

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



M.A. IN ENGLISH

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2009 - 2010

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Introduction

Welcome to the University of Central Florida's Department of English. This Graduate Student Handbook is designed to help guide you successfully through your Master's degree program by outlining such issues as course selection, thesis writing, and the comprehensive exam. The UCF Graduate Catalog is your source for general university policies; however this handbook will introduce you to the policies and procedures that are specific to the M.A. in English. (Please note that not all requirements apply to all M.A. tracks.)

The UCF Graduate Catalog is the university's official record of graduate policies. In any case where this handbook appears to disagree with the Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Catalog is the final authority. Note that, according to the Graduate Catalog: "Satisfactory performance also involves maintaining the standards of academic progress and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program. Failure to maintain these standards may result in dismissal of the student from the program." You should be aware that the Department of English maintains standards for satisfactory academic performance that are specific to graduate study in English. The M.A. Handbook contains information about these standards and policies, which you will not find in the UCF Graduate Catalog.

Please refer to www.ucf.edu/catalog/ for more information. Necessary forms for the program can be found at: <http://www.graduatestudies.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/>.

Any time you need assistance, contact the English Department Graduate Program Assistants. The Program Assistants will either answer your question, tell you who can answer your question, or set an appointment for you with the appropriate English Department Graduate Studies Director.

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Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services before or immediately after admission (www.sds.ucf.edu). The English Department is committed to accommodating students with disabilities that are documented with Student Disability Services.

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of English offers a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree with tracks in Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, and Technical Communication. The M.A. in Technical Communication is entirely online. The department also offers a Graduate Certificate in Professional Writing and two “terminal” degrees: a doctorate (Ph.D.) in Texts and Technology and a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Creative Writing. The department is a co-sponsor of the Graduate Certificate in Gender Studies.

All our graduate programs emphasize the enhancement of critical thinking and writing skills useful for career development in academic and professional settings. Our programs are designed for students interested in intellectual and practical questions of aesthetics, critique, culture, text, and interpretation.

II. ADVISING / MENTORING

You will typically receive guidance from your Academic Advisor and your Thesis Director.

Academic Advisor: The Graduate Studies Director will be your **primary academic advisor** and will provide guidance on academic requirements and program and university policies and procedures. The Graduate Studies Director will help you complete a Program of Study, which is a contract between you and the Department of English that specifies your degree requirements (see Appendix A). Your initial Program of Study must be determined during your first nine hours of coursework. After that, you may make changes in the program of study at any time with approval of the Graduate Studies Director. However, once your program of study has been established, it cannot be altered solely due to poor academic performance. Be sure to consult with the Graduate Studies Director regularly, at least once a semester, to discuss your academic progress.

Thesis Director: After approximately eighteen hours of coursework, you will choose a Thesis Director from among the graduate faculty members who are approved by Graduate Studies in your track (see www.graduate.ucf.edu > Graduate Catalog > Graduate Faculty). Your Thesis Director serves as a mentor, providing guidance for your research, professional opportunities, and other areas of academic interest. Your Thesis Director will also guide you through the writing, revising, and defense of your thesis or research project. (Students in the Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies track who are planning to use the non-thesis option will not have a thesis director.)

Other faculty in your track will offer useful scholarly and professional advice. You are encouraged to confer with your faculty during their office hours as you progress towards your degree.

As the UCF Graduate Catalog makes clear (www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog/ > Policies > General Policies > Student’s Responsibility), **you are responsible for staying informed of all rules, regulations, and procedures required for graduate studies.** Graduate program regulations will not be waived or exceptions granted because students plead ignorance of the regulations or claim failure of the adviser to keep them informed. Please be certain to

inform the department whenever your contact information changes, and be sure to read the email and other messages we send you.

III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Program of Study Requirements and Registration Procedures

All tracks require at least 33 hours of course work. The Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies concentration requires a three-hour thesis (or one additional 6000-level courses). The Rhetoric and Composition and Technical Communication programs require a three-hour thesis or special project. Degree requirements for all current English M.A. tracks are available in the graduate catalog:

http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog/content/Degrees/ACAD_PROG_87.cfm

In all tracks, at least 50% of the coursework must be taken at the 6000-level.

In exceptional cases, up to six hours of 4000-level coursework may be applied to the M.A. degree, provided that those same courses were not credited towards an undergraduate degree. Additionally, 4000-level courses may only be used if the student has completed 30 hours of 5000-level or 6000-level coursework, of which 50% is 6000-level. Permission to use a 4000-level class in your M.A. coursework must be granted by the Graduate Studies Director prior to registration. In order for these courses to count towards your degree, you must present a compelling case that they are vital to your individual program goals and that they are not available on the graduate level. Courses taken to “bring you up to speed” or otherwise prepare you for graduate study will not count towards your degree.

Enrollment for graduate courses is managed by the English Department prior to electronic registration. To protect space in the courses for our students, the department marks graduate courses in the online class schedule as “Closed”: this does not mean that the courses are full. To register, you will need to obtain a permission number from the Program Assistant, either in person, by phone, or via e-mail.

The courses you must take are outlined by the program of study for your track (see Appendix A). In every track, it will help you to take the core (i.e., required) courses as soon as possible.

You should not ordinarily register for thesis hours until all your coursework has been completed. Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies track students have an option to complete additional course work in lieu of a thesis. Students may take one 6000-level class rather than three credits of thesis. Students who intend to pursue a doctoral degree are advised to write a thesis.

2. Additional Course Requirements

If your undergraduate degree is in a subject other than English, the Graduate Studies Director may require you to take additional courses that will not be part of your program

of study. Typically, these requirements include graduate survey courses in American and British literature.

