

**MA IN ENGLISH
WITH
PROFESSIONAL
WRITING OPTION**

MA in English with Option in Professional Writing

The MA in English with an option in Professional Writing consists of 30 credit hours (with thesis) or 33 credit hours (without thesis). In addition to these hours, students must fulfill the language requirement and pass the MA Qualifying Examination in Professional Writing. A description of the degree requirements and regulations appears on the following pages.

Forms to File in 308 Morrill for the MA in English with Professional Writing Option:

- ❖ Departmental Advisory Committee Form: by the end of the second semester of coursework
- ❖ Plan of Study: filed before the end of the second semester of full-time enrollment (filed online at the Graduate College website <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy>)
- ❖ Notice of Intent to take Qualifying Exams: by the end of the second week of classes in the semester in which exams will be taken
- ❖ Thesis Prospectus (when applicable): no later than the beginning of the first semester of thesis hours
- ❖ Notice of Intent to defend a Thesis (when applicable): by the end of the third week of the semester in which the defense will take place
- ❖ Results of Final Defense Form (when applicable): immediately following defense

Summary Checklist

By the end of the second full semester of enrollment, you should have

- ❖ chosen an advisor in Professional Writing
- ❖ chosen your advisory committee
- ❖ met with your committee to discuss your plan of study
- ❖ filed your plan of study

Before taking the MA Qualifying Examination, you must have

- ❖ fulfilled the language requirement
- ❖ maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above on all graduate course work
- ❖ filed an approved plan of study with the Graduate College and English Graduate Office
- ❖ submitted an "Intent to Take Qualifying Examination" form to the English Graduate Office by the end of the second week of classes

Before you are eligible to graduate, you must have

- ❖ filed a Graduation Clearance form (and a revised plan of study, if applicable)
- ❖ filed a Diploma Application (if your graduation is delayed, you must submit a Diploma Extension Application on the Registrar's website: <http://registrar.okstate.edu/Forms>)
- ❖ If you write a thesis, you must also have submitted the defense copy (Final Draft) of your thesis by the Graduate College deadline
- ❖ passed your oral defense (Final Examination) and turned in the signed Results of Final Defense form to the English Graduate Office
- ❖ submitted the final copy of the thesis/dissertation in accordance with the format guidelines at <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis>

Application and Admission

Admission to the MA program in English with an option in Professional Writing requires a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Other qualifications and application materials are listed below. Applicants should be mindful that meeting the minimum standards for admission does not guarantee admission. All applications are submitted electronically through the Graduate College. All required materials will be uploaded electronically with the application at: <https://app.it.okstate.edu/gradcollege/>

Admission Qualifications and Application Materials

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| GPA | Applicants should have maintained an undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, particularly in English courses. |
| Undergraduate Major | Applicants for the MA in English with an option in Professional Writing usually have an undergraduate major in English (at least 24 hours beyond Freshman Composition) or a related field. In addition, students should demonstrate a background in some technical area through work experience, course work, or a combination of these. |
| Recommendations | Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation. |
| Statement of Purpose | Applicants must submit a written statement of approximately 250 words that identifies a proposed area of study, reasons for undertaking graduate study in this area, relevant work experience, and future career plans. |
| Writing Sample | A portfolio of work-related documents or a 7 to 15 page paper written for an upper-level English course or related area of study. |

The GRE Exam is not required, but students who have taken the test are encouraged to submit their scores as part of their application

English Language Proficiency (non-native speakers)

Applicants who are not native speakers of English must submit current scores from one of the following:

- ❖ TOEFL iBT minimum score of 100
- ❖ TOEFL paper based - minimum score of 600 and TWE
- ❖ IELTS minimum score of 7.0

Please see the English Department website for additional score requirements.

Students are admitted to the MA program with Professional Writing Option. If a student wishes to move from one MA degree program into another MA degree program (such as the MA with Option in Professional Writing to the general MA), the student must submit an application to and receive approval for that change from the Admissions Committee. The application must include a new statement of purpose and a new writing sample, which will be considered along with the rest of the student's graduate file. Since this application will be an internal English Department matter, students will not pay an application fee. If the Admissions Committee does not grant the request, the student will have the option of continuing in the area of specialization into which he or she was admitted.

