

# HANDBOOK FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN ENGLISH

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## FOREWORD

Graduate Study is for those students committed to a discipline. We have designed our curriculum to enable you to prepare for a career or for further graduate work. We try to guide you effectively in pursuing either of these goals by:

1. requiring certain fundamental courses;
2. offering a reasonably broad choice of electives;
3. making personal advising readily available; and
4. providing informed, conscientious teaching of high quality.

At the same time, we do not require specialization; nor do we require a foreign language-- though we recommend proficiency in French, German, Italian, or Latin, especially if you contemplate going on for a Ph.D.

Whatever your intentions or expectations, we believe that you will find our program interesting and challenging.

**Jeff Karem**  
**Chair**

## Contact Information

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## GRADUATE FACULTY IN ENGLISH

### With Main Fields of Interest and Specialization

Julie Burrell, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts/Amherst ([j.m.burrell@csuohio.edu](mailto:j.m.burrell@csuohio.edu))

- Assistant Professor
- 20th-century American literature, African American literature, American drama, performance studies

Rachel Carnell, Ph.D., Boston University ([r.carnell@csuohio.edu](mailto:r.carnell@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- 18th-century British literature; the rise of the novel; feminist theory

Brooke Conti, Ph.D., Yale University ([b.conti@csuohio.edu](mailto:b.conti@csuohio.edu))

- Associate Professor
- Renaissance; Early English literature; the intersection of religion and literature in the 17<sup>th</sup> century

Gary R. Dyer, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania ([g.dyer28@csuohio.edu](mailto:g.dyer28@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- 19th-century British literature; transatlantic literary relations

Melanie Gagich, MA, Kent State University ([m.gagich@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.gagich@csuohio.edu))

- Associate College Lecturer
- composition

Michael Geither, MFA, University of Iowa ([m.geither@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.geither@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- Playwriting, drama

Adrienne Johnson Gosselin, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati ([a.gosselin@csuohio.edu](mailto:a.gosselin@csuohio.edu))

- Associate Professor
- African-American literature and critical theory; cultural studies; feminist theory; creative writing

Jennifer M. Jeffers, Ph. D., Emory University ([j.m.jeffers53@csuohio.edu](mailto:j.m.jeffers53@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- 20th-century British and Anglophone Literature, Modern Drama, Contemporary Cultural and Critical Theory, Samuel Beckett

F. Jeffrey Karem, Ph. D., Yale University ([f.karem@csuohio.edu](mailto:f.karem@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- 20th-century American Literature; Ethnic Literature; Regional Literature
- Chair

Ted Lardner, Ph.D., University of Michigan ([t.lardner@csuohio.edu](mailto:t.lardner@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- Composition theory; rhetoric; creative writing

James Marino, Ph.D., Stanford; MFA, University of Massachusetts ([j.marino22@csuohio.edu](mailto:j.marino22@csuohio.edu))

- Associate Professor
- Shakespeare, Renaissance Literature, fiction writing

Mary Murray McDonald, Ph.D., Purdue University ([m.murray@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.murray@csuohio.edu))

- Director of the Writing Center
- Rhetoric, Composition Theory

Caryl Pagel, MFA Creative Writing, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago; MFA Poetry, Iowa Writers' Workshop ([c.pagel@csuohio.edu](mailto:c.pagel@csuohio.edu))

- Assistant Professor
- Poetry, creative non-fiction

Hilary Plum, MFA Creative Writing/Fiction, UMass Amherst ([h.plum@csuohio.edu](mailto:h.plum@csuohio.edu))

- Associate College Lecturer
- Creative Writing, fiction, non-fiction

Imad Rahman, MFA, University of Florida ([imadrahman@yahoo.com](mailto:imadrahman@yahoo.com))

- Associate Professor
- Director of the Creative Writing Programming
- Creative Writing, especially fiction

Adam Sonstegard, Ph.D., Washington University ([s.sonstegard@csuohio.edu](mailto:s.sonstegard@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature, Literature in the Visual Arts, composition, advanced composition, technical writing
- Director, Graduate Studies in English

