining committees reserve the right to refuse to allow a student to examine in an area if circumstances dictate. Doctoral students may choose from the following fields:

1. American Literature to 1865
2. American Literature 1865-1945
3. Early Medieval Literature
4. Late Medieval Literature
5. Renaissance Literature (through Milton)
6. Restoration and 18th-Century Literature
7. 19th-Century Romantic Literature
8. Victorian Literature
9. Modern British Literature (1900 to 1950)
10. Contemporary Literature
11. Postcolonial Literature
12. Literary Theory
13. The Theory and Practice of Teaching English
14. Rhetoric and Writing Studies
15. Contemporary Fiction
16. Contemporary Drama
17. Contemporary Poetry
18. Children's and YA Literature (by permission of the examining committee)
19. Comics Studies

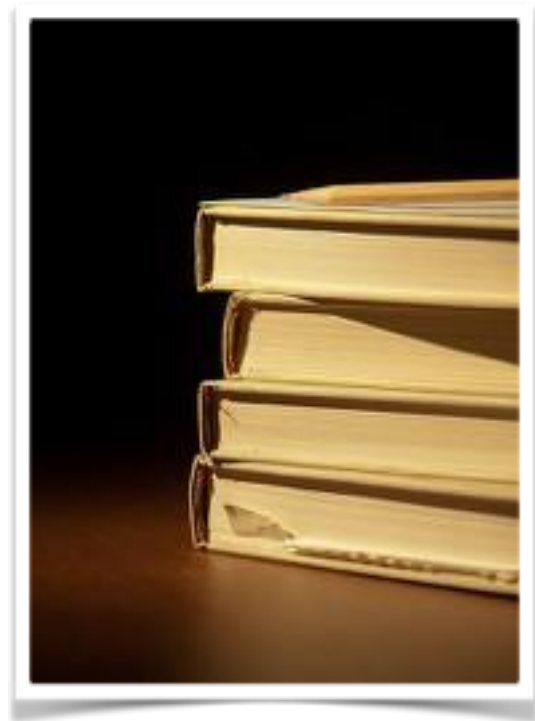
Only Creative Writing students may take exams in contemporary fiction, contemporary drama, and contemporary poetry. Literature and English education students, however, may examine in contemporary literature, which covers fiction, poetry, drama, and contemporary scholarship.

Doctoral students are required to develop focus areas in each of their three chosen fields, one of which will be considered the student's "specialty area" and the other two "focus areas." The only stipulations as to choice(s) of examination areas are:

- ✓ Doctoral students in creative writing **must** examine in contemporary literature of their own genre as their specialty.
- ✓ Doctoral students in English education **must** select a reading list related to the theory and practice of the teaching of English as their specialty.

In preparing to specialize and eventually examine in any given field, students should first learn from the graduate director or advisor which faculty members have been appointed to each area's qualifying exam committee. Then, students should contact the member of the qualifying exam committee who is a specialist in the field to discuss the exam and the specialty area. If there is no one on the qualifying exam committee who is an expert in the narrower field of the students' specialty, then those students should discuss the matter with the graduate director or advisor as well as the committee.

In general, to prepare for the exams, the student, in consultation with faculty who also specialize in their chosen areas, will study a core list created by the department and "specialty" list composed by the examinee geared toward his or her interests.



The English department website features core lists in each of the areas (which students must adopt) as well as longer, more comprehensive reading lists in each area, from which students may choose texts for their individual interests. Students may also augment using texts of their own choosing, based on their individual research, provided faculty who serve on the appointed qualifying exam committee and who specialize in the areas approve. Students should populate their specialty lists with at least twenty works of their choosing, approximately ten of which are primary texts and ten of which are secondary texts.

Though students are encouraged to select specialties that inter-relate (e.g., gothic literature in British Romanticism, Contemporary Fiction, and American Literature before 1865), and many students will see even disparate reading lists and interests as inter-related, for the purposes of the qualifying examinations, no textual repetition should occur among the specialty lists.

Examinations will be administered during a two-week period in late October and in mid-March during each academic year. Each exam has four questions, two relating to the core list and two

relating to the student's specialty list. Students must answer one of the core questions and one of the specialty questions. The student will have four hours to answer two questions in accordance with each question's instructions. Typically, written exams are approximately ten pages in length.

Exams are administered in Brown 3025. Students will have access to a word processing program to type their exam answers. Exams are typically scheduled from 9:00AM to 1:00PM. The Graduate Office will provide scrap paper, but students may bring the following items into the examination room:

- ✓ Food and drink (but must remain courteous to other examinees)
- ✓ Earphones
- ✓ Exam lists
- ✓ Full bibliographic citations of sources

*Note on Literary Theory Exam Format:* Unlike the other exams, the literary theory exam asks students to identify a key figure, define a key term, trace the history and trajectory of a particular theory, and employ a theory in a specialized question related to the student's tailored reading list. Students will select from among four key figures, four key terms, two histories, and two specialty questions. Students must only answer one per section.

