

University of Louisville

English Department

GRADUATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTAL GRADUATE ADMINISTRATION _____	4
GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED _____	4
MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) IN ENGLISH _____	5
APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE M.A. PROGRAM _____	5
M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS _____	6
PROCEDURES FOR THESES AND CULMINATING PROJECTS _____	6
M.A. - PROSPECTUS FOR A SCHOLARLY-CRITICAL THESIS _____	7
M.A. - PROSPECTUS FOR A CREATIVE THESIS _____	7
M.A. – PROSPECTUS FOR NON-THESIS OPTION _____	7
ACCEPTANCE STATUS _____	12
PH.D. IN ENGLISH RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION _____	11
APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES FOR THE PH.D. PROGRAM _____	11
ACCEPTANCE STATUS _____	12
DEPARTMENTAL CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PH.D. STUDENTS _____	13
PH.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS _____	13
PROGRESS INTERVIEW _____	14
COMPREHENSIVE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS _____	14
GUIDELINES FOR THE SRA COMP EXAMS _____	15
GUIDELINES FOR THE SLA COMP EXAMS _____	16
RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS _____	18
PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS _____	19
DISSERTATION _____	19
FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT _____	19
PROCEDURES FOR THESES AND DISSERTATIONS _____	22
PH.D. - PROSPECTUS FOR A DOCTORAL DISSERTATION _____	22

<i>FINANCIAL AID</i> _____	26
<i>UNIVERSITY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS</i> _____	26
<i>GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS</i> _____	26
<i>PART-TIME TEACHING</i> _____	27
<i>SUMMER TEACHING</i> _____	28
<i>PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM</i> _____	28
<i>ADDITIONAL M.A. AND PH.D. POLICIES</i> _____	29
<i>ADVISING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS</i> _____	29
<i>CANDIDACY REGISTRATION</i> _____	29
<i>DEGREE APPLICATION</i> _____	29
<i>INCOMPLETES</i> _____	29
<i>INDEPENDENT STUDY APPROVAL</i> _____	29
<i>SATISFACTORY PROGRESS TOWARD THE DEGREE</i> _____	30
<i>STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR COURSEWORK</i> _____	30
<i>TRANSFER CREDIT</i> _____	30
<i>UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT APPROVAL IN 600-LEVEL COURSES</i> _____	31
<i>SHARING OF DOCUMENTS</i> _____	31

INDEX

DEPARTMENTAL GRADUATE ADMINISTRATION

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

GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED

The English Department offers two graduate degrees: the M.A. in English and the Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition.

MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) PROGRAM

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) PROGRAM

Candidates for the Ph.D. degree must complete 51 semester hours, which must include 12 hours of Dissertation Research (English 690).

NOTE:

The English department does **not** offer a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree. Students interested in such a degree should contact U of L's College of Education and Human Development.

MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) IN ENGLISH

APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE M.A. PROGRAM:

M.A. application deadlines:

- **M.A. (with GTA): January 5 (Fall admission only)**
- **M.A. (without GTA): At least one month prior to the start of the semester for which you are applying (Fall, Spring, or Summer admission)**
- **Please note that all academic credentials other than the GTA application are forwarded from the Graduate School to the English Department.**

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

1. Application for Graduate Admission (including fee).
2. Official Transcripts of all undergraduate work and any post-graduate work.
3. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores.
4. Two academic letters of recommendation. Letters from employers or personal references are not acceptable.
5. Writing sample (critical writing that demonstrates your investigative and expository skills) of least 10 pages. Students who plan to focus on creative writing should send a creative writing sample **in addition to** the critical sample.
6. GTA application (only if you wish to be considered for a GTAship), including references who can speak to the applicant's teaching ability. (Include names and contact information only--letters are not required.) **The GTA application should be sent directly to the English Department (by January 5):**

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

When the credentials are complete, the graduate committee will read them, decide whether the applicant is accepted or denied admission, and if admitted, determine the candidate's acceptance status (see p. 12).

M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - (30 graduate hours)

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

A. REQUIRED COURSES: 15 Hours

- **English 601: Introduction to English Studies - 3 hours**
- **English 691: Theories of Interpretation or English 692: Topics in Interpretive Theory - 3 hours**
- **Pre-1800 literature - 6 hours**
- **Post-1800 literature - 3 hours**

B. ADDITIONAL REQUIRED COURSES FOR GTAs:

- **English 604: Writing Center Theory and Practice - 3 hours (for GTAs working in the Writing Center).**
- **English 602: Teaching College Composition - 3 hours (for GTAs teaching in the Composition Program).**

C. ELECTIVES: 9-15 Hours

One elective may be taken outside the department.

D. THESIS OR NON-THESIS OPTION:

THESIS OPTION: (24 hrs of coursework and 6 hrs of Thesis Guidance [ENGL 615])

Students who choose this option will write a scholarly critical or creative thesis that is an original contribution to the field, shows an awareness of current academic practice, and employs methods appropriate to an extended academic project. Scholarly-critical theses are typically between 50 and 75 pages; creative theses should be around 35 pages for poetry and 55-60 pages for prose. If a creative thesis mixes genres, around 50 pages would be appropriate.