### **Emeritus and Retired Faculty**

Earl R. Anderson, Ph.D., University of Oregon ([e.anderson@csuohio.edu](mailto:e.anderson@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- Old English; Middle English

John C. Gerlach, Ph.D., Arizona State University ([j.gerlach@csuohio.edu](mailto:j.gerlach@csuohio.edu))

- Professor and Chair
- 19th-century American literature; Emily Dickinson; fiction writing; the short story

David M. Larson, Ph.D., University of Minnesota ([d.larson@csuohio.edu](mailto:d.larson@csuohio.edu))

- Associate Professor
- Early American literature; 18th-century British literature; contemporary autobiography and memoir

Glending Olson, Ph.D., Stanford University ([g.olson@csuohio.edu](mailto:g.olson@csuohio.edu))

- Professor
- Medieval literature; Chaucer

## OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### ADMISSION

A major in English or a 6-course **concentration** (16 semester credit hours or 24 quarter credit hours) is required before consideration for admission.

If you have a minimum 2.75 overall undergraduate GPA, and a 3.0 in English, apply for Regular status. In addition to the application materials required by the Graduate College submit an eight- to ten-page essay to the Director of Graduate Studies in English.

If you don't have a minimum 2.75:

- Apply to the Director for Non-degree Status: complete three courses with at least a "B." Then conversion to Regular status is made at your request. OR
- Submit GRE scores at the 50th percentile or above, and then apply for Regular status. See the current Graduate Bulletin for additional information.

The deadline for applying for **Financial Assistance** for the following academic year (teaching assistantships and tuition waivers) is February 1. Write or call the Director of Graduate Studies.

### ADVISING WHILE TAKING COURSES

Students should see a **graduate advisor** from the list of graduate faculty for advising each semester. The advisor will review the student's progress and plans and approve the registration if necessary.

Each spring, before registration, please see or write the professor for brief descriptions of courses for summer and the following year.

### THESIS AND GRADUATION

- 1) Before registering for **The Master's Thesis**, a student must complete a thesis approval form, available from the Director of Graduate Studies, the secretarial staff, or downloaded from the Graduate College web site. The first step is to find a first reader who works in the area of your thesis topic. Once the student is registered for the thesis, the first reader becomes the student's advisor. See the handbook entry on the Andrews Award for possible financial aid while writing the thesis.
- 2) Students should file for graduation early in the semester before the semester in which they intend to graduate. See "Apply to Graduate" link in your personal record in CampusNet.
- 3) Students ready to defend their thesis should arrange with the three readers a time for the **MASTER'S EXAMINATION**, and inform the secretary of the chairman of the department (RT 1815) of the time.
- 4) Check the sections of the handbook dealing with
  - a) **Style and mechanical specifications for the thesis**
  - b) **Guidelines for preparing Abstracts**
  - c) **Procedure for Advisor approval and deposit**

Final deposit copies are due no later than the last day of classes of the semester of the student's graduation.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The M.A. program in English at Cleveland State University provides a broad foundation in the study of literature, the techniques of criticism, composition theory and rhetoric, and creative writing. The program is designed to meet the needs of teachers and writers seeking professional training and credentials, students planning to go on to doctoral programs at other universities, and others preparing for a profession or pursuing cultural interests.

The English M.A. program's principal goals are to develop in its graduates

- A. The skills to interpret texts of all kinds and to defend their interpretations effectively;
- B. Excellent facility in written and spoken language;
- C. A thorough awareness of at least one particular field within the study of writing, literature, theory, cultural studies, linguistics, or pedagogy;
- D. The capacity to produce scholarly, critical, or creative written work in the genres and of the quality that could lead to publication in reputable venues.

To accommodate schedules, many classes are offered between four and eight p.m. weeknights. A few courses are offered online and during summer sessions.

