

English, PhD

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

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program 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 cumulative University of Iowa grade-point average of at least 3.00. Concentrations are offered in areas such as literary history and critical theory, as well as interdisciplinary areas such as cultural studies and transnational studies.

Of the minimum 72 s.h. required for the degree, at least 51 s.h. must be in graded coursework numbered 3000 or above. Of those, at least 30 s.h. must be in English courses numbered 5000 or above, 21 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above may be taken in the Department of English or in another unit, and 9 s.h. taken 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.

The book studies specialization requires 72 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above. Of those, at least 24 s.h. must be in English courses numbered 5000 or above, 15 s.h. must be in Center for the Book courses numbered 4000 or above (see Center for the Book in the Graduate College section of the catalog), 12 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above may be taken in the Department of English or in another unit, and 9 s.h. taken 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.

Students must gain formal admission to PhD candidacy by a vote of the Graduate Steering Committee, usually during the third semester of doctoral study.

Students complete coursework in literature and culture of any four of these historical periods, as expressed in texts of the English-speaking and -writing world (usually but not always British or American): pre-1500, 1500-1660, 1660-1800, 1800-1900, 20th and 21st centuries. They also complete three seminars in the Department of English at the University of Iowa.

Students also 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.

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.

A dissertation is required. Students present their prospectus formally to a faculty committee and must undergo a final exam defending the dissertation.

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.