

# THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

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## ENGLISH

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The mission of the Master of Arts in English at Texas Southern University is to provide specialized instruction in literature, language, and research in order to prepare students for further graduate study, the teaching of English, and other professional endeavors. The program emphasizes literary studies. The degree plan requires students to successfully complete all the core courses and 21 semester hours of course work in (1) literary theory and criticism and (2) genre studies

The objectives of the program are as follows:

1. Provide an historical survey of literature, with a reading concentration on British, American, or African-American literary works;
2. Analyze the various approaches and theories of literary criticism;
3. Introduce the techniques of independent graduate-level research, with emphasis on bibliographical studies and textual criticism;
4. Research, analyze, and write in depth on complex literary topics and significant texts at a level suitable for publication in a refereed literary journal.

### ADMISSION CRITERIA

Applicants to the program must meet admission requirements of both the Graduate School and the English Department of TSU. The requirements for admission to the graduate English program are as follows:

1. A cumulative grade-point average of 2.75 in general undergraduate studies and 3.0 in English studies
2. Completion of 12 semester hours in foreign language(s)
3. A GRE score that meets Graduate-School requirements

Students with fewer than 21 undergraduate hours in English must enroll in specified undergraduate courses to remove noted deficiencies. Having remedied noted deficiencies, the student may reapply for admission to the program.

### DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

There are two tracks leading to the granting of the Master of Arts in English. Track A (thesis option) is designed for students who anticipate pursuing graduate study beyond the Master's degree. Track B (non-thesis option) is designed to prepare candidates for entry to the professional world or further graduate study.

1. Students who have not passed the writing portion of the GRE at the level specified by the Graduate School must successfully complete English 501 during their first year of graduate study.
2. Students must complete a total of 36 semester credit hours. With permission from the Chair, students may count up to 6 hours of 400-level English courses designated as senior/graduate towards the 36-hour course requirement.
3. Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative average, with no more than 6 hours of courses with grades lower than B-; grades of C- or below cannot be used to satisfy degree

requirements.

4. Students must successfully complete 30 credit hours of course work and pass a comprehensive examination before undertaking the thesis.

### **Master of Arts in English Degree Plans**

The English Department offers two options leading to the Master of Arts degree:

1. Track A – Masters of Arts degree (thesis option – 30 semester credit hours +6 research hours for thesis) – in literature study with an emphasis in American, African-American, or British literature.
2. Track B – Masters of Arts degree (non-thesis option - 36 semester credit hours for non-thesis) – with a generalist concentration in literary studies. With the approval of the Department Chair and the instructor, the student will devote three credits to a “Directed Reading and Research” course resulting in two or more longer papers.

Both the MA degree (thesis option) and the MA degree (non-thesis option) are designed to prepare students for entry to the professional world or further graduate study.

#### **Master of Arts Degree, Track A (thesis option)**

In order to earn a Master’s degree in English under Track A, a candidate must complete the following departmental requirements:

1. Thirty hours of graduate work in English exclusive of English 837 (Thesis in Progress), with an emphasis in African American, American, or British literature)

*Required Core Courses:* English 502, 533, and 638

2. Evidence that the student either has passed at least twelve semester hours of a foreign language or has a reading knowledge of some foreign language (such competency to be certified, through examination, by the Department of Foreign Languages)
3. A written comprehensive examination
4. End of program assessment that includes a comprehensive test, portfolio, and research completion and evaluation
5. An acceptable thesis based on an investigation of a subject approved by the Department and the University Graduate School
6. An oral defense of the thesis before the committee of graduate faculty advisors
7. A completed thesis approved by the University Graduate School

#### **Master of Arts Degree, Track B (non-thesis option)**

In order to earn a Master’s degree in English under Track B, a candidate must complete the following departmental requirements:

1. Thirty-six hours of graduate work in English for a general concentration in literature

*Required Core Courses:* English 502, 533, and 638

2. Evidence that the student either has passed at least twelve semester hours of a foreign language or has a reading knowledge of a foreign language (such competency to be certified, through examination by the Department of Foreign Languages)
3. A written comprehensive examination
4. End of program assessment that includes the comprehensive examination, portfolio evaluation, and research completion
5. An acceptable portfolio of at least six seminar-length analyses covering each of the areas of required studies (American, African-American, British, Criticism, Directed Study) with the portfolio to be evaluated by members of the graduate faculty
6. An oral review of the portfolio before the committee of graduate faculty advisors