The student makes an oral defense of the completed thesis before a committee of three faculty members (the thesis director, another English faculty member, and a faculty member from outside the department). **For further information, see Procedures for Theses and Dissertations, page 22.**

THESIS COMMITTEE:

The committee includes the director, who must be a member of the English department's senior graduate faculty; a second faculty member from English, who must have graduate faculty member status; and a member of the graduate faculty from outside the English department.

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

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

M.A. : PROSPECTUS FOR A CREATIVE THESIS

The prospectus should consist of **two** major parts: **(1)** a brief essay describing and providing a context for the thesis project and **(2)** a sample of the student's writing--five or six poems, a short story or play, or an equivalent selection from a longer work of poetry, fiction, or drama.

1. **The essay:** The purpose of the essay is to show that the student has a clear working conception of the thesis. Therefore, the essay must provide a tentative plan for the thesis, including some sense of its genre, its structure, and perhaps its subject matter or content. The student may wish to emphasize generic, formal, technical, or thematic considerations, but in any case the essay must place the work in the context of contemporary writing. The essay should be from 800 to 1500 words in length.
2. **The sample:** The purpose of the sample is to demonstrate the student's competence to undertake the project. Therefore, the sample should contain some of the student's best writing, as determined by the student and the advisor. The sample need not be a part of the proposed thesis, but should demonstrate the student's ability to work in the proposed genre. While the sample may be part of the thesis, at least half of the thesis itself should consist of new work.

Students writing theses should also consult p. 9 (prospectus approval)

NON-THESIS OPTION: (30 hrs of coursework and a culminating project)

Students who choose this option will, as a culminating project, choose one of their strongest seminar papers or creative writing projects to revise. The final product should not exceed 25 pages and should be geared toward publication in a refereed scholarly or creative writing venue.

Guidelines:

The **critical culminating project** involves substantially revising and reframing a scholarly paper. The final version should engage with current scholarly and critical conversations relevant to the paper's topic. It should be clear how the paper's argument intervenes in those conversations.

Accordingly, the student is expected to undertake new primary and secondary research and to revise the structure, development, and style of his or her project to make it as nuanced, convincing, and graceful as possible. Careful reframing (a substantially new introduction and conclusion) will almost certainly be necessary. The research methods employed, whether overtly

stated or implicit, should be appropriate to the argument being advanced.

The culminating project also entails careful study of a target journal. The title of the chosen journal and a one-page rationale for this choice should be turned in with the prospectus.

Like the critical project, a **creative culminating project** should consist of a substantial revision of a body of writing. A culminating project in poetry would likely include 10-15 pages of poetry. Prose projects would entail, say, one long short story (up to 25 pages) or several shorter pieces.

This endeavor should include some interaction with the world of letters. That is, if a student is revising a group of poems as her culminating project, she should investigate the market for contemporary poetry, find out where her work might find sympathetic readers, and prepare the poems for submission. The project, then, includes researching specific publication venues, becoming familiar with the conventions of submission, and revising work to prepare it for professional review. Ultimately, the project will provide students with the literary world's specific responses to their work.

Scholarly-critical prospectuses should include the following:

- A cover sheet with the student's name and contact information, the title of the proposed paper, and the director's name and signature (indicating approval).
- A discussion, usually 2-3 pages, of the project to be undertaken. This account should indicate what the original paper accomplished and perhaps where it fell short and should delineate the revisions that the student plans to make. Prospectuses **must** convey a clear sense of the scholarly conversation that has taken place on this topic and **must** indicate how the student plans to intervene in it.
- A bibliography (usually 1-2 pages), including relevant primary and secondary sources.
- Journal statement: This is a one-page statement identifying the academic journal for which the student is preparing his/her essay. Information on the publication itself should be included (scope, tone, prestige, typical length/style of articles, etc.), as well as an articulation of why the student's work will be appropriate for this venue.

Creative prospectuses should include the following:

- A cover sheet with the student's name and contact information, the title of the proposed work, and the director's name and signature (indicating approval).
- A discussion, usually 2-3 pages, of the project to be undertaken. This account should indicate what the original work accomplished and perhaps where it fell short and should delineate the revisions that the student plans to make.
- An account of the publishing venue(s) to which the student plans to submit the revised work. Information on the publications themselves should be included (scope, tone, style, prestige, etc.), as well as an articulation of why the work will be appropriate for these

venues.

- A brief sample of the student's creative writing, drawn from the material to be revised (e.g., a couple of poems, a brief short story, or an excerpt from a longer prose work).

Procedures and Reminders:

Culminating projects are completed under the guidance of a single faculty advisor rather than a three-person committee. The advisor has sole authority over approving the finished product. Near the end of the semester in which this approval has been granted, the student and his/her advisor will meet with the graduate committee to discuss the project at a time and date specified by the DGS.

Because the timetable for completing these projects is tight, and because the vast majority of prospectus rejections call for a refined or better-researched version of the proposed project rather than a wholesale change of topic, students should **NOT** wait for official prospectus approval to begin working on revisions. Projects typically go through many rounds of revision and commenting before they're approved; students and advisors should discuss preliminary deadlines (e.g., a deadline for submitting an initial draft) early in the process.

The student should give ONE copy of the final project to the program assistant by the due date listed in the program calendar. Submissions should include the following:

- *A cover sheet with the student's name and contact information, the project title, and the director's name and signature indicating his/her approval.
- *The project itself, which should be carefully edited and proofread.
- *For critical projects only, a one-page statement that identifies the target journal, discusses its scope, implied audience, methodological orientation, level of prestige, editorial policies, and submission requirements. This statement should also articulate why the completed project is an appropriate submission to this journal.