Key dates and estimated exam periods appear in the table below:

Fall	Spring
<b>September 25:</b> Verify you will be taking the exam and identify the exam areas in which you will test by responding to the Graduate Office's email query.	<b>February 1:</b> Verify you will be taking the exam and identify the exam areas in which you will test by responding to the Graduate Office's email query.
<b>October 1:</b> Turn in specialty lists to the Graduate Office ( <a href="mailto:English-graduate@wmich.edu">English-graduate@wmich.edu</a> )	<b>February 10:</b> Turn in specialty lists to the Graduate Office ( <a href="mailto:English-graduate@wmich.edu">English-graduate@wmich.edu</a> )
<b>October 15-25:</b> Written Exams	<b>March 15-25:</b> Written Exams
<b>November 5-20:</b> Oral Exams	<b>April 5-20:</b> Oral Exams

## Oral Exam

After passing their three written exams, students will have an oral exam, which provides an opportunity to discuss the student's three exam areas with faculty from each area. The oral exam encourages student and faculty alike to elaborate on the written exam; to pursue issues not addressed by the written exam; and, where possible, to consider connections between the three exam areas.

The oral exam typically begins with the examinee reflecting on his/her written performance — discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the written performance and demonstrating, when appropriate, additional knowledge about each of the knowledge areas. The self-reflection should be direct and succinct so that it lasts no more than about ten minutes. During questioning, students should be expected to field questions that ask them to expound further on their written responses and to consider topics and texts from the reading lists which might not have been addressed in the written portion. The goal is for the student to demonstrate mastery of his or her fields — a flexible breadth of knowledge that allows the student to answer a range of questions with reference to various texts on the reading lists.

Each oral exam committee will have five faculty members:

- ✓ The student's advisor from his/her specialty area
- ✓ A faculty member from each of the other two examining committees
- ✓ Student-selected faculty member (perhaps from his/her specialty area)
- ✓ The graduate director or the graduate advisor (who will provide a tie-breaking vote)

Each of the three oral exam committees will choose one of its members for each oral examination. The student can select the fourth person. This should be the second person in the specialty field; however, students may consult the graduate director if they have a reason to request a faculty member from another area (e.g., for a theoretical or methodological approach). Faculty serving on an oral exam committee will read all three of the student's written exams.

Students must pass all three written exams to move to the oral. A student who fails any portion of the written exam must retake it during the next exam cycle. Once the student has passed all three written exams, he or she will take the oral within two weeks of the end of the written exam cycle.

The oral examination will last a minimum of one hour and a maximum of two. Only the student, the oral exam committee, and the graduate director or advisor may attend. The oral exam will be graded pass/fail, with all four committee members receiving one vote each, and the representative of the Graduate Office having a tie-breaking vote.

Students who fail the oral exam will have two opportunities to retake it. The student should meet with the oral exam committee as early as possible to receive feedback so he/she can prepare for and schedule the retake. The retake should be scheduled as soon as possible so that the original committee can be reconstituted. If one of the original committee members cannot participate, then that exam committee will choose another from the remaining two committee members to serve on the oral. If possible, the retake should be scheduled at the end of the semester of the original exam. If this is not possible, the retake should be scheduled early in the next semester.



## Assessment and Notification of Results

Each sit-down examination will be written and graded by a three person committee. The committee members will evaluate the written exam within their area and award it a grade of either "Pass" or "Fail." Students are notified of results via email approximately one week after the last exam is taken.

In order to pass the written portion of the qualifying examination, the student must receive a grade of "Pass" on all three area examinations. A student who passes one question but fails the other must retake the entire exam area. If the student wishes to appeal a failing grade, he/she should contact the graduate director, who will ask the Graduate Committee to evaluate the examination. If they determine that the grade should not be changed, then the student will need to schedule a retake. If a student does not pass one or more sections of the qualifying examination, he/she may retake the relevant exam area(s). If a student does not pass the retake(s), he/she will meet with the department chair, the graduate director, and his/her advisor to assess the situation. Students are allowed two retakes of any section of the written portion of the qualifying examination.

A student's performance during the oral examination is evaluated immediately afterward. The examinee will be asked to leave the room to allow the committee to discuss the student's performance. Once the committee arrives at a decision, the student is called back into the room and given the results.

Students who fail may also change their examination areas. The Graduate Office strongly encourages an examinee to discuss this option with his/her advisor if she/he fails more than once.

# Dissertation Requirements

## Defense Examination and Admission to Doctoral Candidacy

If they have not already unofficially started, the candidates now begin the research process necessary to write their dissertation prospectus or their doctoral readings exam.