Graduate College Rules and Regulations

There are many rules and regulations affecting graduate enrollment, tenure, examinations, theses, and dissertations that are made by the Graduate Faculty of Oklahoma State University rather than the English Department. Among the rules students should familiarize themselves with are those governing academic dishonesty or misconduct, especially those dealing with plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to become informed about all English Department, Graduate College, and University regulations.

The Oklahoma State University Catalog should be read closely by all those who are considering, or participating in, graduate studies in English at Oklahoma State University. Copies are available online at: <http://www.okstate.edu/registrar>.

Advisor and Advisory Committee

All graduate students select advisory committees to guide them in completing their degrees.

Advisor: Students are encouraged to choose an advisor before the end of their second semester of course work. The advisor may be any member of the English Department graduate faculty who specializes in Professional Writing.

Advisory Committee: The advisory committee will normally consist of the student's major advisor as committee chair and at least two additional members of the English Department's graduate faculty.

Changes: To change an advisor or advisory committee, a student must complete a Committee Change Request form, to be signed by all committee members and the Graduate Director, and submitted to the Graduate College.

Plan of Study

A plan of study is a listing of course work the student intends to take for completion of the degree and an estimated time schedule. The student must develop the plan with his/her advisor and advisory committee. The Graduate College requires MA students to file a plan of study with the Graduate College before completing the end of the second semester of full-time enrollment – summer sessions excluded.

Planning Meeting: Prior to the end of the second semester of full-time enrollment – summer sessions excluded, students must schedule a meeting with their advisory committee. During that meeting, the student and advisory committee will discuss the student's preparation, professional goals, and plans for graduate study. The student and committee should agree upon:

- ❖ A plan of study
- ❖ Fulfillment of the language requirement
- ❖ Tentative plans for the MA Qualifying Examination
- ❖ Tentative plans for the thesis or creative component

Creative Component: The course used as a creative component must be designated with an asterisk on the plan of study.

Submitting the Plan of Study: The student will finalize the plan and submit it online at the Graduate College website: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy> . All members of the advisory committee and the Graduate Director will review and sign the form electronically.

Changes: Changes to the plan of study can be made with the approval of the advisory committee. A revised plan should be submitted to the Graduate College at the beginning of the intended semester of graduation.

Ten-Year Rule: A final plan of study may not include any course more than ten years old at the time of actual graduation.

Checklist for Submitting a Plan of Study

- ❖ Minimum of 30 hours for thesis option, or 34 hours for non-thesis option, beyond baccalaureate degree
- ❖ Minimum of 16 hours in English
- ❖ At least 21 hours of course work at the 5000 or 6000 level at OSU
- ❖ All courses, including 4000-level, taken for graduate credit
- ❖ No more than 9 hours of course work taken as special student or transferred from another institution
- ❖ No course work used to complete requirements for another degree
- ❖ Plan signed electronically by the advisor, committee members, and the Graduate Director

Course Requirements

The MA in English with an option in Professional Writing offers two course requirement plans: thesis and non-thesis. The following requirements govern these options.

Thesis Plan: Students take 30 semester hours, including six credit hours of thesis.

Non-thesis Plan: Students take 34 semester hours, including a three-credit internship and a one-credit-hour Independent Study course. They write a creative component, an article-length paper or research project, as part of this course.

Required Courses: Regardless of whether they opt for the thesis or non-thesis approach, Professional Writing students are expected to complete 18 semester hours of required course work and to fulfill total hour requirements from among the elective courses available. The proposed program of work is planned in consultation with the student's advisory committee.