PROSPECTUS APPROVAL (applies to both theses and culminating projects)

The prospectus, once approved by the director, should be submitted (in double-spaced, typed format) to the DGS, who will select a review committee consisting of three faculty members who are NOT serving on the thesis committee itself. This committee will either approve the prospectus or require the student to revise and resubmit it. Faculty comments are kept on file in the program office; students are encouraged to read these comments carefully whether or not the prospectus is approved. Director approval can be indicated by a signature on the cover page of the document itself or by an email to the DGS.

Consult the program calendar for specific deadlines—theses and culminating projects have different prospectus deadlines. Be aware that thesis deadlines are typically quite early in the term—ideally, students who plan to write theses will compose and revise their prospectuses the semester before they intend to graduate.

If a prospectus fails, the student should meet with his/her advisor to discuss needed revisions. At

the advisor's discretion, the student may submit a revised prospectus that semester. In such cases, the usual rule (that a thesis prospectus must be submitted 8 weeks prior to the defense) will be waived, although the prospectus must be approved before a completed project can be submitted.

NOTE: If a student continues working on the project after the semester in which coursework is completed, he/she must register for master's candidacy each term (including summer) until graduation.

E. M.A. FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: The student must demonstrate reading proficiency in an approved foreign language. The foreign language requirement must be satisfied before the thesis can be defended. For more information, see page 19.

Ph.D. IN ENGLISH RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

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

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

Coursework in the doctoral program introduces the student to the teaching of writing, to current issues and research paradigms in rhetoric and composition, and to issues in literary studies. Students are also required to initiate and complete research in a specialized area of investigation. The department supports dissertations in rhetorical theory, the composing process, technology and composition, assessment, program administration, and historical rhetoric, and offers special expertise in the rhetoric of professional discourse and in connections between rhetorical and critical theory. While taking courses, most students also do supervised teaching in the First-Year Composition program; some have an opportunity as well to teach advanced writing or introductory literature courses. As a result, the English Department offers a site for pedagogical development and for practical research in the teaching of writing.

The student should finish the program able to teach, conduct research, and interact professionally on a variety of topics related to rhetoric and composition.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURES FOR THE Ph.D. PROGRAM

The Graduate committee considers applications to the Ph.D. program for **Fall admission only**. **Ph.D. application deadline: January 5. Please note that all application materials (except for the GTA application, which is sent directly to the English Graduate Department) must be forwarded to the department from the university's Graduate Admissions Office.**

Applicants to the doctoral program in English must send the following credentials to the **Office of Graduate Admissions; University of Louisville; Louisville, KY 40292**:

1. Application for Graduate Admission (including fee).
2. Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work. Applicants must already have (or must be scheduled to complete) an M.A. degree, preferably in English.
3. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores.
4. Three academic letters of recommendation. At least one letter that addresses the applicant's teaching experience and/or aptitude is desirable. Letters from employers outside of academe and personal references are not acceptable.

5. Writing sample -- applicants must supply a recent sample (15-20 pages) of their scholarly or critical writing that demonstrates their investigative and expository skills.
6. Statement of Professional Goals -- applicants must supply a written statement of no more than one thousand words detailing their goals in pursuing a doctoral degree in rhetoric and composition.
7. GTA application, including references who can speak to the applicant's teaching ability. (Include names and contact information only--letters are not required.) **The GTA application should be sent directly to the English Department (by January 5):**

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

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

ACCEPTANCE STATUS

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

- 1) Non-degree status. This category is for students who are not pursuing a specific degree. Only six (6) hours earned while in non-degree status can later be applied toward a graduate degree. Non-degree applicants must submit an undergraduate transcript (B.A. or B.S. degree required) and an application.
- 2) Degree status. This category is for students in good standing who are pursuing a specific degree.
- 3) Degree status--provisional. This status refers to students whose applications are incomplete at the time of admission. All missing credentials must be submitted by the end of the student's first term.
- 4) Degree status--special conditions. This status is reserved for a student whose credentials at the time of admission are weak in some respects, but are strong enough to warrant granting the student an opportunity to succeed in the program. In these cases the graduate committee establishes specific criteria for the student to be allowed to continue in the program beyond the initial trial period.

DEPARTMENTAL CLASSIFICATIONS FOR Ph.D. STUDENTS

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

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

- a. Ph.D. Conditional Student -- this is the status of all new students in the program until after the progress interview (in December of the second year), whether or not any specific conditions were attached to admission;
- b. Ph.D. Student -- until coursework is completed and comprehensive examinations have been passed; and
- c. Ph.D. Candidate -- until the dissertation is completed and accepted. Doctoral students must register for candidacy after completing coursework and successfully passing comprehensive examinations.

Ph.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - (51 graduate hours distributed as follows):

A. REQUIRED COURSES: 12 Hours

- **English 602: Teaching College Composition**
- **English 620: Introduction to Research in Composing *or* another course in Research Methods**
- **English 691: Contemporary Theories of Interpretation *or* English 692: Topics in Interpretive Theory**
- **English 689: Directed Reading for Comprehensive Preliminary Examinations**

B. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: 15 Hours from the following categories:

- **Pedagogy and Program Administration - 3 hours**
- **Rhetoric - 3 hours**
- **Literature - 9 hours** (Three of these hours can be taken in creative writing; in addition, one theory course, beyond the one required course listed above, can be used to meet this requirement.)