Doctoral students who have completed all their coursework, satisfied the world language requirement, and passed all their qualifying examinations then proceed to appoint their dissertation committee by completing the Graduate College form and obtaining the requisite signatures. Students should select a dissertation director and consult with him/her about who might serve on the dissertation committee, including who might become the student's outside committee member.

University regulations require that a student's dissertation committee be composed of at least three members: a chair, one graduate faculty member from the student's home department, and one graduate faculty member from outside the student's department or outside the university. The English department asks for two graduate faculty members from the home department.

As part of WMU policy, all committee members from outside the university must submit a current vita to the Office Associate so that he/she can fill out the necessary paperwork to send to the Graduate College. This is an essential part of the dissertation committee formation process.

Once the dissertation committee is in place and the form submitted to the Graduate College, students in literature and language or English education begin to craft a prospectus while creative writing students begin drafting their readings exam. Although the move to more independent study can be liberating to students, it is also the time at which they benefit most from mentoring. Advisors are encouraged to set up regular appointments with their mentees and to monitor their progress.

When the dissertation advisor believes the document is ready for the full committee to read, the student arranges for the prospectus defense or readings exam to take place. To schedule the doctoral readings examination or the dissertation prospectus defense examination, the student should contact his/her dissertation committee to find a date and a two-hour block of time in which the committee can meet. The exam should then be scheduled by the office associate *at least* two weeks in advance of the agreed upon date. Please note that the committee appointment form must be filed before a prospectus defense can be scheduled.

### **Literature and English Education Candidates | Dissertation Prospectus Defense Examination**

The dissertation prospectus is typically a 20-30 page document that outlines the project, reviews previous scholarship, presents the project's thesis, and provides a rationale for the study.

Lasting a maximum of two hours, the prospectus defense begins with the student briefly explaining the project's origins, the guiding question(s) behind the study, and the basic rationale for the structure of the dissertation. The student might also solicit advice from the committee about key concerns that arose while writing the prospectus. When the student finishes, committee members will begin to ask questions and offer constructive criticism about how best to proceed with the project. Once the committee members have finished, the student will be asked to step out while faculty discuss whether to approve the project. The student is invited to return and is immediately informed of the results. If the student passes the defense, he/she can gather the appropriate signatures on the Project Approval Form. This form should be completed prior to the defense so that it is ready to be signed by the committee members. After this form is submitted to the Graduate College and approved, the student is considered a doctoral candidate (ABD – All But Dissertation).

### **Creative Writing Candidates | Doctoral Reading Examinations**

The doctoral readings examination is a 20-30 page document that helps the student contextualize his/her creative dissertation within a larger literary, generic, or stylistic tradition. While enrolled in ENGL 7110, the student reads a list of at least twenty titles that will help him/her write a critical essay; many students choose to use this experience as an opportunity to write an introduction to their creative work or to write a piece that they might use on the academic job market.

Creative writing candidates **must** pass the doctoral reading examination **before** defending their dissertation. Ideally, the doctoral reading examinations will not occur on the same day.

Like the prospectus defense, the readings exam lasts a maximum of two hours and begins with a brief introduction of the project by the student, after which the committee asks questions. Once the committee is satisfied, the student will be asked to step out while faculty review his/her performance. Upon receiving a passing grade, the student gathers the appropriate signatures on the Project Approval Form. This form should be completed prior to the defense so that it is ready to be signed by the committee members. After this form is submitted to the Graduate College and approved, the student is considered a doctoral candidate (ABD – All But Dissertation).

Students should approach the prospectus defense and the readings exam as professional events in their careers. Thus, they should dress professionally, as if they were about to teach class or present a paper at a conference.

When the student passes his/her prospectus defense or readings examination, the advisor should write a letter to the graduate director confirming the completion of this requirement; the graduate director will note this achievement on the candidate's permanent program.

Students who are ABD can now apply for Admission to Doctoral Candidacy through the Graduate College. For teaching assistants, achieving doctoral candidacy includes a pay increase

that takes effect the semester after which the form is submitted and approved. A doctoral candidate is also eligible to apply for a dissertation completion fellowship. Students should consult the Graduate College's [webpage](#) for application criteria and procedures.

## Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB)

Advisors must assist those students conducting field research to make sure that their project is first approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB). Information on this process can be obtained going to the [HSIRB website](#).

## The Dissertation Advisor/Advisee Relationship

Once a student has selected a dissertation advisor, the student and advisor need to discuss the plan for submitting chapters to the advisor and the rest of the dissertation committee. The ideal scenario is:

- ✓ The student begins by submitting a chapter to the advisor who reads it and gives the student feedback on how to revise.
- ✓ The student revises and continues work on the particular chapter.
- ✓ Only after the dissertation advisor has approved the chapter – meaning that the advisor believes that it is ready to go to the other members of the committee so that they can give their feedback – should the student submit the chapter to the rest of the committee.
- ✓ The committee members provide feedback on the revised chapter.