Required Courses (18 hours)

Professional Writing Core Courses

- ❖ ENGL 5593 Seminar in Style and Editing
- ❖ ENGL 5553 Studies in Visual Rhetoric and Design
- ❖ ENGL 5523 Genres in Professional Writing
- ❖ ENGL 5340 Studies in Discourse Analysis

Six hours from the following:

- ❖ ENGL 5353 Studies in the History of Rhetoric
- ❖ ENGL 5560 Seminar in Professional Writing
- ❖ ENGL 6350 Topics in Rhetorical Theory
- ❖ ENGL 6500 Topics in Professional Writing

Creative Component:

- ❖ ENGL 5210 Directed Study (one credit hour)
- ❖ ENGL 5520 Internship in Professional Writing

Thesis

- ❖ ENGL 5000 Thesis

Sample Electives

Professional Writing:

- ❖ ENGL 5013 Introduction to Graduate Studies
- ❖ ENGL 5223 Teaching Professional Writing
- ❖ ENGL 5560 Seminar in Professional Writing (various topics)
- ❖ ENGL 6500 Topics in Professional Writing (various topics)

Composition:

- ❖ ENGL 5213 Composition Theory and Pedagogy

Linguistics:

- ❖ ENGL 5143 Descriptive Linguistics
- ❖ ENGL 5123 Social and Psychological Aspects of Language
- ❖ ENGL 5130 Studies in English Grammar
- ❖ ENGL 5140 Seminar in Linguistics (various topics)
- ❖ ENGL 6410 Topics in Linguistics (various topics)

TESL:

- ❖ ENGL 5243 Teaching English as a Second Language
- ❖ ENGL 5333 Seminar in TESL: Second Language Testing
- ❖ ENGL 5313 Internship in TESL
- ❖ ENGL 5120 Studies in TESL (various topics)
- ❖ ENGL 6420 Topics in Second Language Acquisition (various topics)

Courses other than those listed may be taken as electives if approved by the advisory committee.

Methods Course for Teaching Assistants: Teaching assistants must take an appropriate pedagogy course or courses in their first semester of teaching at Oklahoma State University. These hours may be counted as part of the total hours of course work.

Electives: The remaining hours of course work are chosen by students in consultation with their advisory committees. Choice of courses should be based on the student's thesis subject, professional goals, and preparation for the MA Qualifying Examination.

Required Hours at 5000/6000 Level: All MA students must complete at least 21 hours of course work at the 5000/6000 level; this 21 hours of course work may include six hours of credit for work on the thesis.

ENGL 5990: ENGL 5990: Special Problems limits enrollment (with permission from the Graduate Director) to who elect the creative component rather than the thesis. The use of ENGL 5990 is restricted to students who have completed course work and need to enroll in one or two hours in order to fulfill enrollment requirements.

4000-Level Courses: Only those 4000-level courses marked by an asterisk in the OSU University Catalog are available for graduate credit. All graduate course work should include a research paper or other appropriate project. In the instance of a 4000-level course that may not require such a paper or project, the student should, with the consent of the instructor involved, arrange for such a paper or project to supplement the assigned work. The English Department strongly suggests that all graduate courses be at the 5000/6000 level.

Transfer Hours: Students may transfer up to nine graduate hours from another university granting a Master's degree in English. The student's advisory committee shall determine the number of hours of transfer credit to be awarded. If a student uses the hours for a degree at the previous institution, the hours are not applicable to the MA degree at OSU.

Independent Study: Independent Study courses may be occasionally arranged with an instructor when no regular graduate course on the desired topic is available during the student's expected tenure. Each of the two course numbers (ENGL 5210 and 6210) may be used for up to six credit hours per semester, and no more than nine hours total per course number. All students requesting an Independent Study course must hold a meeting with their advisory committee and receive approval by the Departmental members of the committee. Special forms must be used by those who wish to enroll in such courses. Available on the forms page of the English Graduate website, this form should be submitted no later than the end of the first week of graduate enrollment prior to the semester in which the Independent Study course is taken. A student who has completed the 17th graduate credit hour in a degree program but who does not have an approved plan of study on file in the Graduate College may not arrange an Independent Study course.