C. ELECTIVES: 12 Hours from offerings in **Rhetoric and Composition**; one elective may be taken outside these offerings, including a course outside the department.

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

E. Ph.D. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT: Ph.D. students must satisfy the general foreign language proficiency requirements as they are described on pages 19 - 21. Ph.D. students must satisfy two language requirements. Those who intend to specialize in some area of classical rhetoric are strongly advised to choose Latin or Greek as one of their foreign languages.

PROGRESS INTERVIEW

The DGS and members of the graduate committee conduct progress interviews in early December with all second-year Ph.D. students. The committee mainly wants to get a clear description of the student's graduate and professional goals and then, where necessary, suggest additional coursework and other preparation.

COMPREHENSIVE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

The structure of the comprehensive exams reflects the distinct identity of the University of Louisville Rhetoric and Composition program. Rather than simply defining themselves as specialists in a single area of English studies -- a procedure that does not fully prepare students for the jobs or departments in which most of them will spend their careers -- students are expected to demonstrate a variety of skills and a variety of ways to join the wide-ranging conversations of English studies as a profession.

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

Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition
Specified Research Area (SRA)
Specified Literature Area (SLA)

The Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition exam is taken by all students in a given semester on the same day. The SRA and SLA are different for each student, and thus are geared to meet the goals and schedules of individual students.

I. Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition Exam

The general exam in Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition tests students' breadth of knowledge in the field of Rhetoric and Composition and students' ability to participate in the field's conversations. The exam certifies that students can articulate individual responses to arguments in the field and have the ability to pursue individual scholarly research in Rhetoric and Composition.

All students taking comprehensives in any given semester will take the same Rhetoric and Composition examination, which will be composed and evaluated by a three-person committee appointed by the DGS. The comprehensive exams will be given at a date announced by the DGS in the previous semester.

The exam in Modern and Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition is a timed comprehensive

exam. The exam is meant to consist of three hours of writing with time for revision. Students will have a maximum of six hours to complete the exam. Students will be provided with a quiet space in which to take the exam, but may move to another location if they wish as long as the exam is completed within the six-hour time limit. Students are responsible for providing their own laptop computers for the exam.

The DGS will appoint a three-person exam evaluation committee the semester before comprehensives are to be taken. The three-person exam evaluation committee and the DGS will meet with graduate students that semester to guide them in preparing for the exam and to answer any questions students may have about the exam.

II. Specified Research Area (SRA) Exam

The SRA exam tests students' knowledge about a self-selected subset of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. The exam certifies that students are able to pursue independent research in their chosen area and advance their own arguments based on the reading they have done.

The doctoral student, in consultation with the DGS, puts together a three-person committee, with one member designated as the director, to guide the student's investigation in an area of Rhetoric and Composition that will lead to a specific research problem and a dissertation topic. This same committee will compose and evaluate a comprehensive exam for the student and, if possible, serve on the dissertation committee.

The doctoral student will work closely with his or her committee to compose a reading list and a proposal that details the goals and objectives for the exam. The student decides whether the SRA should be a 3-hour timed exam (with up to 6 hours to complete it) or a take-home exam (consisting of a maximum of 6,000 words, to be returned to the Director of Graduate Studies within 48 hours). Students choosing the take-home format will have access to books and other resources. Examiners will write questions appropriate to the chosen format.

Guidelines for preparing the SRA proposal and reading list:

The doctoral student, in consultation with his or her committee, will prepare a brief proposal to accompany the reading list for the SRA. The proposal should be no more than 1500 words (not including the reading list). When preparing their proposals, students are expected to look at copies of past proposals and exam questions, which are available from the graduate program assistant.

The SRA proposal should include the following:

1. A statement indicating when the student plans to take the exam and whether the exam will follow a 3-6 hour timed format or a take-home exam with 48 hours to complete and access to books and other resources.
2. A list of the members of the committee.

3. A statement of the specific goals or objectives the candidate hopes to accomplish or the questions he or she wishes to answer while reading for the comprehensives. The questions and goals that students articulate will shape the types of questions they will receive on the exam.
4. A succinct description of the proposed comprehensive area, including a list of the major topics or issues the candidate will be responsible for: these issues should be reflected in the reading list attached to the proposal. The relevance of the SRA to the field of Rhetoric and Composition must be clear.
5. A description of how the SRA will lead to a dissertation topic in Rhetoric and Composition.
6. A list of study questions that will guide the student's reading. Examiners typically consult this list of questions when preparing the exam questions.

III. Specified Literature Area (SLA) Exam

The SLA invites students to articulate a secondary research area in literary studies that will complement their research in Rhetoric and Composition and/or to develop competence in a secondary area that will help them achieve breadth as teachers. The exam certifies that students can engage in interdisciplinary thinking that will help them achieve breadth as scholars and/or teachers.

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

The doctoral student will work closely with his or her committee to compose a reading list and a proposal that details the goals and objectives for the exam. The student decides whether the SLA should be a 3-hour timed exam (with up to 6 hours to complete it) or a take-home exam (consisting of a maximum of 6,000 words) to be returned to the Director of Graduate Studies within 48 hours. Students choosing the take-home format will have access to books and other resources. Examiners will write questions appropriate to the chosen format.