The reasons for this are that the members of the committee may not be the specialists in the field that the advisor is, and that one of them is an outside reader, which may mean that he or she is further removed from the subject matter. It is, though, very important for the student to get feedback on all the chapters, with the possible exception of the conclusion, from all the committee members before compiling the defensible draft.

If a student submits what he or she deems a defensible draft to the committee without having had the committee members see the chapters prior to this, the student runs a risk of being told that he or she cannot defend at the desired time. The defensible draft is one that, barring minor revisions, should be ready to be submitted to the Graduate College.

Both students and dissertation advisors should also be aware of deadlines and reasonable expectations of the time necessary to read and comment on a chapter, and they should make all attempts to submit and return chapters in as timely a manner as possible. The one exception to this is that the defensible draft needs to be submitted to the committee with a minimum of four weeks before the defense date; it is a good idea for the student to contact the committee members

to see how much time they will need to read the dissertation.

## Dissertation

After passing the dissertation prospectus defense examination (literature/English education) or the doctoral readings examination (creative writing), the student should begin working on the dissertation in earnest by enrolling in at least 15 hours, and up to 24 hours, of ENGL 7300: Doctoral Dissertation. To enroll, a student must fill out the Permission to Elect form.

This form requires the signatures of:

- ✓ The advisor
- ✓ The department chair
- ✓ A representative of the Graduate College

Once a student has enrolled in ENGL 7300 for the first time, he/she must continue to take at least one hour of ENGL 7300 for each fall and spring semester/session continuously until graduation. For dissertation hours, the Permission to Elect form need be completed only once.

Once the dissertation is complete, the student needs to work with his/her committee and a representative from the Graduate Office to set up a dissertation defense date and fill out the Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form. A graduate office representative attends the dissertation defense in an advisory role, and the Graduate Office should be included in the scheduling process.

The Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form must be given to the Office Associate for submission to the Graduate College *at least* three weeks prior to the dissertation defense date – this is a very strict deadline – there are no exceptions. The student should also find out the deadline for scheduling a defense – these dates change each semester and can be obtained by consulting the Graduate College Calendar of Deadlines. Finally, the student should consult with the Office Associate to reserve a conference room and should be sure that all four committee members have the final draft of the dissertation *at least* one month prior to the defense date.

At the dissertation defense, the student should bring with him/her three copies of the Dissertation Approval Form to be signed by all the committee members. The forms must be typed up in advance by the student. Once the forms are signed, they should be handed back to the student for inclusion in the submitted dissertation. Graduate students should download the Dissertation Check-In Form, which includes up-to-date information on the fees that must be paid and forms that must be obtained from the Graduate College in order to submit the dissertation. Each semester, there is a deadline for submission of dissertations – graduate students who are planning to defend should obtain the Dissertation Check-In Form and the deadline information in order to plan out the defense within the time limits set by the Graduate College.

The Graduate College has specific requirements for formatting the dissertation. Students should familiarize themselves with these requirements **before** writing the dissertation. Therefore, students should consider writing the dissertation with the formatting required for submitting the manuscript to the Graduate College or plan two to four weeks for formatting at the end of the dissertation to meet this requirement.



## Request to Extend Time of Program

If circumstances compel a student to request an extension beyond the seven year deadline for earning the Ph.D. or the six year deadline for earning the M.A. or M.F.A., he/she should obtain a form entitled Request to Extend Time to Complete Graduate Degree Program.

The student should fill out the request portion, ask the advisor and the graduate director to fill out their portions, and submit the form to the Graduate College. The student typically will hear within a week whether or not the request has been approved.

## Appendix A: Rights and Responsibilities

Since advising and supervising constitute two of the most significant professional relationships of faculty members and graduate students, it is important to highlight the rights and responsibilities of both advisors and advisees.

### General Rights and Responsibilities

1. Graduate faculty and graduate students should observe the Modern Language Association's Statement of Professional Ethics. Both advisor and advisee should understand that their relationship is professional rather than personal. All faculty members advising graduate students must know and abide by Western Michigan University's policies, including provisions of the AAUP, TAU, and PIO Agreements.
2. Graduate faculty should be candid with their advisees about their performance and career prospects. Graduate faculty should provide prompt feedback on research and writing for coursework, including timely reading of thesis drafts. Whenever discussing a student's situation with other faculty or university staff, graduate advisors should use discretion and respect for a student's privacy.
3. Good, accurate advising from faculty depends on willingness of graduate students to initiate communication, identify key issues, and listen to advice with an open mind. All graduate students should recognize that they, in the end, have primary responsibility for their own graduate education and for their development as scholars and teachers.
4. Graduate faculty and graduate students should know the rules of the programs of study contained in the English Graduate Handbook and the Graduate College Catalog, especially the required coursework, language training, general/preliminary examinations, and all stages of thesis preparation from prospectus to completion. Faculty should keep themselves informed about the current program requirements. Graduate students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the rules of their program of study, even if they have been misinformed on a particular issue by a faculty member. Students and faculty should consult the Graduate Office if there is or has been the potential for misinformation.
5. Faculty working with students, together with the Graduate Office, should insure that their students make timely progress in completing their program of study. Both faculty advisors and graduate students need to be familiar with deadlines for the different stages of the student's program and should allow ample lead time for meeting such deadlines, which are outlined in the English Department Graduate Handbook and the Graduate College Catalog.