The Graduate Studies Committee will evaluate applications for Independent Study in accordance with the following criteria and procedure:

1. Has the student's advisory committee approved the course?
2. Has the student taken regularly offered courses related to the subject?
3. Is the Independent Study unlikely to have a negative impact on enrollment in concurrent or immediately subsequent course offerings?
4. Does the Independent Study fill a gap in the student's curriculum? Or is the specific course content unlikely to be offered during the student's expected tenure?
5. Are the text materials clearly listed?
6. Is the work appropriate for the number of credit hours requested?
7. Is the list of assignments and percentages awarded to each clearly explained?
8. Is the schedule of conferences sufficiently specific?

If all eight questions may be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will email notice of acceptance to the proposed instructor, who will then inform the student.

If one or more questions cannot be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will contact the proposed instructor in an effort to clarify and/or resolve the problem(s). If no resolution can be reached, the Graduate Director will inform the proposed instructor of the denial and the reason(s) for the denial in writing. The proposed instructor will then inform the student.

End-of-Semester Evaluations: All graduate students will be evaluated in writing at the end of each semester by the professors with whom they have taken courses. These evaluations are kept on file in the English Graduate Office. These evaluations are available for students to read.

Grade of "Incomplete": The following regulations apply to students who receive what at OSU is termed the "composite incomplete" grade ("IB," "IC," "ID," or "IF") for any of their course work within the English Department:

- ❖ Students must complete course work within one calendar year, after which time the preliminary grade (expressed by the second letter of the composite) becomes permanent in accordance with University policy. Individual faculty members, however, may establish a shorter time limit for completing course work. Faculty will identify time limits in the "remarks" dropdown of the electronic grade sheet.
- ❖ Teaching assistants or associates having more than three incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for reappointment.
- ❖ Teaching assistants or associates having any incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for summer employment

Students should familiarize themselves with Section 6.2 of the University Academic Regulations found in the *University Catalog* for a full explanation of University policy governing incomplete grades.

Language Requirement

Methods of Demonstrating Proficiency: In order to fulfill the language requirement for the MA in English, students must demonstrate reading knowledge of one language other than English by passing a translation test, or taking course work, or submitting the departmental form on which the student's advisory committee affirms that the language is the student's primary language.

Students who elect a translation test must choose from among the following languages: French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Old English, Russian, and Spanish. The language requirement must be fulfilled prior to taking the MA Qualifying Examination or defending the MA Thesis.

Petition for Alternative Method of Demonstrating Proficiency: Students may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for approval to fulfill the language requirement with demonstrable proficiency in a language other than English that they have gained through study and/or residence in an area where the language is spoken. This petition is completed by means of a departmental form and must have the support of the student's advisory committee.

Substitution of Computer Language: Professional writing students may use a computer language if their research indicates its value and if their advisory committee approves. Competence in the computer language must be confirmed in writing by a faculty member with relevant expertise (as determined by the student's advisory committee).

Reading Knowledge may be demonstrated in any of the following ways:

- ❖ Reading knowledge can be demonstrated by passing a translation test. The test shall consist of a total of three 250- 300-word passages in the language, two from scholarly and one from a primary text. For Latin, Greek, or Old English, the test will consist of three primary texts. With access to a dictionary, students must translate any two of the passages. The test for reading knowledge must be completed within three hours.
- ❖ Reading knowledge can be demonstrated by taking one three-credit- hour upper-division undergraduate course in which the instruction and readings are primarily in the language or by taking one three- credit-hour graduate language-reading course. Students must receive a grade of "B" or better in the specified course to fulfill the requirement. Coursework may be completed after enrolling in the OSU English Department Graduate Program, or it may have been completed no more than five years prior to matriculation

- ❖ A student who holds a Master's degree from another university may fulfill the reading knowledge requirement by providing written proof that he or she has satisfactorily completed a language requirement for the Master's degree at the awarding institution. This documentation should be in the form of either (a) a specific posting of the language requirement having been met on the student's transcript or, (b) a letter from an appropriate official at the institution that awarded the Master's.

