

English, PhD

The Doctor of Philosophy program in English is designed to prepare students for a lifetime of literary study, as well as for the wide range of professions that require well-developed reading, research, writing, teaching, and administrative skills. The program emphasizes individual initiative, careful choice, and creativity. Students may concentrate in one or more of several areas, including literary history, critical theory, cultural studies, the digital humanities, and pedagogy. The department offers a version of the PhD that incorporates book studies, including a certificate from the UI Center for the Book, as well as a combined program with the Master of Arts in library and information sciences; see Combined Programs [p. 3] in this section of the catalog.

Learning Outcomes

- Writing skills: proficiency in writing publishable academic and creative work of high quality.
- Historical knowledge: comprehensive historical knowledge of literary history, reflected in courses taken across a range of literary periods and national/international traditions.
- Critical theory and approaches: rigorous study of critical methodologies and interpretive strategies.
- Research skills: familiarity with library research into secondary scholarship on primary texts, archival research methods, and field research, where applicable.
- Teaching skills: ideally, students will move from foundations-based grading positions under the supervision of tenure track faculty (introduction to the major) to rhetoric/composition coursework (rhetoric), and then on to literary analysis-focused courses (general education literature). Students learn to build their own syllabi, develop a teaching portfolio, and manage their own courses independently.
- Professional development: preparing conference presentations, curriculum vitae, résumés, and teaching statements, as well as gaining exposure to career tracks, both academic (e.g., tenure track jobs, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, etc.) and alternative professions (e.g., digital humanities, humanities organizations, publishing, etc.).

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy in English requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit. Students may receive credit for up to 18 s.h. of transfer courses. They must maintain a graduate college program grade-point average of at least 3.00. Students may focus in areas such as literary history and critical theory, as well as interdisciplinary areas such as cultural studies and transnational studies.

The PhD in English requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Required Courses	30
Electives	21
Additional Courses	21
Additional Requirements	

Required Courses

Introduction to Graduate Study

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
ENGL:5000	Introduction to Graduate Study	3

Historical Distribution Courses

Students complete one course from each of the following three historical areas for 9 s.h. total. A grade of B-plus or above is required for each course.

Course #	Title	Hours
Pre-1700		
ENGL:6100	Readings in Medieval Literature and Culture	3
ENGL:6110	Medieval Authors	3
ENGL:6200	Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Authors	3
ENGL:6210	Readings in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Genres	3
ENGL:6220	Shakespeare	3
ENGL:7100	Seminar: Medieval Literature and Culture	3
ENGL:7200	Seminar: Early Modern Literature and Culture	3
1700-1900		
ENGL:6300	Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature	3
ENGL:6400	Romantic Literature	3
ENGL:6500	Victorian Literature	3
ENGL:7300	Seminar: Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature	3
ENGL:7400	Seminar: Romantic Literatures	3
ENGL:7500	Seminar: Victorian Literature	3
1900-Present		
ENGL:6720	Twentieth-Century Literatures	3
ENGL:6730	Modernist Studies	3
ENGL:6760	Topics in Contemporary Literature	3
ENGL:6800	Readings in Postcolonial Literature and Theory	3
ENGL:6850	Topics in Creative Writing	3
ENGL:7700	Seminar: Studies in the 20th and 21st Century	3
ENGL:7800	Seminar: Postcolonial Studies	3

Upper-Level English Courses

Students complete an additional 18 s.h. of English courses (prefix ENGL) numbered 5000-7899, excluding ENGL:5990 MA Portfolio in Literary Studies, ENGL:5999 MA Thesis in Literary Studies, ENGL:6950 Colloquium: Teaching Foundations of the English Major, and ENGL:6960 Colloquium: Teaching Literature; these courses must be taken on an A-F graded basis.

Seminars

Of the 18 s.h. in upper-level courses and 9 s.h. in historical distribution courses, 9 s.h. must come from seminars. A grade of B-plus or above is required for each seminar.

Course #	Title	Hours
ENGL:7000	Seminar: Cultural Studies	3
ENGL:7010	Seminar: Literary Criticism and Theory	3
ENGL:7050	Seminar: Performance Theory and Practice	3
ENGL:7100	Seminar: Medieval Literature and Culture	3
ENGL:7200	Seminar: Early Modern Literature and Culture	3
ENGL:7300	Seminar: Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature	3
ENGL:7400	Seminar: Romantic Literatures	3
ENGL:7500	Seminar: Victorian Literature	3
ENGL:7600	Seminar: American Literature and Culture	3
ENGL:7700	Seminar: Studies in the 20th and 21st Century	3
ENGL:7800	Seminar: Postcolonial Studies	3

Electives

Students complete 21 s.h. of coursework taken on an A-F graded basis. Students are encouraged to explore their interdisciplinary interests, including the opportunity to complete a graduate certificate in book arts and book studies.