## **Responsibilities of Dissertation Advisors**

1. Dissertation advisors should advise their students on how to develop and sustain an intellectual agenda and build a professional career. In addition to regular communication with their advisees, dissertation advisors should discuss the full range of issues relating to the chosen program of study and professional development. Such issues will vary depending on advisee and circumstances but would usually include: conducting and presenting research, teaching, developing and completing a thesis, grant seeking, publication venues, and potential job market and career strategies. When dissertation advisors or student advisees are not in residence, dissertation advisors and graduate students should continue to communicate regularly.
2. Dissertation advisors should expect to write letters of recommendation on behalf of their students for grants/fellowships and employment opportunities.
3. Dissertation advisors will provide a written response to the advisee's annual graduate review to the student and to the director of graduate studies, for inclusion in the permanent file. While such evaluations occur formally each year, they should be part of the ongoing supervising dialogue between advisor and advisee.

## **Responsibilities of Supporting Graduate Faculty**

Faculty members who play supporting roles in the graduate student's education (as seminar instructors, supervisors of teaching assistants, members of exam or thesis committees) have responsibilities similar to those of dissertation advisors. Some aspects of these roles merit highlighting separately:

1. In the first year or two of the Ph.D. student's program, his or her mentor (more than likely the person who will become the dissertation advisor) provides a written response to the advisee's annual graduate review to the student and to the director of graduate studies, for inclusion in the student's permanent file. While such evaluations occur formally each year, they should be part of the ongoing supervising dialogue between advisor and advisee.
2. Faculty who teach graduate courses or serve on examination and thesis committees have an obligation to provide complete, candid evaluation of all students in a timely fashion.
3. Faculty who teach graduate courses or serve on examination and thesis committees should expect to write letters of recommendation on behalf of their students for grants/fellowships and employment opportunities.
4. Faculty who serve on dissertation committees should provide written responses to the dissertation in a timely fashion, including the kinds of revision required for approval.

## Appendix B: Timeline to Degree

This timeline<sup>2</sup> provides an *ideal* outline for the timeliness for degree for full-time students. Every student's own educational trajectory will vary in some ways from this suggestion. Nonetheless, students should still find a larger scope timeline like this useful when planning their permanent programs. All new graduate students are advised to take six credit hours in their first semester of study, though students may take nine at their discretion.

### Master's Timeline (M.A.)

Master's	Year One	✓ ✓	Familiarize yourself with program requirements. Begin coursework.
Master's	Year Two	✓ ✓ ✓	Continue taking coursework and fulfilling graduation requirements. Fulfill M.A. capstone project. Potentially apply for admission to Ph.D. programs.

### Master of Fine Arts Timeline

M.F.A.	Year One	✓ ✓	Familiarize yourself with program requirements. Begin taking in-genre workshops and elective coursework.
M.F.A.	Year Two	✓ ✓	Continue taking workshops in area of specialization. Take one to two workshops outside area of specialization.
M.F.A.	Year Three	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Continue taking workshops in area of specialization. Fulfill and submit M.F.A. thesis project. Complete public performance (reading) of a portion of the M.F.A. thesis project Potentially apply to Ph.D. programs.

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<sup>2</sup> This timeline is gratefully adapted from Gregory Colón Semenza's *Graduate Study for the 21st Century*.

## Doctoral Timeline

Doctoral	Year One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Familiarize yourself with program requirements.</li> <li>✓ Begin taking coursework and fulfilling graduation requirements.</li> <li>✓ Contemplate how to meet the world language requirement.</li> <li>✓ Begin studying for qualifying exams during summer.</li> </ul>
Doctoral	Year Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete coursework.</li> <li>✓ Meet world language requirement.</li> <li>✓ Begin compiling qualifying exam specialty lists.</li> <li>✓ Submit qualifying specialty lists for approval.</li> <li>✓ Continue studying for qualifying exams during summer.</li> </ul>
Doctoral	Year Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete qualifying examination.</li> <li>✓ Assemble dissertation committee.</li> <li>✓ Write and defend dissertation prospectus/ readings exam.</li> <li>✓ Begin drafting dissertation.</li> </ul>
Doctoral	Year Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue writing dissertation chapters and finish a first draft.</li> <li>✓ Begin revising dissertation.</li> </ul>
Doctoral	Year Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Complete and defend dissertation.</li> <li>✓ Submit properly formatted dissertation to the Graduate College.</li> <li>✓ Complete job applications.</li> <li>✓ Graduate.</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Course Offerings

Listed below are the catalog descriptions for the courses that are offered by our department at the 5000, 6000, and 7000 level.