If you lack one year of undergraduate study in a foreign language, you will be required to complete that requirement in order to earn your degree. The foreign language requirement may be fulfilled at a community college. You can also meet the requirement by taking a CLEP test. Contact the University Testing Center for more information on the test (www.testing.sdes.ucf.edu). If you have completed the equivalent of one year of undergraduate study in a language for which there is no CLEP test, contact the Graduate Studies Director for more information about whether your accomplishment satisfies the foreign language requirement.

If you are interested in teaching first-year composition courses, you must take ENC 5705: Theory and Practice in Composition. This course is most often offered during the spring term. It is recommended that you take the course during your first eighteen hours of graduate study. Taking the course does not guarantee that you will be awarded a graduate teaching assistantship.

A maximum of three courses may be taken as independent study, for a total of no more than six semester hours. To obtain approval to enroll in an independent study course, students must propose a topic, related readings, and set of assignments to a faculty member. The proposal (with faculty approval) must be submitted to the department's Graduate Studies Director one week prior to the last day of classes in the term before you will enroll in the independent study. Faculty members are under no obligation to teach independent study courses, but many will do so if the topic supports their own teaching and research responsibilities. If the faculty member agrees to teach the independent study course, contact the Graduate Studies Director to determine whether it will meet the requirements in your program of study. Independent studies may not duplicate courses in the catalog, whether or not that course is scheduled for a given semester. Independent studies will not count towards a graduate certificate.

Directed Research does not count toward your program of study, but it can count towards your full-time enrollment. Students who are studying for the comprehensive exams may enroll in three hours of directed research during the semester that the exam will be taken. The chief requirement of the directed research course is that you take the exam that semester. If you enroll in directed research and then do not take the exam, you will receive a "U" for those hours. You may only enroll in this "comprehensive exam research" one time.

Classes in the M.F.A. program (with CRW prefix and some LIT prefixes) are available only to those students who have been accepted into the M.F.A. program or who have received instructor permission. If you plan to seek instructor permission to take those courses, be prepared to submit a portfolio of your creative work to that instructor.

B. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

1. Overview

Rhetoric and Composition and Technical Communication students must successfully pass the comprehensive examination to receive the M.A. in English. Literary, Cultural, and

Textual Studies students do not have a comprehensive exam requirement. The comprehensive exam allows you to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge, as well as to make critical connections between texts. Such broad interrelation, rather than specialization, lies at the heart of a good M.A. program.

The comprehensive examination is given only in the Fall and Spring semesters during regular business hours. The administration date for the exam is announced four to six months before the test is given.

Inform the Graduate Studies Director of your intent to take the exam by the end of the add/drop period of the semester **before** the semester you want to take it (in other words, if you plan to take the exam in Fall, tell us by the end of the add/drop period for the previous Spring semester. **You must be registered for at least one credit hour during the term of your comprehensive exam.** This exam can be taken at any time during your program of study, but ordinarily it should be taken after students have completed at least eighteen credit hours and should not be scheduled for the same semester in which you are completing your thesis.

2. Exam Policies

The comprehensive examinations are a significant exit requirement for all students in the Rhetoric and Composition and Technical Communication tracks. The exams are designed and graded by faculty members and administered by the Graduate Studies Director.

The examination can be taken at any time during a program of study but is designed as a capstone, encouraging students to make connections between issues raised by various texts while also demonstrating their broad knowledge of their field.

All graduate students must pass the exam in order to graduate, and students are permitted to take the comprehensive examinations no more than twice. If you sit for the exam, you are deemed to have taken it, whether or not you submit your exam for grading.

Students are normally provided with two official opportunities to discuss the exam:

- A planning meeting approximately three to five months prior to the exam, at which time the reading list is distributed
- A review meeting approximately one to two months before the exam to answer any questions that may have arisen; individual reading lists for the Rhetoric and Composition Exam are due at this meeting.

Neither meeting is required. However, if you cannot attend these meetings, contact the Graduate Program Assistant to make sure you receive all the information distributed at the meeting. Also, you must submit your individual abstracts/reading lists to the Graduate Program Assistant by the date of the second meeting, whether or not you attend.

The Comprehensive Exams are administered in the Technical Communications Lab in Colbourn Hall, room 203E, with students having the choice of writing the exam on a computer or in longhand. Technical Communication students admitted in Catalog Year 2008 or later will take their comprehensive exams at the same time and on the same day as Rhetoric and Composition students but will receive their questions via email and,

likewise, submit their answers as a Microsoft Word document attachment. The exam lasts for five hours, during which time students are allowed to leave briefly to use the lavatories or get a drink. However, there is no lunch break provided and no conferring or consulting permitted.

When students arrive, they are expected to sign an honor statement promising that they will neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance. They are provided with scratch paper and a copy of their reading list, but they are not permitted to consult any other materials. The test is a closed book exam with only the student's unassisted responses allowed.

Although the number of questions may vary from year to year, normally the student will be able to choose from alternatives. In answering the questions, a student may refer to works taught in graduate courses, works on the predetermined reading list, or from other sources familiar to the student.

Exams are coded, with only the Graduate Program Assistant knowing the identity of the exam takers. The exams, therefore, are graded anonymously. Five faculty graders grade every exam.

Makeup exams are not permitted. If you are unable to take the examination on the announced date, you must wait for the test's next normal administration time. If you fail your first exam, you may retake the test one time. If you fail the exam twice, you revert to post-baccalaureate status.

3. Exam Content—Rhetoric and Composition

This exam focuses on works drawn from a reading list and will consist of at least three essay questions. The reading list has two parts:

- A core list of 25–30 texts in the discipline. At least two questions will focus on these texts.
- An individual list that develops an interest emerging from your studies. Prior to the examination (ordinarily by the date of the review meeting held one to two months before the exam), students submit for approval an abstract and a ten item reading list. At least one question will focus on this topic.