Scheduling the Translation Test. Translation tests are arranged by the English Graduate Director. They are offered three times a year, at the beginning of the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Fall and spring tests typically are held the third Wednesday of the semester. Summer tests are held the Wednesday after the last day of the semester. Notices of Intent to take the test are due no later than two weeks prior to the test. The fee for the test is \$30. This fee must be paid by check or money order (payable to the English Department) prior to the test date. Sample tests are available in the English Graduate Office.

MA Qualifying Examination in Professional Writing

The Qualifying Examination for the MA in English with an option in Professional Writing is a five-hour exam that is administered on a single day. It is given each September and February, on the fifth Saturday of the semester. Students must submit a signed Notice of Intent to take the examination by the end of the second week of classes. No exams are offered during the summer, and students must take the exams on the Stillwater campus.

Prerequisites: Before taking the MA Qualifying Examination, students must:

- ❖ have fulfilled the language requirement.
- ❖ have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work taken beyond the baccalaureate degree. All courses carrying graduate credit, including transfer hours on the approved plan of study, will be calculated in this grade point average.
- ❖ have an approved plan of study on file with the Graduate College
- ❖ submit a Notice of Intent to Take Qualifying Examinations form to the English Graduate Office by the end of the second week of classes.

Exam Areas:

Students must answer a total of four questions. They must answer at least one question from each of the following three areas:

- ❖ Theories in Rhetoric and Professional Writing
- ❖ Genre and Discourse
- ❖ Style, Editing, and Visual Rhetoric and Design

Preparation: Reading lists for all areas are posted on the English Graduate Website at: <http://english.okstate.edu/graduate-program/ma-exams-and-reading-lists> . Students should prepare for their exams in consultation with their advisory committees.

Evaluation: Each question will be evaluated by three readers from the specific subject area covered by that section of the exam. Student anonymity will be maintained. If a student answers two questions in a single area, the readers in that area will evaluate each question separately. All readers evaluate exam questions individually before meeting as a committee to discuss student performances and provide each question with a rating of "Pass with Distinction," "Pass," "Pass/Terminal MA," or "Fail." To be eligible for the MA in English with an option in Professional Writing, students must pass four questions and at least one question in each of the three areas.

Notification of Results: The Graduate Director will email notification of exam results to students and their advisors no later than two weeks after they were taken.

Retakes: Students may take the exam only twice. If a student passes one question in each area but fails one question in the “double” area (the area in which two questions were answered), he or she may retake a question in any area on the second attempt. Students may also retake the exam or parts of the exam in the next major semester in order to improve an original rating of “Pass/Terminal MA.” Students retaking part of the exam will have two hours to answer one question, three hours to answer two questions, and four hours to answer three questions.

Appeals: Normally, a second failure on any section of the MA Qualifying Examination will result in termination of the student's work toward the degree. However, when course work has been of exceptionally high quality, a student may, after a second failure, petition the Graduate Studies Committee for permission to take the exam a third and final time. In order to petition, the student must have a grade point average of 3.50 or higher in graduate courses taken at OSU. In addition, the student's petition must be supported by favorable end-of-semester evaluations from at least three professors.

Thesis (optional)

Should the student choose to write a thesis, the thesis is expected to be a substantial research project on a topic related to Professional Writing. The thesis director should be a member of the Professional Writing graduate faculty of the English Department.

Thesis Committee: Unless the student requests a change, the advisory committee serves as the thesis committee. If it is necessary to change the committee, a new committee form must be completed and submitted to the English Graduate Office and the Graduate College.

Prospectus: *MA candidates writing a thesis should submit a prospectus (approximately 1000 words) no later than the first semester they are enrolled in thesis hours.* The prospectus must be approved by the candidate's committee. Committee members must be notified in writing if an approved prospectus differs significantly from the submitted thesis (if, for example, the topic of the thesis changes, the authors or texts to be treated are altered, or the number or character of the chapters changes). Students must provide a copy of the approved prospectus to the Graduate Director.