**ENGL 5110: Studies in Linguistics, 3 hrs.**

A course focusing on concepts and theories in linguistics, language, storytelling, and orality. Possible foci include World Englishes; Language, Gender, and culture; Michigan Languages, and Language Acquisition. Topics change with each offering.

**ENGL 5220: Studies in American Literature, 3 hrs.**

Study of a movement or a recurring theme in American literature, such as romanticism, realism, naturalism, humor, or racial issues.

**ENGL 5300: Medieval Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in the medieval literary tradition. Some Middle English works will be studied in the original; works in Old English and continental literature will be studied mainly in translation.

**ENGL 5320: English Renaissance Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in representative writers of the period 1500-1660.

**ENGL 5340: Restoration and Eighteenth Century Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in representative writers of the period 1660-1800, focusing on the diversity of literary forms in the period.

**ENGL 5360: Romantic Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in poetry and criticism, with emphasis on such writers as Blake, Burns, the Wordsworths, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, the Shelleys, and Keats.

**ENGL 5370: Victorian Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings emphasizing such writers as Carlyle, Mill, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, Tennyson, the Brownings, and Arnold.

**ENGL 5380: Modern Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in representative writers in the period 1890-1945, not exclusively in British and American literature.

**ENGL 5390: Post-Colonial Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in representative writers from colonial and post-colonial cultures.

**ENGL 5400: Contemporary Literature, 3 hrs.**

Readings in representative writers who have come to prominence chiefly since 1945.

**ENGL 5550: Studies in Major Writers, 3 hrs.**

Study of the works of classical, European, British, or American writers. Limited to one or two authors. May be repeated for credit as long as the authors covered are different.

**ENGL 5660: Creative Writing Workshop – Fiction, 4 hrs.**

A workshop and conference course in the writing of fiction, with emphasis on refinement of the individual student's style and skills. May be repeated for credit.

**ENGL 5670: Creative Writing Workshop – Poetry, 4 hrs.**

A workshop and conference course in the writing of poetry, with emphasis on refinement of the individual student's style and skills. May be repeated for credit.

**ENGL 5680: Creative Writing Workshop – Playwriting, 4 hrs.**

A workshop and conference course in the playwriting, with emphasis on refinement of the individual student's style and skills. May be repeated for credit.

**ENGL 5700: Creative Writing Workshop – Creative Non-fiction, 4 hrs.**

A workshop and conference course in the writing of creative non-fiction, with emphasis on refinement of the individual student's style and skills. May be repeated for credit.

**ENGL 5740: Grammar for Teachers, 4 hrs.**

Deals with issues surrounding the teaching of grammar, various aspects of grammar itself, and ways of teaching grammar and developing students' grammatical competence.

**ENGL 5750: Icelandic Sagas in Translation, 3 hrs.**

Readings in medieval Icelandic literature. This class provides students an opportunity to explore medieval Iceland through its rich mythology, literature, and culture. No previous coursework required in either Old Norse/Icelandic or medieval literature.

**ENGL 5760: Introduction to Old Norse, 3 hrs.**

An introduction to the fundamentals of Old Norse grammar and language. By translating prose and poetry, students will develop an appreciation of the literature and culture of medieval Iceland as well as a reading knowledge of Old Norse.

**ENGL 5770: Advanced Readings in Old Norse, 3 hrs.**

A review of the fundamentals of Old Norse grammar and language learned in ENGL 5760 by focusing on longer selections from sagas and poems. This class will further students' knowledge of the language and the literature through discussion of them.

**ENGL 5820: Studies in Children's Literature, 3 hrs.**

A study in depth of significant themes, movements, and types of children's literature.

Prerequisite: Permission of the department.

**ENGL 5830: Multi-Cultural American Literature for Children, 3 hrs.**

A course designed to develop an understanding of the cultural diversity of the American experience through multi-cultural oral and written literature for young people. Attention will be paid to developing criteria for selecting and evaluating literature which reflects diversity within the American heritage. Prerequisites: 16 hrs. of English course work.

**ENGL 5970: Studies in English: Variable Topics, 1-3 hrs.**

Group study of special topics in literature, film, English language, and writing. Many of these special courses are organized around special events or speakers on campus or in the community, or in response to special needs or interests of students. Some topics are announced in the schedule of course offerings; some are added during the semester. Further information and full listing of topics may be obtained from the Department of English, sixth floor Sprau Tower.