Guidelines for preparing the SLA proposal and reading list:

The doctoral student, in consultation with his or her committee, will prepare a brief proposal to accompany the reading list for the SLA. The proposal should be no more than 1500 words (not including the reading list). When preparing their proposals, students are expected to look at copies of past proposals and exam questions, which are available from the graduate program assistant.

The SLA proposal should include the following:

1. A statement indicating when the student plans to take the exam and whether the exam will follow a 3-6 hour timed format or a take-home exam with 48 hours to complete and access to books and other resources.

list of the members of the committee.

3. A statement of the specific goals or objectives the candidate hopes to accomplish or the questions he or she wishes to answer reading for the comprehensives.
Students should articulate the specific functions that their SLA serves in their preparation as researchers and/or teachers. Specifically, students should articulate whether the SLA serves a pedagogical or research function or both. The questions and goals that students articulate will shape the types of questions they will receive on the exam.

4. A

succinct description of the proposed comprehensive area, including a list of the major topics or issues the candidate will be responsible for: these issues should be reflected in the reading list attached to the proposal. Students are expected to look at copies of former exams when preparing their proposals.

5. A

description of how the SLA will serve the student's research and/or teaching interests.

6. A list

of study questions that will guide the student's reading. Examiners typically consult this list of questions when preparing the exam questions.

IV. Scheduling the SRA and SLA exams

- All three exams must be taken the same semester; the failure to complete all three exams in the same semester will result in the student's failing any exam that he or she does not take.
- The entire SRA/SLA exam committee must approve the proposal and reading list before they are submitted to the Graduate Program Assistant. The submission deadline is **one month** prior to the date of the exam.
- The SRA/SLA may be scheduled to occur no earlier than three weeks after the first day of regularly scheduled classes for the semester.
- The SRA/SLA may be scheduled to occur no later than the last day of regularly scheduled classes.
- The student must give the DGS a proposed timetable for taking the exams by the end of the first week of regularly scheduled classes for the semester. Exam dates can be changed only with the approval of the DGS.

V. Unsuccessful examinations

The following policies apply to those who unsuccessfully sit the Comprehensive Preliminary examinations:

- Students who fail one or more specific examination(s) (General, SRA, SLA) must retake the failed exam(s) within two semesters.
- Students may attempt each examination twice
- Students who either 1) fail a specific exam twice or 2) fail the entire comprehensive

preliminary examination series twice must withdraw from graduate school and may apply for re-admission to the program no sooner than six months after the date of withdrawal. There is no guarantee of re-admission

- A student who fails a set of comprehensives three times or a single comprehensive three times must leave the program permanently.

VI. Progress after the examinations

Successful completion of the Comprehensive Preliminary Examinations admits a student to formal candidacy for the doctorate.

Students who fail to make progress after successfully passing comprehensives may be required to re-sit the comprehensive examination:

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

1. re-sit the SRA examination to encourage progress on the dissertation, or
2. re-sit all three examinations.

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

B. The graduate committee may require a candidate to take a new SRA examination if the student significantly changes the topic of the dissertation after successfully taking comprehensive exams. The committee reviews the original SRA proposal, the original examination, and a description of the new dissertation project in order to make this decision.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate Catalog requires that at least one year be spent in full-time residency (two consecutive semester of full-time enrollment) at the University of Louisville before the doctorate is awarded. All exceptions and special cases will go before the English department graduate committee, which will forward its recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

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

DISSERTATION

The final and most important part of doctoral training here is the dissertation, which is a scholarly-critical contribution to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Students should expect to devote at least a full year of graduate study to the dissertation. See page 22 for the Procedures for Theses and Dissertations.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

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

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

1. DEPARTMENTAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Pass the departmental foreign language proficiency examination, which is given once each semester and once each summer. The program calendar includes the registration deadline and the time and place of each term's examination. When registering for the examination, students must submit the grader's fee of \$20.00 IN CASH to the Graduate Program Assistant in Bingham 315. The grader's fee is *not refundable*. The exam is usually given on a Saturday morning from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The examination requires that, during a period of three hours, the student complete a translation, with the use of a dictionary, of a 500+ word passage of critical (academic) prose. The passage will be of medium difficulty, of the sort one might reasonably expect to find in scholarly or critical articles and books on a literary subject. Students taking the exam in Latin or Greek will translate a somewhat shorter passage drawn from a primary text. The aim of

the examination is to demonstrate the student's capacity to read critical prose (or in the case of Latin and Greek, to read primary materials) in another language well enough to further coursework and research. The proficiency examination may be repeated.

2. SATISFACTION OF REQUIREMENT AT ANOTHER INSTITUTION

Submit proofs of proficiency that have been used to satisfy graduate foreign language requirements at another institution.

An undergraduate major in an approved foreign language or proof of superior ("A-" or better) work in a 300-level class taken as an undergraduate (or "B-" or better work in a 500-level class) can also be used to satisfy the requirement. Courses taught in English translation do not qualify.

The graduate committee will decide cases in which a question arises concerning these credentials.

3. SATISFACTION OF REQUIREMENT THROUGH COURSEWORK

Pass, with a grade of "A-" or better, a 300-level or with a grade of "B-" or above, a 500-level University of Louisville undergraduate course in an approved language. Courses taught in English translation do not qualify. The English graduate committee must approve these courses (or equivalent courses taken at other institutions).

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

OPTION ONE: Satisfy both language requirements by means listed above.