Occasionally, more than three questions may be provided; in that case, you will be able to choose from alternatives. You must satisfactorily respond to three questions to pass the exam.

4. Exam Content—Technical Communication

This exam focuses on a reading list drawn from four core courses. The core courses covered on the exam are Production and Publication Methods, Modern Rhetorical Theory, Technical Editing, and Technical Writing: Theory and Practice.

The exam consists of several essay questions in each of the core areas and in all of the chosen concentrations. You must answer four questions. You must satisfactorily respond to three of the four questions to pass the exam. You must also submit an annotated bibliography of research for your thesis or project topic. This bibliography must be a minimum of ten sources. You should have it completed before the day of the exam, but you will submit the bibliography with your completed exam.

5. Exam Grading

Five graduate faculty members will grade each exam. They may either grade the entire exam holistically or they may grade each individual question and then total their grades for the entire exam. Either way, the exam is graded on a pass/fail basis. Graders are not required to comment on individual student responses (though they may occasionally do so). Passing work at the graduate level is the equivalent of a B- or better. In rare cases, faculty may vote to reward an exceptionally good exam with the grade of “Pass With Distinction.”

Your answers will be evaluated in terms of your writing ability (for example, style, grammar, and mechanics), your knowledge of the field, and your ability to construct a meaningful logical argument.

A passing exam exhibits detailed, cohesive writing: not only should each essay be free of grammatical and other errors, but it should consist of well-developed paragraphs with quotations and examples from the literature. The essays should show depth of insight, reflecting a carefully planned response to the issues raised by the questions.

You will receive your results approximately three weeks after the exam.

C. THESIS

To receive a Master of Arts in English degree, you must complete a thesis or a final project, **after your coursework has been completed**, except in the Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies track where you may elect to take one extra 6000-level course in lieu of a thesis. A major project such as a thesis cannot be proposed, researched, written, revised, and defended in a single semester; therefore, you must plan carefully and work in concert with your thesis director. Preparations for a thesis or project are usually begun at least one calendar year before completing this final requirement.

All M.A. students engaging in thesis research must be continuously enrolled every term, including summer, until they finish their thesis.

1. Choosing a Topic Area

When writing your thesis or special project, the topic you choose should represent an area of sustainable interest for you. It is also essential that you choose a topic for which your coursework has prepared you, and a topic in which a member of the UCF English faculty has expertise. When you have identified the general area you would like to pursue, you should start the process of choosing a thesis director. Your thesis director will help you narrow your area of interest into a workable topic. Your thesis director will also help you figure out whether your topic is best pursued in a thesis or (for Rhetoric and Composition and Technical Communication Tracks) an alternate research project.

2. Choosing a Thesis Director

Make an appointment with a UCF English faculty member whose area of expertise complements your area of interest. Ideally, you should meet with such a faculty member to begin the process of selecting a topic at least a calendar year before you intend to graduate. A list of faculty appears in the UCF Graduate Catalog (www.graduate.ucf.edu > Graduate Catalog > Graduate Faculty); faculty research interests are listed on the department homepage (www.english.cah.ucf.edu). Be prepared to explain how your interest developed and how it relates to your previous coursework and your professional goals. Together, you and your thesis director will narrow your area of interest into a workable topic. You will also work together to choose the rest of your thesis committee.

3. Choosing a Committee

Your thesis director and you will agree upon two other readers with expertise in your topic to compose the required three-person thesis committee. One of these two readers must be a UCF English faculty member; the second reader may be a faculty member from another department. If you plan to have two professors co-direct your thesis, both must be UCF English faculty members.

If no faculty member in the Department of English agrees to direct your project or if you are unable to identify two other experts to form your committee, you must select a different topic.

Your thesis committee must be approved before you can enroll in thesis hours. You may obtain a Thesis Committee Approval Form from the department's Graduate Program Assistant.

4. Writing and Submitting a Proposal

During your first semester of thesis hours, you will write a proposal and obtain formal approval of that proposal from your committee. A copy of this proposal, along with the signed approval form, is filed with the Graduate Studies Director. If an approved proposal is not filed with the Graduate Studies director before the end of your first semester of thesis hours, you will ordinarily receive a "U" for those hours.

Proposals in all tracks, whether for a thesis or an alternate project, are at least four to six pages long and must contain these elements:

- a working title that clearly states the proposed idea, hypothesis, or central questions that guide the project
- a statement of purpose and scope that provides context for the project
- an outline of the proposed chapters (or methodology for special research project)
- a preliminary bibliography
- a committee section (described below)
- a timeline for completing the project

Individual tracks and individual committees may require additional elements. For example, a proposal for research involving human participants should include an Institutional Review Board application. Other track-specific information is available below.

The **committee section** of the proposal outlines the role of each member of the committee, including how each member's specialty helps to form a coherent committee, and for which particular concerns or sections of the thesis each committee member will be consulted. The section also outlines the involvement of the readers in the thesis, addressing such questions as when the readers will see drafts of chapters. (e.g., Will the two readers on the committee read chapters at the same time as the director of the committee? Or will they read each chapter only after the director has reviewed each chapter?)

No more than two weeks after you have submitted your proposal, your committee will either approve or disapprove it. However, your proposal may go through a series of revisions until both you and the director find it acceptable. Be sure to plan carefully and communicate effectively with your committee so that you have time to complete an approved proposal before the end of your first semester of thesis hours. Do not begin writing your thesis until your proposal has been approved by all three committee members and the Graduate Studies Director.