### Admission to the program

A bachelor's degree with a major or a **concentration** in English, and a general grade point average of 2.75 and of 3.00 in English courses, is a minimum requirement for admission, though satisfying these minimums will not guarantee admission. (A concentration is defined as a minimum of 24 quarter credits or 16 semester credits beyond Freshman English). Students without a sufficient number of undergraduate courses in English are required to take undergraduate courses as specified by the Graduate Director. Such concentrations normally emphasize British and American literature surveys and courses that stress writing about literature.

Those interested in applying for admission must submit the following:

1. Application
2. Undergraduate transcripts
3. Two letters of recommendation
4. Statement of purpose
5. Analytic writing sample of at least ten pages

Normally, applications take about two months to process, but students may be admissible with nondegree status while applications are pending. Application forms are available on line at <http://www.csuohio.edu/gradcollege/admissions/apply.html>. Applicants for teaching assistantships have additional requirements, which is described below under the heading "Graduate Assistantships."

### Sequence of courses

Course sequence is flexible, but we recommend that the core requirements be completed as soon as possible. Core courses will be offered once each academic year, and most students will have no difficulty making up their schedules. We intend to reflect the needs of our students in the scheduling of courses, so please make your preferences known to us.

### Course loads

Graduate courses require more work than undergraduate courses. Students who have full-time jobs are advised to take only one graduate course per semester, at least until they can accurately gauge their ability to meet successfully the demands of graduate work. A few students have been able to

complete their program in a calendar year. Most students will be wise to stretch their programs over four or more semesters.

### **Advising: selecting courses**

A student enrolling in the program should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to plan a program and choose appropriate courses. Before registering in subsequent semesters, all students ought to see the Director or one of the graduate advisors to review their programs and agree on what courses to take.

Students should feel free at all times to talk with the Director or any members of the graduate faculty about academic and professional decisions and problems.

### **Graduation**

When you decide that you are approaching graduation, ***remember to apply for graduation your next-to-last semester.*** See the "Apply to Graduate" link in your personal record in CampusNet.

### **Summary of Requirements for the M.A. Degree**

Candidates will be recommended for the Master of Arts degree on completing the following requirements with an overall average of B (3.0) or better:

## **Requirements for the M.A. Degree with a LITERATURE TRACK WITH THESIS**

The M.A. in English with a Concentration in Literature allows students to focus on literature, critical theory, cultural studies, linguistics, and/or pedagogy.

### **Literature Track with Thesis: Degree Requirements (33-credit minimum)**

1. **Core courses (6 credits):** ENG 600 and ENG 601
2. **Graduate Seminars (12 credits):** ENG 695 (at least four seminars, with change in topic)
3. **Electives (9 credits):** Three graduate electives in English numbered 500 or higher. No more than 6 credits of independent study may be counted toward the degree.
4. **Thesis (6 credits):** EITHER 6 credits of ENG 699 (Thesis) OR 3 credits of ENG 699 and 3 credits of ENG 698 (Pre-Thesis Colloquium). To earn these credits, the student must prepare an acceptable master's thesis of 30 to 50 pages, written under the direction of a three person committee of English graduate faculty.
5. **A successful Master's Examination based on the student's thesis topic** (graded Pass, Honors, or High Honors).

## **Requirements for the M.A. Degree with a LITERATURE TRACK WITH PORTFOLIO**

### **Literature Track with Portfolio: Degree Requirements (36-credit minimum)**

1. **Core courses (6 credits):** ENG 600 and ENG 601
2. **Graduate Seminars (18 credits)** ENG 695 (at least six seminars, with a change of topic)
3. **Electives (12 credits)** Four Graduate electives in English numbered 500 or higher. No more than 6 credits of independent study may be counted toward degree requirements.
4. **Portfolio:** A portfolio of writing from advanced coursework, submitted for review by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester in which the student applies to graduate. The portfolio is typically four seminar papers from English 695 and an 8-10 page critical introduction by the student.

- 5. Degree Completion Plan:** A degree completion plan, indicating a student's decision to follow the non-thesis option, submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies after the student completes 18 hours of coursework. The degree completion plan lists the courses the student intends to use to fill remaining requirements and the semester in which the student plans to submit a portfolio.