## **Master of Arts in English Two-Year Matriculation Plan**

### **Year One**

**The student is expected to accomplish the following during the first year:**

- Arrange to confer with the Graduate Dean for advisement on specific requirements
- Demonstrate writing proficiency on the GRE or ENG 501
- Fulfill the M.A. language requirement if you do not have four semesters of a foreign language for your B.A.
- Submit official final transcripts of the B.A. (and any graduate coursework to be transferred) to the TSU Registrar, Graduate School Office, and English Department
- Form a committee of advisors and meet with them at least once a month
- Take English core course requirements as soon as possible
- Successfully complete 18 hours by the end of the first year.

### **Year Two**

**The student is expected to accomplish the following during the second year:**

- Meet with the committee of faculty advisors to determine needed course work and to meet all degree requirements and obligations, according to the Graduate School schedule
- File a degree plan before the third semester in the program
- Successfully complete the remaining hours of your degree plan
- Schedule and take your oral examination in the final semester
- Turn in the thesis and/or portfolio according to the Graduate School schedule. (This will allow time for the advisors to review and evaluate the work and to schedule a review of the portfolio or a defense of the thesis. This will also allow time for the candidate to incorporate recommended changes into the thesis.)
- Apply for graduation and follow all requirements as established by the University's Graduate School Office.

## **ENGLISH GRADUATE CATALOG** COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ENGLISH

**ENG 501 GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL WRITING (3)** A course for students who have not achieved writing proficiencies appropriate for graduate work, including the master's thesis and doctoral dissertation. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 502 CORNERSTONE SEMINAR (3)** An intense and comprehensive period-based survey of literature from the ancient through the modern and the post-modern. Identified as a core course for the graduate degree in English. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 529 STUDIES IN LITERARY BIOGRAPHY AND NON-FICTION** (3) A study of the relationship of author and text in the works of notable British and American writers. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 530 AFRICAN AMERICAN FICTION** (3) An examination of the literary presentation of the passage from slavery to free personhood in selected texts of African American fiction, with a special concentration on rhetorical structure. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 532 AFRICAN AND AFRICAN DIASPORA LITERATURE** (3) A study of selected poetry, fiction, and drama of Africa and the African Diaspora. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 533 METHODS OF RESEARCH** (3) An introduction to techniques of independent graduate study, with emphasis on bibliographical studies and textual criticism. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 629 SEMINAR IN AMERICAN LITERATURE** (3) A special topics course focusing on American poetry, drama, and fiction. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 638 SURVEY OF LITERARY THEORY** (3) An historical survey of theories of literary criticism from Aristotle to the present. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 640 SEMINAR IN CHAUCER, SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON** (3) An intense study of all the major works of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton as the lynchpins of British Literature. (Prerequisite: graduate standing)

**ENG 732 THE AMERICAN NOVEL** (3) A study of selected American novelists in conjunction with modern critical theories. (Prerequisite: completion of all required core courses)

**ENG 734 SEMINAR IN MODERN POETRY** (3) An examination of the primary trends in modern poetry, devoting attention to the masterpieces in the canon and engaging students in a systematic study of the techniques and philosophical tendencies in these works. (Prerequisite: completion of all required core courses)

**ENG 735 THE BRITISH NOVEL** (3) An intensive survey of the British novel from Defoe through the authors of contemporary British fiction. (Prerequisite: completion of all required core courses)

**ENG 736 STUDIES IN BRITISH LITERATURE TO 1900** (3) A study of British poetry, drama, and prose from Shakespeare to the era of modernism. (Prerequisite: completion of all required core courses)

**ENG 835 DIRECTED READING AND RESEARCH** (3) An individualized course for students wishing to work with a specific professor in a well-defined area of scholarship. (Prerequisites: completion of all required core courses and the consent of both the Department Chair and the instructor)

**ENG 837 THESIS IN PROGRESS** (6) The writing of the thesis under the supervision of a thesis advisor from the graduate faculty of the Department of English. (Prerequisite: All preceding requirements for Master of Arts)