In consultation with their advisor, students select English courses (prefix ENGL) numbered 3000 and above, excluding ENGL:5990 MA Portfolio in Literary Studies, ENGL:5999 MA Thesis in Literary Studies, ENGL:6950 Colloquium: Teaching Foundations of the English Major, ENGL:6960 Colloquium: Teaching Literature, ENGL:7910 Advanced Studies in a Literary Period, ENGL:7920 Advanced Studies in a Literary Form, and ENGL:7960 Advanced Studies in a Literary Theme. Coursework numbered 3000 or above from an array of subjects may also be used as electives; see "Electives" in the MA in English, no subprogram section of the catalog for a full list of approved course subjects.

With the permission of the program, students may be able to select additional courses from other subjects.

Additional Courses

Students complete 21 s.h. of additional coursework that may be taken either on an A-F or satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) graded basis. They are required to complete the following three comprehensive exam preparation courses and the thesis course, each for a minimum of 1 s.h.

Students consult with their advisor on the number of credits they are required to enroll in for each course. In consultation with their advisor, students may select courses from the preceding list of elective [p. 2] subjects to complete the 21 s.h. as needed.

Course #	Title	Hours
At least 1 s.h. from each of these:		
ENGL:7910	Advanced Studies in a Literary Period	1-3
ENGL:7920	Advanced Studies in a Literary Form	1-3
ENGL:7960	Advanced Studies in a Literary Theme	1-3
ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis	1-18

Book Studies Specialization

The book studies specialization requires 72 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above. Of these, at least 24 s.h. must be in English courses (prefix ENGL) numbered 5000 or above, 15 s.h. must be in Center for the Book courses (prefix UICB) numbered 4000 or above (see Center for the Book in the Graduate College section of the catalog), 12 s.h. may be in courses numbered 3000 or above in the Department of English or in another unit, and 9 s.h. must be in independent studies related to a comprehensive exam. The remaining 12 s.h. of post-comprehensive courses numbered 3000 or above may be taken as graded or independent study coursework.

Additional Requirements

World Language

Students must fulfill the program's world language requirement, usually by taking a standardized test or completing an advanced undergraduate course numbered 3000 or above in a language other than English with a grade of B or higher.

Comprehensive Exam

The comprehensive examination consists of the following: a portfolio of five scholarly questions based on a period of literary history (usually British or American), a review essay and annotated bibliography in a special area of interest, two course syllabi or alternate materials pertaining to an academic-adjacent career, an article to be submitted for publication, and an introduction to the portfolio that synthesizes its parts in preparation for a two-hour oral exam. Students enroll in ENGL:7910 Advanced Studies in a Literary Period, ENGL:7920 Advanced Studies in a Literary Form, and ENGL:7960 Advanced Studies in a Literary Theme to prepare for the exam.

Dissertation

A dissertation is required. Students present their prospectus formally to a faculty committee and must undergo a final exam defending the dissertation. Students continuously enroll in ENGL:7999 PhD Thesis throughout the dissertation process, from developing the prospectus until completing the final exam.

Teaching

All doctoral candidates are strongly advised to gain teaching experience, preferably in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Department of Rhetoric and in GE CLAS Core literature courses.

Combined Programs

MA in Library and Information Science/PhD in English

The combined MA in library and information science/PhD in English program prepares students for careers in academic libraries as humanities subject specialists, reference and instruction librarians, first-year experience librarians, special collections librarians and curators, and archivists. It also enhances the research profiles and methodological toolboxes of digital humanists as well as archival historicists, in addition to improving pedagogical skills. Offered by the Graduate College and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; see the MA in library and information science in the catalog.

Admission

Applications and all supporting documents for graduate admission must be submitted electronically by Dec. 14. Applicants should submit their applications and supporting materials to the University of Iowa Admissions website.