There is no foreign language requirement, though students are encouraged to learn at least one foreign language.

*Composition course requirements for teaching assistants:* Graduate students who are beginning as teaching assistants must take ENG 506 and ENG 507. ENG 507 credits do not count towards the 12 credits of electives in the degree requirements. Graduate students who completed ENG 308 Composition Theory as undergraduates are required to attend ENG 506 sessions in fall semester but should not register for credit for this course. Graduate students who completed four credits of ENG 309 Writing Center Practicum as undergraduates are required to attend ENG 507 workshops in fall semester but should not register for this course.

### **Pursuing the Ph.D.**

Many of our graduates continue their educations in schools offering a doctoral degree. Students interested in the Ph.D. are encouraged to consult with faculty members about further study.

We strongly recommend that students interested in the Ph.D. prepare themselves by taking at least one foreign language, if they have not already done so. Students wishing to earn a Ph.D. elsewhere should also note that for many Ph.D. programs, the application deadline for admission and financial support is January 1 or even earlier.

### **Outcomes**

M.A. Graduates should be able to

1. Demonstrate the ability to interpret texts and to defend these interpretations effectively.
2. Demonstrate the ability to focus on and define a problem; work on this problem must have the potential to advance scholarly or pedagogical work in the field.
3. Demonstrate the ability to synthesize an approach to the problem by drawing on the significant relevant scholarship.
4. Render his/her analysis in compelling prose, and in a form suitable for publication in reputable venues. The writing ought to be as clear as the nature of the subject will permit.
5. Situate his/her findings within current scholarly or critical debate on this topic; the student should be able to do so both orally and in his or her written work.
6. Demonstrate awareness of the limits of his or her claims or analytic approach.

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

The primary function of independent study (ENG 596) is to allow the student to examine in some depth a topic growing out of 500- or 600- level English courses or topics not available in the department's regular offerings. All independent study courses must be approved by the department's Committee on Graduate Studies. Independent studies are not designed to help students overcome scheduling difficulties, including the need to graduate within a certain time. The committee will not approve independent studies on these grounds. The following regulations govern independent study:

1. Independent study is for regular graduate students of proven ability who have demonstrated a readiness to undertake the proposed projects.
2. The proposed course must not duplicate a course already in the Bulletin, whether or not that course is being given in the semester/year for which the Independent Study is proposed. If the proposed independent study appears to be a duplicate but is not, the difference should be made clear.
3. The student should demonstrate to the instructor supervising the study that she/he has the necessary background to undertake the proposed course of study.
4. No more than 3 credits of Independent Study may be taken at one time. The total of Independent Study course work may not exceed 6 credits. Independent Study counts only for elective credit; under no circumstances can it be used to substitute for core courses or seminars.
5. The student must submit to the instructor supervising the study a proposal including the following details:
  - a justification for the proposed Independent Study, in terms of the student's special interest or experience, the course's significance, etc.
  - a list of readings (tentative, if necessary) and of the requirements agreed to by instructor and student (typically this includes at least a one-hour meeting each week and a substantial amount of writing)
  - a list of English courses already taken by the student, including current courses
 The instructor will then forward the student's request, along with a note of the instructor's approval, to the Director of Graduate Studies.
6. Any independent study proposal must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies **NO LATER** than two weeks before the end of the term preceding the semester in which the course is to be taken. Please bear in mind that the two-week deadline is the minimum amount of time needed; if a proposal can be submitted earlier, then it can be returned for clarification or further data if necessary without jeopardizing the student's enrolling in the course.
7. Under **NO** circumstances can a student enroll for ENG 596 without written permission from the Director of Graduate Studies and the approval of the Graduate Subcommittee. Notes from an instructor will **NOT** satisfy the Registrar.
8. Once the independent study proposal has been approved, the Director will notify the department's administrative assistant so that the necessary section of English 596 can be set up for the student.