If your committee rejects your proposal despite all your revisions, you must select a different topic and/or a different committee.

5. Writing Your Thesis

Before you begin writing your thesis, review the Thesis / Dissertation Manual and other information online at www.graduate.ucf.edu > Current Students > Thesis & Dissertation. The Thesis and Publications Editor in Graduate Studies (MH 230) can also supply information on deadlines, thesis requirement checklists and workshops. You can contact the editor through e-mail editor@ucf.edu, by phone (407) 823-2739, or by Fax (407) 823-6442.

The University Writing Center also offers support to graduate students and thesis writers: www.uwc.ucf.edu.

The information that follows concerns the thesis requirements for each of the tracks.

6. Defending Your Thesis

You will defend your thesis at a public meeting lasting at least one hour. Your committee members will attend along with any other interested members of the general public, including faculty members, graduate students, and your friends and family.

This defense must be scheduled at least six weeks ahead of time, and a public announcement of the defense must be posted at least two weeks ahead of time. At the defense, faculty members will ask questions that call on you to discuss the theoretical, methodological, and substantive aspects of your research.

To schedule your defense, establish a mutually convenient date and time for you and your committee. After conferring with the committee members, you will need to contact the Program Assistant in order to schedule a room. Notify your committee and the Graduate Studies Director of the place, date and time. If you are doing a project, notify the Graduate Studies Director at least two weeks in advance of the date and place of your defense.

Students in the online Technical Communication M.A. program may choose to have either a face-to-face defense or a teleconferenced defense. A student opting for a teleconferenced defense must arrange logistical details (e.g. teleconferencing equipment, Internet access, computer projector, etc.) with the thesis director and with the Graduate Program Assistant and so should prepare well in advance of the defense date.

While you may schedule a defense in the summer, many faculty members are not available for extensive thesis work from April 1 to September 1. Faculty who do not teach in the summer and therefore are not under contract during the summer may not direct a summer defense.

Please plan carefully and consult frequently with your thesis or project director about schedules and deadlines.

No later than three weeks before your defense (or earlier, if called for in your thesis proposal), submit four copies of the final draft of your thesis: one for your director, one for each committee member, and one for the Graduate Studies Director. These copies will be shared with other faculty members who may wish to attend the defense.

In addition to copies of your thesis, you'll need to prepare two documents:

- A thesis announcement, which is emailed to the Graduate Program Assistant for distribution. Contact the Graduate Program Assistant for examples.
- A thesis approval form, which you will bring to the defense. More information about this form is available in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual available from Graduate Studies (<http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/>)

(These documents may not be required for non-thesis projects. If you are working on a non-thesis project, contact the Graduate Studies Director to determine which documents are needed.)

Follow all requirements specified by UCF Graduate Studies (www.graduate.ucf.edu). Bring at least two copies of the thesis approval form on good thesis paper to your defense. These forms will be signed by your thesis committee (in black ink only) at the end of the defense, assuming that your thesis was successfully defended.

You are responsible for securing all signatures and submitting all required documents, electronic and paper, to the Graduate Studies office.

Your thesis must be submitted by your thesis director Turnitin.com. Before a student can submit a final version of the thesis to the University, the thesis chair must indicate that the Turnitin.com screening was performed by signing the “Review for Original Work” section on the Thesis and Dissertation Attachment form (found here: <http://graduatestudies.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/>).

Your director can and should refrain from signing the final forms until all revisions called for by the committee have been accomplished.

When you submit your final e-document to the university for graduation, you must also submit a copy to the department Graduate Program Assistant.

7. Additional Thesis Information—Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies

A formal proposal for a Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies thesis should be between eight to ten typed pages. In addition to the elements listed in “Writing and Submitting a Proposal” section above, a thesis proposal in Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies must provide:

- a brief discussion of the place of the particular writer(s), text(s), or topic within literary or cultural history
- a brief review of the pertinent scholarship, framing crucial theories or critical disagreements
- a tentative outline of the plan or organization
- a brief (two-page) working annotated bibliography

A more extensive list of Works Cited and Works Consulted (neither annotated) will become part of your final completed thesis.

To fulfill the thesis requirement in the Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies program, you may complete a thesis with defense, or take one additional 6000-level course.

The Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies thesis can take a variety of forms, though generally a thesis is a scholarly treatment of a theme or issue in the literary works in one or more writers in a particular period. The thesis, which involves the use of both primary and secondary sources, should be 60 pages or more in length. Final drafts of your thesis must be available to all committee members no less than three weeks before the defense.

8. Additional Thesis Information—Rhetoric and Composition

Candidates in the rhetoric and composition track may choose to write a thesis or a complete a classroom research project. This track does not offer a non-thesis option.

a) Thesis

The thesis is an in-depth study of an issue in rhetoric/composition. Thesis research may involve an empirical research project. Most theses are 50–75 pages long.

b) Classroom Research Project

This research project is an in-depth study of a topic in rhetoric/composition presented in a format other than that of a traditional thesis. The project is grounded in the same in-depth research as a traditional thesis, but may include the development of classroom materials, assessment programs, Web resources, or other means of disseminating research.

You should complete your project no later than one calendar year after your proposal is submitted and approved.

9. Additional Thesis Information—Technical Communication

a) Thesis

The thesis is an in-depth study of an issue in technical communication. The thesis should be 50–75 pages in length.

b) Special Project

This project is an in-depth study of a topic in technical communication presented in a format other than that of a traditional thesis. The topic is not limited to, but may focus on, emerging technologies and their significance and application for technical communicators.

A special project may encompass a demonstration of the use of technology to present and manipulate information electronically. The project is grounded in the same in-depth research as a traditional thesis, but may include the development of software, tutorials, and other electronic means of disseminating information. The special project option also requires a three-member committee.