OPTION TWO: The student must pass the requirement for the first language by transcript or other verification, or by examination. Then the student may demonstrate the ability to use that language at an advanced level in his/her research. The DGS will negotiate with the Department of Classical and Modern Languages for participation by a member of that department who can certify this ability. That formal certification will count for the second language requirement. The Department does not guarantee that a member of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages will always be available to certify this advanced level of ability.

OPTION THREE: This is a combination of language requirement and research or retrieval skills. The student would satisfy the first language requirement by transcript or other verification, or by examination. Then for (or in place of) the second language requirement, the student may do one of the following, in consultation with the DGS and the student's Specified Research Area Committee or other faculty mentor(s):

1. Pass, with a grade of "B-" or above, an advanced (500+ level) statistics course.
2. Pass, with a grade of "B-" or above, a computer language course (or a technology course offered in the English department that is designated as fulfilling the second language requirement for doctoral students) that will have a clear function in the

student's plan of research or teaching. Students must consult with the DGS about taking advantage of this option.

3. In consultation with the DGS and a faculty mentor, propose and carry out a technology project that has either pedagogical or research applications.

PROCEDURES FOR THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

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

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

Second, the student composes a prospectus; the advisor should supervise the preparation of the prospectus and give final approval. The prospectus is then submitted to the DGS, **along with a proposed thesis or dissertation committee**. For information on the composition of committees, see p. 6 (for M.A. theses) or p. 23 (for dissertations). The **prospectus must be approved at least three months prior to the final oral examination**. As soon as your committee has been approved, you should submit a **Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee form** to the DGS, who will forward it to the Graduate School.

Third, the student writes the thesis or dissertation, allowing readers to comment on its progress CHAPTER BY CHAPTER.

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

Finally, in keeping with the deadline announced in the program calendar, the student must submit the following:

one unbound copy (on 25 % cotton paper) with original signatures to the Graduate School;
one bound copy to the advisor;
one bound (hard cover) copy to the English Department.

Ph.D. dissertations must include a 350-word abstract; M.A. theses must include a 150-word abstract. Other submission and formatting information is available from the graduate school. Students should email Courtney Kerr (clkerr01@gwise.louisville.edu) two months prior to the submission deadline to schedule an appointment to have the document's formatting approved.

Ph.D.: PROSPECTUS FOR A DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

COMPOSITION OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

A doctoral dissertation committee includes the advisor, three additional members of the English graduate faculty, and a member of the graduate faculty from outside the department of English. This “outside reader” can instead be chosen from another university (any department, including English); in such cases, the department must request term graduate faculty status for the non-U of L reader. The additional members of the English graduate faculty must include one member whose scholarly work does not reside primarily in Rhetoric and Composition. In special circumstances, students with highly specialized dissertation topics may petition the graduate committee for an exemption from this requirement.

The membership of the dissertation committee and an approved prospectus must be on file with the DGS at least three months prior to the dissertation defense.

PROSPECTUS GUIDELINES FOR DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

The prospectus communicates the student’s desire to write a dissertation on a given topic and demonstrates that this topic can result in a successful piece of scholarship. The prospectus consists of 15-20 pages, plus a bibliography. It typically describes a project that can be completed in eighteen months to two years. Like any proposal, a prospectus is a persuasive document. In general, its rhetorical goals are to persuade the reader:

1. that the proposed project addresses a significant problem or question. That is, the document gives a clear sense of how this research might matter to the discipline. What might change as a result of this research? What difference will it make to others working in the field? In making this case, the student should indicate what has already been published on this issue and should articulate how this project fits with and adds to that existing conversation.
2. that the proposed project is feasible. That is, the document demonstrates that the proposed project is well thought out and can be completed in a timely manner.

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

INTRODUCTION. What background information does the reader need in order to understand the proposal? This section orients the reader to the ensuing document.

ARTICULATION OF THE PROBLEM OR TOPIC. What specific problem(s) or topic(s) will your research treat? What rationale can you offer for this project? Why is this problem or topic significant? Whom will it interest? What areas or questions will you cover and what will you exclude—in other words, what is the scope of the project? This section not only states the problem or topic, but indicates how and why it might matter to the field. In this section you should answer what is commonly called the “so what” question.

RESEARCH QUESTION(S). These should be clearly stated with operational definitions

provided, as needed. What are the precise goals or objectives of your study? What specific questions will you attempt to answer? This section gives the reader a clear sense of what your project will achieve. (It may repeat, in a more concise and/or specific form, material included in previous sections.)

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE (WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHY APPENDED).

What previous research is relevant to your project? How does your project relate to and move beyond what has been done by others? What kinds of gaps or dissonances have you discovered in previous research and how will your work address them? What areas of previous research support your work? This section locates your project within existing research in your field. The proposal must convince readers that the project is sufficiently connected to established work in the field to be relevant to the discipline and that the project offers sufficient new knowledge to be worth pursuing.

PLAN OF RESEARCH FOR AN EMPIRICAL DISSERTATION. What do you propose to do in order to answer your research questions? This section shows the reader that you have a feasible and well-thought-out research design. To make this case, you will need to specify the following in some detail (as appropriate):

1. Research hypotheses
2. Subjects (how you will select them; what kind of permission you will need to obtain.
3. Treatment (if appropriate)—that is, what is your intervention?
4. Data gathering methods
5. Data analysis methods (including means of assuring reliability and/or any statistical treatments you plan to use and/or approaches to analyzing qualitative data).
6. Budget (if applicable)
7. supporting documents (pilot studies, sample materials, etc.)
8. IRB status (or plan and timetable for securing IRB approval)

**For more information on the IRB approval process, go to <http://research.louisville.edu/UHSC>. Note that the “principal investigator” for IRB purposes is the dissertation director rather than the student.