## COURSES OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT

### Transfer credit

Students may receive up to nine credits for graduate courses taken at other institutions, if these courses are appropriate to the CSU Master's program. To apply for Transfer Credit, the student must prepare a Transfer Credit form (available from the Registrar's Office or can be downloaded from the Graduate College web site), together with a letter explaining the relevance of the course(s) to the program, and a copy of a transcript showing the credits and grades earned. These should go to the Director of Graduate Studies; if approved in the department, transfer credit will not be officially posted to a student's record until 12 credits of graduate course work at CSU have been earned. Transfer credit is not normally granted for courses taken more than six years previously. (See the on-line Graduate Catalog for additional information: <http://graduatestudies.csuohio.edu/catalog>)

### Courses in other departments at CSU

A student may take up to 6 credits of graduate-level work in other CSU departments in lieu of English department electives. External course-work must be approved in advance by petition to the Graduate Subcommittee.

## PETITIONS

All graduate students in English operate not only within the Department's regulations but within the academic rules of the College of Graduate Studies, which are specified in the current *Graduate Catalog*. Petitions for exceptions to departmental rules should be made to the Graduate Subcommittee, in care of the Director. Petitions for exceptions to Graduate College rules must be approved by the departmental Graduate Subcommittee before being sent to the Graduate Petitions Committee.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Grants

Every year Graduate Assistantships are awarded to outstanding students engaged in full-time study toward a Master's Degree in English. These awards take the form of a semester stipend and a nine-credit-hour tuition waiver for each semester in which an assistantship is held. Students granted assistantships at the beginning of their program are eligible to apply for a second year of support. In accordance with the regulations of the Graduate College, Graduate Assistants must be enrolled in at least nine hours of course work during each semester of the assistantship.

The duties of a Teaching Assistant in the English Department normally involve work in the Writing Center, a tutorial program designed to provide individual instruction in composition to students. Teaching Assistants will take ENG 506, Composition Theory, during the Fall semester of their first year, and ENG 507, Workshop in Teaching, during both their first and second years. Students awarded second-year assistantships may also be appointed to the Composition Staff where they will teach sections of ENG 099, 100, 101, or 102. Sometimes Graduate Assistantships are awarded for other duties, such as editorial or research assistance.

Those interested in applying for an Assistantship should write to the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of English announcing their desire to be considered for an Assistantship and explaining their reasons for applying. **The application deadline is February 1.**

The minimum criteria for students applying for Assistantships and Tuition Grants include the following:

1. Students who have taken graduate courses should have a GPA of 3.3 or higher.
2. Students who have not taken graduate courses must have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0.
3. Superior writing and speaking skills in English (fluent and idiomatic) are expected.

4. Preference will be given to students with teaching or tutoring experience.
5. Awards are made only to applicants admitted as regular students by the time the awards become effective.

**The deadline for submission of a letter of intent or the application form indicating a desire to be considered for an assistantship is February 1. Application files must be completed by March 1.**

### **Andrews Foundation Research Awards**

Each year, the English Department gives one or more awards to students in the Masters Program (other than those in the creative writing concentration) to support the completion of a literature thesis. Students who wish to be considered for an award must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a prospectus for their thesis projects with a cover letter announcing their intention to compete for an award. The prospectus should be no longer than five pages and should describe the thesis, offer a rationale for its undertaking, explain how the study or creative project relates to current activities in the relevant field, and specify any distinctive features of the project or resources it will utilize. Students should also submit one letter of recommendation from one of the three readers of their thesis. The prospectus will be read by the Graduate Subcommittee, which will also review each applicant's graduate record. Awards will be made on the basis of the probable quality of the completed thesis and on the likelihood of its being completed within a year of the receipt of the Award.

*The annual deadline for submission of prospectuses is March 1. Awards will be announced a few weeks later.*

### **Scholarships for Creative Writers**

Additional tuition support is given to winners of the Creative Writing Contests. The contests are open to all students, even those who receive graduate assistantships. Samples of poems, fiction or drama for these contests should be sent to the CSU Poetry Center at times announced during the year.