You must complete your project no later than one calendar year after your proposal is submitted and approved.

D. TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION OF DEGREE PROGRAM

If you take classes full time (nine hours per spring and fall term, six hours in summer term), you should be able to complete your M.A. within two years, depending on course availability. Many students take longer because of thesis or research projects. Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies students will not take the comprehensive exam but they must complete the Capstone Course (offered in fall) after having completed 18 hours of coursework.

Several possible timelines for completing the M.A. follow. While these timelines indicate actual paths that real students took to earn their degrees, please note that your own best plan depends on your individual situation. Please consult the Graduate Studies Director for help in figuring out your individual program of study.

Finish in fewer than two years—Thesis

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| First Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework |
| First Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework • form thesis committee by end of semester • plan to take comprehensive exam during following fall semester |
| First Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete six hours of coursework (full-time = 6 hours) • draft a thesis proposal; this draft should be as complete as possible so that revisions will be minimal • study for comprehensive exam |
| Second Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete six hours of coursework • complete three hours of thesis work; finish thesis proposal early in semester and begin writing thesis • take comprehensive exam • finish writing thesis; defend thesis • take Capstone Course |

Finish in fewer than two years—Non-Thesis Option

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| First Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework |
| First Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework • plan to take comprehensive exam during following fall semester |
| First Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete six hours of coursework (full-time is six hours) • study for comprehensive exam |
| Second Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework • take comprehensive exam • take Capstone Course |

Finish in two years--Thesis

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| First Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework |
| First Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete nine hours of coursework • form thesis committee by end of semester • plan to take comprehensive exam during following fall semester |
| First Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete three to six hours of coursework (full-time is six hours) • draft a thesis proposal; this draft should be as complete as possible so that revisions will be minimal • study for comprehensive exam |
| Second Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete six hours of coursework • complete three hours of thesis work; finish thesis proposal early in semester and begin writing thesis • take comprehensive exam • take Capstone Course |
| Second Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete three to nine hours of coursework or thesis work (full-time is nine hours) • finish writing thesis; defend thesis |

Finish in two years—Non-Thesis Option

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| First Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete nine hours of coursework |
| First Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete nine hours of coursework• plan to take comprehensive exam during following fall semester |
| First Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete three hours of coursework• study for comprehensive exam |
| Second Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete six hours of coursework• take comprehensive exam |
| Second Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete six hours of coursework or thesis work |

Finish in three years—Thesis

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| First Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete six hours of coursework |
| First Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete three hours of coursework |
| First Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete three hours of coursework |
| Second Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete six hours of coursework• form thesis committee by end of semester |
| Second Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete six hours of coursework• complete one hour of thesis work; write proposal & have it approved by end of semester |
| Second Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete one hour of thesis work |
| Third Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete six hours of coursework• Complete one hour of thesis work• Study for comprehensive exam• Take Capstone Course |
| Third Spring Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete one hour thesis work• Take comprehensive exam |
| Third Summer Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete one hour thesis work |
| Fourth Fall Semester | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish writing thesis; defend thesis |

IV. DEGREE PLANS

The degree plans for all three M.A. programs and for the Professional Writing Certificate can be found in Appendix A of this handbook. For information about the Gender Studies Certificate, contact Women's Studies (<http://womensstudies.cah.ucf.edu>)

Literary, Cultural, and Textual Studies: You must take nine credit hours of required core courses including a linguistics course, twelve credit hours of restricted electives, six credit hours of unrestricted electives, three credit hours of either Thesis or Non-Thesis coursework, and the three credit hour Capstone Course.

Rhetoric and Composition: You must take four core courses, four restricted electives, and two unrestricted electives.

Technical Communication: You must take five core courses, three restricted electives, and two unrestricted electives. Please note that the comprehensive exam in technical communication is based upon the content of the core courses.

In all tracks, at least 50% of the coursework must be taken at the 6000-level.

In exceptional cases, up to six hours of 4000-level coursework may be applied to the M.A. degree, provided that those same courses were not credited towards an undergraduate degree. Additionally, 4000-level courses may only be used if the student has completed 30 hours of 5000-level and 6000-level coursework, of which 50% is 6000-level. Permission to use a 4000-level class in your M.A. coursework must be granted by the Graduate Studies Director prior to registration. In order for these courses to count towards your degree, you must present a compelling case that they are vital to your individual program goals and that they are not available on the graduate level. Courses taken to "bring you up to speed" or otherwise prepare you for graduate study will not count towards your degree.

V. GRADUATION

To graduate, complete an Intent to Graduate Form during the first week of your last term. If your plans change, and you do not graduate in the indicated semester, you must complete another form, which is available in the English Department or online at <http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/> at the beginning of your new semester of graduation.

You must be registered for at least one hour in your graduating semester. Commencement information is available online at www.graduate.ucf.edu.

VI. GENERAL POLICIES

A. DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services before or immediately after admission (www.sds.ucf.edu/). The English Department is committed to accommodating students with disabilities that have been documented with Student Disability Services.

B. ETHICS

Researchers in every discipline have a responsibility for ethical awareness, as the status of the profession rests with every individual researcher. It is important to be honest and ethical in all your work: your research, your teaching, and your coursework. The ethical collection and use of information includes, but is by no means limited to, confidentiality, accuracy, relevance, self-responsibility, honesty, and awareness of conflict of interest.

Be sure to become familiar with your responsibilities outlined in the Graduate Catalog (www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog) and in the Golden Rule (www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu).

C. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

1. WHAT GRADES MEAN IN GRADUATE ENGLISH COURSES

In general, a final grade of “A” in a graduate course indicates consistently strong and outstanding achievement. Students receiving an “A” have not only fulfilled all course requirements but have exceeded them by the skill and originality of their written and oral work.

A grade of “B” in a graduate course indicates adequate completion of course requirements. While this grade often indicates a potential greater than the finished work demonstrates, a student who receives “B” grades on a regular basis should seriously reconsider the kind and amount of commitment he or she is able to give to graduate school.

A grade of “C” or “U” in a graduate course indicates weak, substandard performance. Only two such grades can be included among the courses on the program of study. A student may earn a maximum total of six semester hours of “C” (C+, C, C-) or lower grades. A course in which a student has received these grades may be repeated to provide a better grade. However, both grades will be used in computing the GPA. **Exceeding six semester hours of unsatisfactory grades (“C+” and below or unresolved “I” grades) is reason for dismissal from the degree program.** Graduate courses with a grade of “D” or lower and 4000-level courses with a grade of “C” or lower are not accepted toward your master’s degree. You may earn a maximum of six hours of “C” grades. You are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA to keep regular status and to graduate. **There is no grade forgiveness policy for graduate students.**

In addition to the University Policy on Satisfactory Performance, the Department of English maintains the following standards: In order to earn a grade of “Satisfactory” in thesis or special project hours, a student must produce the equivalent of a substantial chapter of material (at least 25 pages) that meets with the approval of the student’s advisor. A student who does not produce this minimum of acceptable work will earn an “Unsatisfactory” in thesis hours for the term. **Two grades of “Unsatisfactory” in thesis hours will result in the student’s dismissal from the program, even if those hours add up to fewer than six total.**

2. GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Your grade point average (GPA) is calculated from all graduate level (5000-level and above) courses taken from admission into your program until completion.

If you are active in more than one program, the admission semester of the most senior program is used for the GPA calculation.

Transfer courses are not calculated into the GPA.

You must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the time of your graduation. **The graduation requirement for a minimum 3.0 GPA in all graduate courses completed since admission into the graduate program cannot be waived.**

4000-level courses will not count in the GPA, even if they are used toward completion of the program of study.

D. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

All students are expected to make expeditious progress towards their degree and to maintain satisfactory academic performance. You should familiarize yourself with the University's policies on academic status and progress by consulting the UCF Graduate Catalog, found here: <http://www.students.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/> .

Credit for courses completed more than seven years prior to the term in which your degree is earned may not ordinarily be used toward your degree requirements. You may appeal for an exception to this rule by filing a formal petition, but such petitions are not always approved.

1. Petitions and Grievances

It is your responsibility to be informed of graduate policies and procedures. Should you wish to request an exception to a university or program policy, you must file a petition that outlines the nature of your request. Normally, petitions are presented to the department's Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Studies Committee, the College Director of Graduate Services and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Council for consideration.

Should you wish to file a grievance, you should first review UCF's Golden Rule (www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu) and the Academic Grievance Procedures in the Graduate Catalog (www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog/ > Policies > General Policies > Academic Grievance Procedure).

VII. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. CAREER SERVICES AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Graduate career development issues are unique and include evaluating academic and nonacademic career choices, discussing graduate school effect on career choices, as well as learning, evaluating, and refining networking and interviewing skills. Whatever your needs, the

offices of Career Services and Experiential Learning offer services and resources to aid in the career exploration and job search of Master and Doctoral students in every academic discipline. (See www.crc.ucf.edu/home)

B. INTERNSHIPS / TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

In the M.A. in English curriculum, you will have the opportunity to take courses that will prepare you to teach both at the university level and in the community, and to work in the publishing field as an editor. We recommend that you take advantage of these opportunities.

C. TRAVEL SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

While conference presentations are not required for the M.A. degree, such presentations are professionally important, and graduate students are encouraged to pursue them. Your faculty members will likely mention conference opportunities in your classes, and you will receive email announcements of them as well. Not all of these conferences require travel; some are held at UCF. For more information about how to pursue these opportunities, consult with a faculty member, a member of your thesis committee, or the Graduate Studies Director.

Funding is available to pay some expenses for graduate students who are delivering a research paper or comparable creative activity at a professional meeting. Contact the Student Government Association (www.sga.ucf.edu) at 407-823-5648 for more information.

The Division of Graduate Studies offers a Graduate Travel Award that provides funding for master's, specialist, and doctoral students to deliver a research paper or comparable creative activity at a professional meeting or conference. More information can be found on the Graduate Studies website: www.graduate.ucf.edu > Current Students > Financial Matters.

The English Department is sometimes able to make limited funding available to graduate students who have also applied to SGA and Graduate Studies. Contact the Graduate Program Assistant for more information.

All graduate students who will travel to professional workshops and conferences should obtain an approved Travel Authorization Request (TAR) from the department, particularly if the travel occurs during the same semester as a GA / GRA / GTA contract.

D. SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

Scholarly publications are not required for the M.A. degree, but such publications are professionally important and graduate students are encouraged to pursue them. Publications need not be full-length journal articles or book chapters. Book reviews, notes, and professional newsletter publications are valuable for students at the M.A. level. For more information about how to pursue these opportunities, consult with a faculty member, a member of your thesis committee, or the Graduate Studies Director.

E. AWARDS

The university provides various graduate student achievement awards including:

1. Graduate Excellence Awards

Each year, students can submit a portfolio for nomination of College and University level awards of excellence. These are intended to showcase student excellence in academic achievement, teaching, research, leadership, and community service.

2. Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant

This award is intended for students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (This award is not intended for students who are instructor of record.)

3. Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching

This award is for students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the students teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.

4. Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis

This award recognizes graduate students for excellence in the Masters thesis. The focus is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the Masters thesis may be demonstrated by evidence such as (but not limited to): publications in refereed or peer-reviewed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. The university award will be forwarded to a national-level competition sponsored by the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) when the thesis discipline corresponds to the annual submission request.

For more information about these awards, please see the Division of Graduate Studies administrative website: www.graduatestudies.ucf.edu > Graduate Awards.

For more information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, please see their website: www.csgs.org > Awards.

The Conference on College Composition and Communication sponsors Scholars for the Dream Travel Awards to encourage scholarship by historically underrepresented groups. For more information, see their website: <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/>

VIII. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. FELLOWSHIPS AND ASSISTANTSHIPS

1. Overview

Financial support is offered only to full-time degree-seeking students. If you are a non Florida resident and would like to switch to a Florida Resident for tuition purposes please contact the Division of Graduate Studies Residency Department at gradresidency@mail.ucf.edu.

You ordinarily do not need to complete a special application for assistantships or fellowships. However, you are required to let us know of your interest by January 15th of every year, and to submit a current curriculum vitae to be considered for an assistantship.

M.A. students are eligible for three kinds of support:

Need-based assistance: The university provides need-based scholarships funded by the federal government. These are based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA form and are awarded in the middle of April. We encourage all students to complete a FAFSA application form online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Fellowships: These competitive, merit-based awards are usually reserved for newly admitted students. These awards pay a stipend and/or provide a tuition waiver. Fellows are nominated by the Department in the first week of March. To be eligible, students must have their entire application on file by January 15th.

Assistantships: These merit-based awards may be applied for at any point in your degree program. Different assistantships have different eligibility criteria. For example, graduate teaching assistantships may only be awarded to students who have completed eighteen hours of graduate coursework in English, who have successfully completed ENC 5705: Theory and Practice in Composition, and who have completed all mandatory university training.

Different assistantships also have different requirements. Some of these requirements include in-depth professional development activities. Consult with the Graduate Studies Director for more information on which assistantships are available and what they require. Additionally, if you work in another department on campus you may be ineligible for an assistantship and must contact notify the Department of English before applying for an assistantship.

Students who have earned 36 semester hours or more are no longer eligible for assistantships (though this rule may be waived based on exceptional department need).

2. Assistantship Opportunities

Some of the assistantship opportunities are as follows:

a) Writing Consultant Assistantships

Incoming and returning students can qualify for Writing Consultant Assistantships. Recipients work as writing consultants in the University Writing Center (UWC), which offers a peer review service for UCF students. Writing consultants spend twenty hours/week in the UWC working one-on-one with writers (or groups of writers) on an appointment or walk-in basis. Consultants may give presentations about the UWC, lead special topic workshops, work with small group projects, develop pedagogical or publicity materials, and consult with writers via telephone or the Internet. All consultants are also expected to perform office duties such as filing, answering phones and data entry.

Good communication skills are essential for this job, and all writing consultants must be interested in learning more about writing. Candidates must be able to think critically, ask good questions, and demonstrate a sincere interest in the writing of other students. Because the UWC is not a remedial service, consultants must be able to work with students at all levels in all disciplines.

Every consultant is required to attend initial training when first hired and weekly seminars throughout the semester. Participation in an online discussion and professional development projects are also required. Currently the training sessions involve two Saturday meetings from 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. and weekly Friday seminars from 3:15–4:15 p.m.

The Writing Consultant Assistantships are renewable and pay a stipend of approximately \$4000/semester per twenty hours/week (not including the required professional development activities). They may also include a partial tuition waiver. More information is available on the UWC website at www.uwc.ucf.edu. To be considered, indicate your interest in your application letter, briefly explaining why you would like to work in the UWC. Applicants may also be asked to submit an additional application form, interview, and writing sample.

b) Teaching Assistantships

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) are awarded for a full academic year. The assistantships are renewable, pay a stipend of approximately \$2000 per semester per course taught, and include a partial tuition waiver. You must have completed eighteen graduate credit hours, including ENC 5705 Theory and Practice of Composition, in order to apply for a graduate teaching assistantship. Because GTAs ordinarily teach Composition I and II, ENC 5705 is crucial as it covers the theoretical issues and pragmatic applications of college composition. If you are awarded a Teaching Assistantship, you'll also be required to complete online and face-to-face training with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. While teaching, you must also be a full-time graduate student, taking at least nine credit hours each semester. You also will be expected to participate in ongoing meetings and workshops for the composition program.

c) Other Assistantships

Other graduate assistantships (GTAs and GRAs) are usually reserved for students who have not yet completed eighteen hours of graduate work. GTAs and GRAs may be assigned a variety of non-teaching duties such as: grader for a faculty member; researcher for a faculty member; assistant editor on *The Faulkner Journal* or the *Florida Review*.

3. Teaching Assistantship Resources

If you received a graduate teaching assistantship the following information will be useful in fulfilling your teaching duties:

a) Instructor Training and Development

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. To that end, it offers several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

b) GTA Training (mandatory for employment as a GTA)

This two-day workshop provides information and resources for students who will be instructors. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.

c) GTA Teaching Certificate

This certificate program (twelve weeks for domestic students, sixteen weeks for international students) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided, and a stipend is offered to current UCF students who complete the certificate. International students are provided the same training as well as information regarding language immersion and cultural awareness as a way of knowing what to expect from American students.