**ENGL 5980: Readings in English, 1-4 hrs.**

Advanced students with good scholastic records may elect to pursue independently the study of some topic having special interest for them. Topics are chosen and arrangements are made to suit the needs of each student. Approval of English advisor required. May be elected more than once.

**ENGL 6100: Seminar, 3 hrs.**

Study of a problem in literary history or criticism. May be repeated once with the permission of the Graduate Advisor.

**ENGL 6150: Literary Criticism, 3 hrs.**

Readings in several significant theorists on the nature of literature, the characteristics of audience response to literature, and principles underlying the analysis and evaluation of literature. Works in at least two genres will be examined in light of these theoretical writings.

**ENGL 6110: Literary Forms, 3 hrs.**

A study in form and technique in one of the four major literary genres: poetry, fiction, drama, non-fiction.

**ENGL 6210: Studies in British Literature, 3 hrs.**

The advanced study of selected aspects of British literature. May be repeated once with the permission of the Graduate Office.

**ENGL 6220: Studies in American Literature, 3 hrs.**

The advanced study of a topic in American Literary history, such as The American "Renaissance," The 1920's, The Transcendental Tradition in American Literature, Fiction (or

Poetry, or Drama) in America, or The Development of Modern American Prose Style. May be repeated once with the permission of the Graduate Advisor.

**ENGL 6300: Professionalization in English Studies, 3 hrs.**

This course is intended to prepare graduate students to enter the profession of English Studies. Topics include: Preparing for the job market and interviewing, writing for the profession, scholarship and the publishing process, attending and presenting at conferences, research and library skills, developing strong teaching practices, and exploring nonacademic careers.

**ENGL 6400: The Nature of Poetry, 3 hrs.**

A study of styles, techniques, forms, and conceptions of poetry, involving practice in explication, both oral and written, of individual poems.

**ENGL 6410: Studies in Modern Poetry, 3 hrs.**

An intensive study of the work of several modern poets.

**ENGL 6420: Studies in Drama, 3 hrs.**

Selected areas of drama from classical times to the present.

**ENGL 6440: Studies in the Novel, 3 hrs.**

An examination of significant forms and techniques employed in the novel from its beginnings to the modern age.

**ENGL 6450: Studies in the Modern Novel, 3 hrs.**

An intensive study of the works of some important novelists of the twentieth century.

**ENGL 6520: Studies in Shakespeare: Tragedy, 3 hrs.**

Selected tragedies of Shakespeare.

**ENGL 6530: Studies in Shakespeare: Comedy, 3 hrs.**

Selected comedies of Shakespeare.

**ENGL 6660: Graduate Writing Workshop, 3 hrs.**

Any given section of this course will focus on poetry, fiction, non-fiction, or drama. Course organization will emphasize roundtable discussion of student writing. Course may be taken more than once; a student may elect up to 12 credit hours in one genre and up to 18 hours in all. M.F.A. candidates must take at least 6 hours in their area of specialization. Prerequisite: Open to graduate students accepted into the M.F.A. or Ph.D. programs and, with the permission of the instructor, to other graduate PTG students.

**ENGL 6690: Methods of Teaching College Writing, 3 hrs.**

A course required of those teaching the first-year writing course, ENGL 1050, for the first time.



Establishes the basic structure and methodology for teaching such a course. Participants prepare assignment sequences for their classes, design appropriate learning activities, and practice evaluating and responding to student writing. Participants are introduced to activities that reflect different theories and approaches to the teaching of composition.

**ENGL 6760: Old English, 3 hrs.**

A course dealing with the grammatical structures of Old English and the sociolinguistic context in which this language was spoken and written, with a view to applying such linguistic study to translating and interpreting pre-1066 English literary texts, both poetry and prose, including *Beowulf*.

**ENGL 6770: Middle English, 3 hrs.**

A course dealing with the grammatical structures of Middle English and the sociocultural context in which this language was spoken and written, with a view to applying such linguistic study to translating and interpreting Middle English texts, both prose and poetic, Chaucerian and non-Chaucerian, stemming from various regions of English-speaking Britain.

**ENGL 6780: English Education Seminar, 3 hrs.**

Built around a core set of concepts while simultaneously tailored to student participants' interests. Covers a variety of English Education topics.

**ENGL 6790: Studies in Composition Theory, 3 hrs.**

A course which examines various approaches to the teaching of composition. Aims to increase awareness of the relationship between theory and practice, acquaint participants with ongoing dialogues within the field, and help them identify and formulate their own professional stances. Attention will be given to the impact on composition theory of scholarship in fields such as classical rhetoric, linguistics, literary theory, cognitive psychology, human development and learning, social constructionism, and ethnology.

**ENGL 6800: Advanced Methods in Teaching Literature, 3 hrs.**

A study of theories and methods of teaching literature.