The Leonard Trawick Creative Writing Fellowship is also available for creative writers. Details on submission available spring semester.

### **Plain Dealer Awards for Excellence in Writing**

Each year, in conjunction with *The Plain Dealer*, the department offers several awards for Excellence in Writing. Essays or research papers nominated by instructors of graduate classes are eligible. For details, call 216-687-3951 or 216-687-2532.

### **Employment Possibilities**

The department regularly receives announcements of full- or part-time jobs and internships, involving editing, tutoring or teaching, research, and so on, that may be of interest to graduate students. If you might be interested in such opportunities, leave your name with the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **THE MASTER'S THESIS**

The thesis is normally the last step of your progress through the program. When you decide that you are approaching graduation, *remember to apply for graduation during your next-to-last semester*. See the "Apply to Graduate" link in your personal record in CampusNet.

### **Nature and length of the thesis**

Quality is more important than quantity. The scholarly/critical thesis should be about 30-50 pages long; theses for the concentration in creative writing are about 60 pages long and must provide a critical introduction or critical prospectus. The scholarly/critical thesis may fall within any of the several emphases of the program--literary criticism and history, linguistics, composition--according to the inclinations of the student and advisor. Copies of theses already accepted are available for

inspection in the English Department and in OhioLink (<https://www.ohiolink.edu>). Experience shows that, almost invariably, the more carefully limited and defined a topic is, the more successful the finished essay will be. Seek a topic for a criticism thesis that can be treated thoroughly in 30 pages.

### **Registering for the thesis**

Students in the Literature Track with Portfolio do not write a thesis. A thesis is required for students in the Literature Track with Thesis. Students normally register for one, two, three or four credits of thesis in any semester, but once they begin registering for ENG 699, they must register continuously for the course during the academic year (Fall and Spring, but not Summer, unless the student graduates during that term) until the thesis is deposited. Students should therefore estimate when the thesis will be completed in order to decide how many credits to register for in a given semester.

The minimum thesis requirement is either six credit hours of ENG 699 or 3 credit hours of ENG 698 (Pre-Thesis Colloquium) and 3 credit hours of ENG 699.

A student should begin registering for thesis at least two semesters before expected graduation and must fill out a Thesis Approval Form (available from the Director, the secretarial staff, or downloaded from the Graduate College web site) before registering.

ENG 698 is regularly offered as a practicum and tutorial class toward launching one's thesis reading, writing, and researching. Students can bring ongoing thesis work and ideas toward theses into their coursework for ENG 698, and the three credits for this course can ultimately count toward their total thesis hours as part of their degree.

Students will receive a grade of "T" for ENG 699 each semester that they are registered for the course. When the thesis is submitted and graded, up to six credits of ENG 699 will be changed to the letter grade that the thesis received. (Any additional thesis credits will receive an S grade.)

### **Choosing a thesis topic and advisor**

It is advisable to settle on a topic for the master's essay and find a thesis advisor as early as possible. Students are expected to have a thesis topic and advisor at least two semesters before the anticipated graduation date.

Students may go about selecting a topic and an advisor in any of several ways. They may already have a topic in mind, growing out of their undergraduate studies or independent interests. In that case, they should seek out the faculty members whose fields of specialization would qualify them to supervise the thesis. A thesis topic may grow out of a graduate course the student is taking; in this case, the instructor of the course would be the natural advisor. Or the student, without having a particular topic in mind, may have a general interest in an author, period, or genre; such a student should seek out the faculty member with the appropriate field of specialization and work out a specific topic in consultation with this advisor. A student may talk with several faculty members before settling on a congenial topic. See the beginning of this document for a list of the graduate faculty members of the English Department, with their fields of special interest. Topics that students pursue in ENG 695 and ENG 698 often become their early, partial drafts toward the papers they go on to complete and defend as their Master's Thesis Project.

It is important to note that the initiative for finding a thesis advisor lies with the student, though she or he is urged to discuss possibilities with graduate advisors and with other members of the faculty.