Reading Procedure: At the time that the prospectus is approved, the candidate and the committee members should agree upon a reading procedure for the thesis. Matters to be discussed in reaching this agreement might include which chapters each member of the committee needs to see as they are completed by the candidate, whether individual committee members want to see the chapters serially or all at once, and how much time committee members will need to finish reading a chapter or the entire thesis. Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading fewer than two weeks before the defense.

Deadlines: Students submitting theses must adhere to deadlines established by the Graduate College and by the English Department.

Style: The student must write the thesis according to the guidelines in the current Graduate College Style Manual, available from the Graduate College or at: <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/default.html>

Defense Copy (Final Draft): The thesis that is defended shall contain all of the chapters in a completed form, with full documentation, and in a format specified by each committee member.

Final Copy: If as a result of the defense, revisions to the thesis are required, committee members will not sign the thesis until they are satisfied with the revisions.

Thesis Defense (optional)

For those students writing theses, the thesis committee conducts a public, oral examination lasting no fewer than 45 minutes. The thesis defense occurs after the student has submitted a complete draft of the thesis to all committee members.

Intent to Defend Form: Candidates will file a nonbinding Notice of Intent to Defend form with the Graduate Director within the first two weeks of the semester in which they expect to defend the thesis or dissertation. This form will be signed by each member of the committee before it is filed with the Graduate Director. If a student does not defend in a semester when the Intent to Defend form is filed, he or she should resubmit the form when he or she is prepared to defend.

Scheduling of Oral Defense: *Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading less than two weeks before the defense.* The English Graduate Office must be notified no fewer than two weeks before the oral defense of the following: the day, time, and location of the defense, and the title of the thesis. The English Graduate Office must be informed of any changes in the scheduled defense date, time, and location. **No thesis defense will be held after the beginning of the summer session.**

Student Tenure

The time limit for completion of the requirements for the MA degree in English with an option in Professional Writing is seven years from a student's first enrollment after admission to the MA degree program.

Length of Financial Support for Teaching

Assistants

A teaching assistant who stays off strict academic probation and who is making satisfactory progress toward the degree is eligible for financial support for a maximum of three years. A student who obtains an MA in English at OSU and then enters the PhD program is eligible for an additional five years of support.

If exceptional circumstances warrant, a student in the final year of financial support may petition the Head of the English Department for an additional year's support. Such exceptional cases will be judged on an individual basis and in light of Departmental policies and staffing needs.

Ineligibility for the MA Degree

The Graduate Director may upon proper cause declare that a student is ineligible for a degree from the English Department at Oklahoma State University. Upon determining that such cause exists, the Graduate Director will immediately notify the student's advisor, who will discuss the matter with the student and respond to the Graduate Director within fifteen working days. Should the Graduate Director still believe that proper cause exists, he or she will write a letter to the student indicating the reasons for the decision. The student may then appeal to the Graduate Studies Committee within ten working days for a hearing.

The Graduate Studies Committee will review the appeal and report its findings to the Graduate Director, who will notify the student. The student may then appeal that decision to the full Graduate Faculty of the English Department. The decision of that group shall end Departmental appeals.

Appeals and Petitions

All appeals involving grades or charges of academic dishonesty or misconduct must be directed to the OSU Academic Appeals Board. Students should contact the Provost's office (101 Whitehurst) for information and forms.

Petitions involving teaching assistantships must be directed to the Department Head.

All other petitions or appeals must be directed in writing to the Graduate Director, who will then forward the petition to the appropriate body, usually the Graduate Studies Committee (for special requests as described within the English Graduate Guidelines) or the English Graduate Faculty (for exceptions to English Department policy). The Graduate Director will notify students by mail of the decision reached by the Graduate Studies Committee or the Graduate Faculty, with a copy to the student's advisor. For exceptions to university policy, the Graduate Director will forward the petition to the Graduate Council.

Students are urged to discuss matters with their advisors and with the Graduate Director before making a formal petition or appeal.

If the Graduate Director does not act upon a student's written request within a reasonable amount of time, the student and/or advisor may appeal directly to the Department Head. If a student has exhausted all appeals procedures within the Department and is still not able to resolve the problem, he or she may appeal to the Graduate College.