**ENGL 6900: Scholarship and Writing in the Profession, 3 hrs.**

In this seminar students will prepare the capstone essay to be submitted as the culminating requirement for the M.A. in English. The course will include analysis and evaluation of journals and articles in areas relevant to the student's research topic, "workshop" review and editing of the paper, and preparation for oral presentation and discussion of the student's work in a master's colloquium. Graded on a Credit/No Credit basis. Prerequisites: ENGL 6300 and prior completion of at least 21 hours of credit toward the Master of Arts in English.

**ENGL 6910: Research and Scholarship in English Education, 3 hrs.**

As reflective practitioners in English classrooms, participants in this seminar will develop a

research question, review relevant professional literature, conduct classroom and/or academic research using appropriate research techniques, and present findings orally and in a written paper or report that will be the capstone paper for the M.A. in English with an Emphasis on Teaching.

**ENGL 6970: Studies in English: Variable Topics, 1-3 hrs.**

Group study of special topics in language, literature, and composition. These special courses and workshops may be offered on campus, in the off-campus centers, or as in-service work in schools. Students may repeat this course, providing topics vary. For further information, consult the Graduate Office.

**ENGL 6990: M.F.A. Project, 3-6 hrs.**

A collection of short fiction, a collection of poetry, a collection of one-act plays, a full-length play, or a novel. The work presented in fulfillment of this requirement must be judged by a committee of the graduate faculty to be worthy of publication or production; a public reading or performance is required.

**ENGL 7100: Independent Research, 2-6 hrs.**

**ENGL 7110: Readings in Doctoral Specialization, 3-6 hrs.**

In consultation with a faculty member, the doctoral student will design a reading list of 20 to 30 books in a specialized area; students wishing additional guided reading may register a second time. The student will master these works independently and, in consultation with faculty members, select a representative list of approximately 20 works on which to be evaluated in a two-hour oral exam, conducted by a committee of at least two faculty members. Prerequisite: Doctoral candidacy.

**ENGL 7120: Professional Field Experience, 2-12 hrs.**

**ENGL 7130: Practicum in Teaching in the Discipline, 3 hrs.**

A practicum in teaching in the discipline will be done as collaborative teaching with an experienced faculty member in a broad-based undergraduate course in literature, language, creative writing, or advanced composition. There will opportunity for both guided praxis and reflection on praxis. May be repeated. Prerequisite: Consent of advisor.

**ENGL 7300: Doctoral Dissertation, 15 hrs., minimum**

## Appendix D: Resources and Links

### Admissions

#### **Western Michigan University Graduate College Application (All Programs)**

<http://www.wmich.edu/apply/graduate/>

#### **English Department Graduate Admissions Information**

<http://wmich.edu/english/academics/graduate/grad-admissions.html>

#### **Teacher Certification Information**

<http://www.wmich.edu/education/certification>

#### **Permission to Elect Form**

<http://wmich.edu/apply/print/GradPTGform.pdf>

### Registration, Courses, and Grades

#### **Grade Appeals**

<http://wmich.edu/ombudsman/appeals.html>

#### **Academic Calendar**

<http://www.wmich.edu/registrar/-/file/wmu-calendar-academic-201415.pdf>

### Policies and Procedures

#### **Graduate College Annual Review Policy**

<http://www.wmich.edu/grad/policies/annualreview.pdf>

#### **WMU Student Code**

<http://www.wmich.edu/conduct/code/>

#### **Graduation Audit Form**

<http://wmich.edu/registrar/pdf/forms/gradaudit.pdf>

### Dissertation

#### **Notification of Appointment to a Dissertation, Thesis or Specialist Project Committee**

[http://www.wmich.edu/grad/forms/committee\\_appointment.pdf](http://www.wmich.edu/grad/forms/committee_appointment.pdf)

#### **Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Website**

<http://wmich.edu/research/hsirb.html>

**Permission to Elect Form**

<http://wmich.edu/grad/forms/permission.to.elect.pdf>

**Dissertation Defense Scheduling Form**

<http://www.wmich.edu/grad/forms/defense.scheduling.pdf>

**Graduate College Calendar of Dissertation Deadlines**

[http://www.wmich.edu/grad/currentstudents/dissertation\\_deadlines.html](http://www.wmich.edu/grad/currentstudents/dissertation_deadlines.html)

**Dissertation Approval Form**

<http://wmich.edu/grad/currentstudents/final-diss-theses-project-approval.html>

**Dissertation Check-In Form**

[http://wmich.edu/grad/forms/diss\\_checkform.pdf](http://wmich.edu/grad/forms/diss_checkform.pdf)

**Request to Extend Time to Complete Graduate Degree Program**

[http://wmich.edu/grad/forms/extension\\_form.pdf](http://wmich.edu/grad/forms/extension_form.pdf)

**Rights and Responsibilities****MLA Standards of Professional Conduct**

[http://www.mla.org/repview\\_profethics](http://www.mla.org/repview_profethics)