No faculty member is to supervise more than five theses as first reader each year. If a sixth student asks for the supervision of a thesis, the student must either wait until one of the first five is completed, or consult another advisor. In these circumstances, a student normally should find another advisor.

### **Prospectus (Literature Track with Thesis)**

An English M.A. student in the literature track with thesis must submit a 700- to 1,000-word thesis prospectus to his or her thesis committee within six weeks after submitting the official thesis approval form. The prospectus must describe in detail the thesis's purposes, approach, and scope, and it must include a bibliography. The committee will read the prospectus and consider whether the thesis is likely to meet the outcomes set for the literature track (see above). The prospectus should demonstrate, in particular, the student's "ability to focus on and define a problem" (remember that "work on this problem must have the potential to advance scholarly or pedagogical work in the field"). The committee will convey to the student any comments they have.

### **Second and third readers**

Graduate College requirements specify that each thesis must be signed by three faculty members of the Graduate Faculty; two of the three must be from the department granting the degree.

The principal advisor, after consultation with the student, will suggest another faculty member who might be an appropriate second reader of the thesis. First and second readers will advise and guide the student in concert as the thesis progresses. The Director of Graduate Studies appoints the third graduate faculty member, who will serve as the third signatory to the thesis.

See instructions for the Master's exam for the procedures to follow as the thesis approaches completion.

The student, of course, should feel free to consult any faculty member about the thesis at any stage of its writing.

A master's degree candidate may, under compelling circumstances, request a change in the membership of his or her thesis committee. The Graduate Director will attempt to resolve the matter; if this is not possible, the Director may, with the approval of the majority of the Graduate Subcommittee, make the requested change.

### **Allotting time for the thesis**

Because three faculty readers, two of them looking at successive drafts, are working with students on the thesis, *students must be careful to allow sufficient time for the completion of the thesis*. Allow at least two weeks for a faculty member to review a draft. Final copies, with all signatures on the approval sheet, must be turned in to the Director of Graduate Studies by Wednesday of the final week of class in the semester during which the student plans to graduate.

*Students who wish to graduate during a specific semester will generally need to begin the semester with a completed draft*, one that the first and second reader have seen, in order to complete revisions and have the thesis reviewed by the third reader.

Students should remember that faculty are not always available for consultation during the summer or during breaks.

### **Style and mechanical specifications for the thesis**

Correct formatting of the thesis is important; however, word-processing technology has facilitated the quick and easy formatting of a thesis. The intellectual work of defending the thesis takes precedence over the commonplace work of formatting the thesis.

Every student, before completing his or her thesis, should review the pamphlet *Thesis and Dissertation Format Guidelines* from the office of the college of Graduate Studies. For a copy see <http://www.csuohio.edu/gradcollege/students/thesis/thesis.html>. This pamphlet describes the format and mechanical specifications required of all theses by the Graduate College. It should be followed in all details, except for the following three items, which apply specifically to English Department theses.

1. In all matters of style, English Department theses should follow the *MLA Handbook*. In case of conflict, follow the *Graduate Study Format*. (The *Format*, for instance, calls for one and a half inch left-hand margins because of binding requirements; MLA suggests one inch margins.) In one case you may follow MLA directions: you may indent quoted passages 10 spaces rather than 5 as specified by the *Format*.
2. The following items described in *Thesis and Dissertation Format Guidelines* are optional for the English department.
  - Acknowledgments
  - List of Tables
  - List of Figures
  - Division of text into chapters
  - Appendices
  - Index
3. Footnotes may be placed at the bottom of the page or at the end of the thesis. *Note that an Abstract is required.*

### **Guidelines for preparing abstracts (adapted from MLA guidelines)**

#### **A. Form**

Abstracts are to be 150 words or fewer.

#### **B. Content**

Generally, write your abstract as an abbreviated version of the conceptual argument of your essay. Begin with a statement of your thesis and trace the development of your argument through its major hypotheses, proofs or evidence, and conclusions. Show the progression of your thesis by keeping the relative emphases in your abstract the same as for your essay. Do not make your abstract a mere listing of the major points of your essay, or a statement of what your essay is about, but write a succinct condensation of your thesis. If you are in the creative writing concentration you may either abstract the optional introductory essay or explain your objectives in writing.