PLAN OF RESEARCH FOR A THEORETICAL, CRITICAL, OR ARCHIVAL

DISSERTATION. How do you plan to answer your research questions? What theoretical and/or historical context(s) will you use to pursue those questions? What kinds of evidence will you use? On which central texts will you draw? This section shows the reader that you have a feasible and well-thought-out plan for developing your dissertation’s argument.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS. How will your dissertation be structured? This section, which may be combined with your plan of research, typically provides an overview of each chapter.

TIMELINE. What specific activities do you plan to carry out and how much time will you spend on each? When do you plan to finish each stage? This section demonstrates that you can complete the project in a timely manner.

The prospectus may also, of course, include additional information that will assist readers in

estimating the value and practicality of the topic. Remember that a proposal is an informative and persuasive document: clarity, concision, and thoroughness are crucial.

The prospectus is not simply a formality but an essential first step in producing a successful dissertation. That said, the prospectus should not be conceived of as a strict contract—elements may shift as you execute the project. A new prospectus is necessary only if these changes constitute a marked change of topic. If a question arises as to whether a project has changed so dramatically that a new prospectus is required, the graduate committee will make the determination, taking into account the assessment of the dissertation director.

The prospectus should be written as soon as the student has completed the necessary preliminary reading and research. Proposals should not be thought through in isolation, but with the help of committee members and colleagues who can help anticipate problems and suggest solutions.

PROSPECTUS APPROVAL PROCESS

1. The student prepares the prospectus in consultation with his/her director and other committee members.
2. When the director and student feel that the prospectus is ready for review, the student will distribute copies to all dissertation committee members, including the outside reader (that is, if the outside reader is on board at that point in the process). The entire committee will meet face to face with the student to discuss the prospectus in detail. The outside reader, if named, is invited to this meeting but his/her participation is optional. If the committee is not unanimously satisfied with the prospectus, the student returns to step 1. If the entire committee approves the document, the student will submit the signed approval sheet to the DGS.

FINANCIAL AID

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowships are awarded to Ph.D. applicants competitively through all the graduate programs of the University, upon a recommendation from the home department. Fellowships carry full tuition remission, with no teaching duties except those required for teaching while completing an internship. They are renewable for a total of two years upon a recommendation from the home department.

Applicants who wish to be considered for a Fellowship must have **all** materials in by January 5.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

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

10-month Graduate Teaching Assistants receive tuition remission for 24 credit hours a year, to be used in fall and spring terms only. Twelve-month GTAs receive summer tuition remission as well and are required to teach one section in the summer or perform other duties, according to departmental needs.

Applications for Graduate Teaching Assistantships

The graduate committee can guarantee consideration only to those applicants whose files are complete by January 5. Applications should be submitted to the DGS (not the Graduate Admissions Office). Announcements of GTA awards or of an applicant's status in the competition will be made by April 1. An agreement among graduate schools nationwide requires that students accept or reject such offers by April 15.

Responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants

Responsibilities of GTAs are outlined in the letter of agreement that is sent with the offer. GTAs are required to carry a full load of academic work to remain eligible for support. For GTAs in English, "full load" means taking 9 hours of coursework in both the Fall and Spring semesters. University Fellows and students holding twelve-month GTAs must also take 6 hours in the summer. These can be dissertation hours rather than coursework. Graduate Teaching Assistantships are awarded to support the student's graduate work and cannot continue beyond the end of the semester in which the student has satisfied the requirements for the degree.

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

GTAs who are teaching in the composition program for the first time must take English 602:

Teaching College Composition, during the Fall semester.

Student duties as GTAs also require that they attend Department and University orientation sessions and participate in staff development sessions. The Director of Composition and the Director of the Writing Center will send more information about these activities early in the summer.

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

1. The student has taken a comparable graduate course at another university.
2. The student has had supervised teaching experience in an English graduate program that provided experience similar to English 602.

The student should present the request for such an exception in writing to the Director of Composition, who will forward a recommendation to the graduate committee for approval.

Renewal of Graduate Teaching Assistantships

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

GTA renewals are not automatic; renewal depends on an evaluation of the candidate's academic record and his/her performance of GTA duties. The Graduate committee, in consultation with the Director of Composition and the Director of the Writing Center, makes this evaluation. Current GTAs will receive a renewal letter during the Spring semester. Students who wish to accept this renewal must return the letter by the given deadline to the DGS.

PART-TIME TEACHING

Sections in the Composition Program are sometimes available to graduate students at part-time rates. These sections are awarded according to amount of previous teaching experience, progress toward graduate degrees, recommendations, teaching evaluations, and specific program needs. Graduate students may not teach more than three sections a semester.

Occasionally, advanced graduate students may be asked to teach other courses in the English department and/or humanities division. These courses are typically awarded to students who are close to completing their Ph.D. degree requirements.