For application forms and a complete description of the PhD program, contact the department's graduate program academic coordinator.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Career Advancement

Most PhD graduates seek employment at colleges and universities. Although the Department of English cannot guarantee such employment, it does supply vigorous assistance. Because there is no certainty that all doctoral graduates in English will find continuing academic employment, it is valuable to remain open to the opportunity of jobs outside the profession of teaching. A number of graduates are finding employment in academic administration, the digital humanities, business, and government.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

English, PhD

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
72 s.h. of graduate level coursework must be completed; up to 18 s.h. of graduate transfer credits from an accredited institution allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^{a, b}		
Graduate College program GPA of at least 3.00 is required. ^c		
Hours		0

First Year

Fall

ENGL:5000	Introduction to Graduate Study ^d	3
ENGL:6950	Colloquium: Teaching Foundations of the English Major ^e	1
Historical distribution course ^{f, g}		3
Historical distribution course ^{f, g}		3

Hours 10

Spring

ENGL:6950	Colloquium: Teaching Foundations of the English Major ^e	1
Historical distribution course ^{f, g}		3
Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
World language requirement ⁱ		

Hours 10

Second Year

Fall

RHET:5350	Colloquium: Teaching Rhetoric ^j	3
Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
Elective course ^k		3

Hours 9

Spring

Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
Elective course ^k		3
Elective course ^k		3

Hours 9

Third Year

Fall

Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
Elective course ^k		3
Elective course ^k		3

Hours 9

Spring

ENGL:6960	Colloquium: Teaching Literature ^{e, l}	2
Upper-level English course ^{f, h}		3
Elective course ^k		3

Hours 8

Fourth Year

Fall

ENGL:7910	Advanced Studies in a Literary Period ^e	1 - 3
ENGL:7920	Advanced Studies in a Literary Form ^e	1 - 3
ENGL:7960	Advanced Studies in a Literary Theme ^e	1 - 3
Exam: Doctoral Comprehensive Exam ^m		

Hours 3-9

Spring

Dissertation Prospectus Defense		
ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis ^{e, n}	3

Hours 3

Fifth Year

Fall

ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis ^{e, n}	3
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Hours 3

Spring		
ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis ^{e, n}	3
Hours		3
Sixth Year		
Fall		
ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis ^{e, n}	3
Hours		3
Spring		
ENGL:7999	PhD Thesis ^{e, n}	2
Exam: Doctoral Final Exam ^o		
Hours		2
Total Hours		72-78

a Students may pursue certificates (including the book arts and book studies certificate), in conjunction with completing the degree requirements for the PhD. For more information check with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

b Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

c Graduate College program GPA is comprised of all courses that are approved degree requirements. If a student takes more than the minimum required number of semester hours to complete the degree, but all courses taken are eligible to count toward the degree, those courses will be included in the Graduate College program GPA.

d Typically this course is offered in fall semesters only. Check MyUI for course availability since offerings are subject to change.

e Students complete 21 s.h. of additional coursework that may be taken either on an A-F or satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) graded basis. The three comprehensive exam preparation courses (ENGL:7910, ENGL:7920, ENGL:7960) and the thesis course (ENGL:7999), each for a minimum of 1 s.h. are required. ENGL:6950 and ENGL:6960 can also be counted toward this requirement. Students consult with their advisor on the number of credits they are required to enroll in for each course and may select additional courses from the approved list of electives to complete the requirement.

f Of the 18 s.h. in upper-level English courses and 9 s.h. in historical distribution courses, 9 s.h. must come from seminars; a grade of B-plus or above is required for each seminar. See the General Catalog for list of approved courses.

g Students complete one course from each of three historical areas for 9 s.h. total; a grade of B-plus or above is required for each course. See the General Catalog for list of approved courses.

h Students must complete 18 s.h. of English courses (prefix ENGL) numbered 5000-7899, excluding ENGL:5990, ENGL:5999, ENGL:6950, and ENGL:6960; these courses must be taken on an A-F graded basis.

i Students must fulfill the program's world language requirement, usually by taking a standardized test or completing an advanced undergraduate course numbered 3000 or above in a language other than English with a grade of B or higher.

j RHET:5350 may be counted toward either the graded elective or additional coursework requirement.

k Students complete 21 s.h. of coursework taken on an A-F graded basis. In consultation with their advisor, students select English courses (prefix ENGL) numbered 3000 and

above, excluding ENGL:5990, ENGL:5999, ENGL:6950, ENGL:6960, ENGL:7910, ENGL:7920, and ENGL:7960.

l Required for TA employment.

m Requires a portfolio of five scholarly questions based on a period of literary history (usually British or American), a review essay and annotated bibliography in a special area of interest, two course syllabi or alternate materials pertaining to an academic-adjacent career, an article to be submitted for publication, and an introduction to the portfolio that synthesizes its parts in preparation for a two-hour oral exam.

n Students continuously enroll in ENGL:7999 throughout the dissertation process, from developing the prospectus until completing the final exam.

o Students present their prospectus formally to a faculty committee and must undergo a final oral exam defending the dissertation.