#### **C. Style**

##### **1. Brevity**

Be as brief as possible without being cryptic or obscure. Include only significant details. Avoid repeating information apparent from the title of your essay, but always include the name of the author of the work under discussion (e.g., don't write an abstract of an analysis of "Ghost House" without at least once mentioning Robert Frost). Include dates for all but the most obvious books and authors.

##### **2. Paragraphing**

Write your abstract as a single, coherent paragraph.

##### **3. Sentences**

Use complete, grammatical sentences. Do not omit verbs, conjunctions, or other form words. Avoid both series of short, choppy sentences and overlong complex sentences in which phrases and clauses are piled up in an attempt to include as much as possible in one sentence. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and adverbs.

##### **4. Language and quotations**

Do not use such expressions as "in this essay, I . . .," "The author concludes . . .," or "it is shown that . . ." Reflect in your abstract the language of your essay. Avoid direct quotations from your essay. Define unusual or difficult terms.

### **Procedure for advisor approval and deposit**

#### **A. Submission of Tentative Final Draft to the Thesis Committee:**

The advisor and second reader will make all substantive corrections and recommendations during their consultations with the student. The abstract must be submitted with the tentative

final draft. This draft is circulated to the three readers in advance of the Master's Examination (see next section).

- B. **Submission of Draft for Format Review to the Graduate College:** After making any revisions required by the committee, see the guidelines found at <http://www.csuohio.edu/gradcollege/students/thesis/thesis.html> and in the *Handbook for Graduate Studies in English* (see Jane Dugan if you need a copy) in order to format final draft correctly. The student submits an electronic copy of the thesis to the College of Graduate for format review. For format review, the thesis is sent as an email attachment to the Graduate College at [masterthesis@csuohio.edu](mailto:masterthesis@csuohio.edu). The email should contain the student's name and CSU ID# in the subject line. Additionally, include student name, CSU ID, telephone number, and current email address in the body of the email.
- C. **Deposit of Thesis to OhioLink (<https://www.ohiolink.edu>):** After the thesis committee has approved the thesis and the College of Graduate Studies has approved the thesis formatting, the student submits the thesis to OhioLink.

## THE MASTER'S EXAMINATION

Candidates for the Master's degree in English must take and pass the Master's Examination, according to the following procedure:

1. After the first and second readers have reviewed and commented on a complete draft of the thesis, the student will revise the thesis based on their comments. The student will then, with the readers' assent, schedule his/her Master's Examination. The Master's Examination should be scheduled for a date not later than 30 days before the end of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.
2. At least two weeks before the examination the student must present a tentative final draft of the thesis to the three project readers, and then within one week the readers must prepare one or two questions to give to the student in advance. These questions should generally focus on theoretical issues deriving from the thesis itself or on some connection between coursework and the thesis.
3. The examination begins with a brief presentation (10-15 minutes or so) by the candidate giving an account of what the project has accomplished and of its broader relevance, intrinsically, in relationship to work previously done in the field, and/or in relationship to further work to be undertaken. Candidates in creative writing will be expected to relate their work to that of traditional as well as contemporary practitioners in their genre.
4. The committee then moves to questions previously submitted (step 2). Students may also choose to incorporate into the initial presentation some responses to the questions submitted by their readers.
5. After further discussion of the thesis, the panel determines a grade on the oral examination (Fail, Pass, Honors, High Honors) and communicates it to the candidate, along with any requests for revision. The panel will usually inform the student at this time of the thesis grade as well.
6. Candidates who fail the Master's Examination may ask to be examined again after at least 30 days have passed.

**When the Master's Thesis and the Master's Examination are evaluated, particular attention is paid to how well the student has fulfilled the "Outcomes" listed under "Requirements for the M.A. Degree," pp. 10-11 above.**