SUMMER TEACHING

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

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

PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

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

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

ADDITIONAL M.A. and Ph.D. POLICIES

ADVISING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

The DGS, in consultation with the graduate committee, supervises graduate registration and advises all English graduate students. Each semester, students must schedule an advising appointment with the DGS before they can be cleared to register for classes. Students who register for English graduate courses on their own must take full responsibility for any mistake about degree requirements. Tuition remission for courses not necessary for the degree will be granted at the discretion of the DGS.

CANDIDACY REGISTRATION

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

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

DEGREE APPLICATION

The Application for Degree form in the semester in which the student plans to graduate submitted to the Graduate School. As of Fall 2005, these applications must be submitted via U-Link. Deadlines are included in the English Department program calendar. All degrees require minor graduation fees.

INCOMPLETES

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

INDEPENDENT STUDY (ENGLISH 613 and 614) APPROVAL

Forms for requesting an independent study are available from the graduate program assistant in HM 315; they must be filled out and signed by both the student and professor before they are submitted to the graduate committee for approval. Proposals must adhere to the following guidelines:

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

graduate student's overall course of study.

3. Independent studies must be approved by the graduate committee before the student may register. The graduate committee will check to ensure that the proposal does not duplicate existing courses or conflict with the objectives of the student's program.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS TOWARD THE DEGREE

Satisfactory progress toward the degree requires the following: regular enrollment in graduate courses, consistent satisfaction of course requirements within given time limits, and maintenance of an appropriate grade point average (minimum 3.0). Failure to pursue coursework for the degree on an orderly schedule consistent with the student's other duties, a history of incompletes in courses, or the acquisition of two or more grades of "C" or below will be cause for a review of the student's records by the Graduate committee with the aim of determining whether the student should continue in good standing, be placed on probationary status, be withdrawn from the program, or be encouraged to transfer to some other academic program. After moving to candidacy, Ph.D. students should take no longer than six months to get a dissertation prospectus approved; the dissertation should normally be finished within the next twelve to eighteen months. M.A. students often complete theses or culminating projects while completing coursework.

The DGS, in consultation with the thesis or dissertation director, decides whether or not a student is making satisfactory progress. The Graduate School catalog states that the candidate must complete all requirements for the degree of Ph.D. within four calendar years after passing the comprehensive examinations. In exceptional cases, the Dean of the Graduate School is empowered to grant limited extensions.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR COURSEWORK

Coursework taken more than six years ago at this or another institution cannot be counted toward the M.A. or Ph.D. degrees. In special circumstances, the student may petition the graduate committee for an exception. Submit petitions of this sort to the DGS, who will forward them with his/her recommendation to the graduate committee. Final approval must be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Students may be permitted to transfer up to six hours of comparable coursework from other graduate institutions toward a graduate degree. At least twenty-four hours at the master's level and forty-five hours (33 hours of coursework plus 12 dissertation hours) at the doctoral level must be completed at the University of Louisville. Students who wish to transfer course credit must first be admitted, then petition the English Department by describing in detail the courses for which they wish to receive transfer credit (including a general course description, a transcript, and a syllabus or reading list describing the course or courses to be transferred). The English Department Graduate committee will decide whether to recommend that the transfer credit be accepted. Final approval must be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School.

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT APPROVAL IN 600-LEVEL COURSES

1. Normally, undergraduates are not admitted into 600-level courses.
2. Exceptions are made only for students who have completed upper-level undergraduate courses in the area covered by the 600-level course that the student is petitioning to take.
3. Exceptions will be approved only when the instructor of the 600-level course supports, with a letter, the student's petition. This letter should comment on the student's ability to do the kind of research and writing normally expected in a 600-level course.
4. Signatures from both the 600-level course instructor and the DGS (as certification of graduate committee approval) are required before the Graduate School will allow the student to register.

A NOTE ON THE SHARING OF DOCUMENTS

The program considers all prospectuses (for theses, dissertations, and culminating projects) and all SRA/SLA proposals to be public documents, which can be shared with other students in the program. Students who want their proposals and/or prospectuses to be kept confidential must append a written and signed statement to that effect to the documents in question.

INDEX

Acceptance Status - M.A.....	12
Acceptance Status - Ph.D.....	12
Advising.....	29
Application Procedures - M.A.....	5
Application Procedures - Ph.D.....	11
Candidacy Registration.....	29
Comprehensive Exams.....	14
Culminating Projects.....	7
Degree, Application for.....	29
Degree Requirements - M.A.....	6
Degree Requirements - Ph.D.....	13
Degree, Satisfactory Progress toward.....	30
Departmental Graduate Administration.....	4
Progress Interview.....	14
Dissertation.....	19
Dissertation Procedures.....	22
Fellowships.....	26
Financial Aid.....	26
Foreign Language Requirements.....	19
Graduate Degrees Offered.....	4
Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA).....	26
Incompletes.....	29
Independent Study.....	29
Internships.....	28
M.A. Program.....	5
Non-Thesis Option.....	7
Part-time Teaching.....	27
Ph.D. Classifications.....	13
Ph.D. Program.....	11
Professional Requirements.....	19
Prospectus Procedures.....	22
Dissertation.....	22
Thesis.....	7
Residence Requirements.....	18
Sharing of Documents.....	31
SLA/SRA Guidelines.....	14-18

Statute of Limitations for Coursework.....	30
Summer Teaching.....	28
Thesis Option.....	6
Thesis Procedure.....	22
Transfer Credit.....	30
Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses.....	31