For more information about GTA Training, see www.fctl.ucf.edu > Events > GTA Programs.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

A. DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of English
www.english.cah.ucf.edu

Department of English Graduate Studies Director
Dr. Anna Maria Jones
amjones@mail.ucf.edu

Graduate Program Assistant
Brooks Pingston
407-823-5254
bpingsto@mail.ucf.edu

Ph.D. & M.F.A. Program Assistant
Elizabeth Sloan
407-823-5329
esloan@mail.ucf.edu

B. UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

UCF Alumni Association www.ucfalumni.com (Benefits include limited use of UCF library; anyone can join, even current students)

UCF Graduate Catalog (available online only) www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog/

UCF Graduate Website for Students www.graduate.ucf.edu

Academic Calendar: www.ucf.edu/info/acad_calendar.php

Counseling Center counseling.sdes.ucf.edu

Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning www.ftl.ucf.edu

Gender Studies Certificate <http://womensstudies.cah.ucf.edu/>

Golden Rule www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu

Graduate Student Association www.gsa.graduate.ucf.edu/

Health Services <http://www.hs.sdes.ucf.edu/>

Institutional Review Board www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html

International Services Center www.intl.ucf.edu

Library library.ucf.edu

Student Disability Services www.sds.ucf.edu

Student Government Association www.sga.ucf.edu

University Testing Center www.testing.sdes.ucf.edu

University Writing Center www.uwc.ucf.edu

Women's Studies Program <http://womensstudies.cah.ucf.edu/>

C. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Society for the History of Rhetoric (ASHR) www.ashr.org

Association of Departments of English (ADE) www.ade.org

Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC)
www.ncte.org/cccc/?source=ql

Council of Southern Graduate Schools (www.csgs.org)

Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) www.wpacouncil.org

Florida College English Association (FCEA) www.flacea.org

International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) www.writingcenters.org

Modern Language Association (MLA) www.mla.org

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) www.ncte.org

National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) www.nwsa.org

South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAMLA) www.samla.org

Southeastern Writing Center Association (SWCA) www.swca.us

X.FORMS

Following are some of the forms that will be useful as you complete your degree. Each of these forms can be found on the Division of Graduate Studies Website:

www.graduatestudies.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/ or can be found by contacting the Graduate Program Assistants listed above.

A. TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

In order for transfer courses to be requested for use in a UCF degree, the official transcripts from the institution where the courses were taken must be sent to the UCF Division of Graduate Studies. In addition to the form, supporting documentation from the program must include a memo that gives approval for courses to be transferred and where credit should be applied in Program of Study.

B. TRAVELING SCHOLAR FORM

The university participates in the Board of Education Traveling Scholar Program (6C-6.07) enabling a graduate student to take advantage of special resources available at another regionally accredited institution but not available on the home campus (for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories, and library collections). A Traveling Scholar is a graduate student who, by mutual agreement of the appropriate academic authorities in both the sponsoring and hosting institutions, receives a waiver of admission requirements of the host institution and a guarantee of acceptance of earned resident credits by the sponsoring institution.

The Traveling Scholar form and a memo of support from the student's program must be submitted to the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office prior to the start of classes for the semester of enrollment in the course. More information is available online at <http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/currentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm#Traveling%20Scholars>

C. TIME CONFLICT (COLLEGE FORM)

If a registration attempt results in a time conflict between two courses, this form must be completed in order for the student to be registered. This form accompanies the override of the course into which the student is unable to register. This form is submitted to the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office for approval and course enrollment.

D. THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM (COLLEGE FORM)

Thesis committees must be in place and approved by the Graduate Studies Director, the Department Chair, and the College of Arts and Humanities Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies prior to student enrollment into thesis hours.

Committee Composition:

- Chair (Requirements: regular department faculty, terminal degree)
- Minimum of three committee members (Requirements: terminal degree or appropriate discipline recognition)
- At least two must be regular faculty in the student's department.
- Majority UCF faculty

Regular department faculty are tenured or tenure-earning faculty or research faculty with permanent appointments; and can include joint appointments but not courtesy joint appointments. A list of graduate faculty is online here: www.graduate.ucf.edu > Graduate Catalog > Graduate Faculty

E. GRADUATE PETITION FORM

Requests for exceptions to college or university policies are made by petition. The petition process includes both student and program required documentation prior to its receipt in the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office.

- In addition to the Graduate Petition Form, the student must supply his or her program with a clear statement of what exactly is being requested, why it is being petitioned, and rationale for support
- If approved, the program supplies an additional letter of support and forwards the request to the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office for review and submission to the College of Arts and Humanities Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies
- If approved, the college supplies an additional letter of support and forwards the request to the UCF Graduate Council Subcommittee for Policy and Appeals.

If at any point the petition is denied, the student is given the option of having the petition considered at the next level; however, the Graduate Council makes the final decision regarding petitions. Denials at any level are accompanied by a written explanation. For more details

regarding the petition process, please see the College Graduate Website (<http://www.cah.ucf.edu/students/graduate.php>).

F. GRADUATE STUDENT INTENT TO GRADUATE FORM

Intents to Graduate must be filed by the end of registration add/drop in the semester that the student is intending to graduate.

The Director of Graduate Studies confirms potential completion of degree or certificate program by confirming program/plan, checking audit (making any revisions) and signing the form. The audit (with needed corrections, if any) and form are forwarded to the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office where it is verified for potential completion.

Note: If the Program of Study does not show that all requirements may be met by the end of the intended term, the form will either be approved pending or not processed. All pending items must be resolved by mid-semester.

Approved forms are forwarded to the Division of Graduate Studies for processing and notification that the student is intending to graduate. If it is determined that the student will not graduate, the College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Office should be notified. The student will need to re-file his/her intent for the next semester he/she intends to complete the degree. Final certification is completed after grades have been released for the semester, and final transcripts are normally available three to four weeks after certification.

**APPENDIX A:
PROGRAMS OF STUDY**