

MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDIES

You should consider both your personal interests and professional goals when deciding whether to begin work on a Master's degree.

While the program is suitable for anyone who wants to pursue the study of English and American literature in depth, it also yields a credential that can help you advance in a variety of careers, including secondary school and community college teaching, technical writing, editing, public relations, journalism, and just about any other field that requires good reasoning and communication skills.

You should be aware that most openings for literature professors at four-year colleges require a PhD degree and that for the past couple of decades, even those with doctorates have found it difficult to obtain such employment. (Accordingly, PhD programs in literary study have themselves become smaller and more competitive.) On the other hand, openings in the field of rhetoric and composition have expanded in recent years.

We urge you to seek advice from our faculty concerning employment opportunities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

301 Sparkman Drive Huntsville, AL 35899

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT Morton Hall 222

Dr. Daniel Schenker schenk@uah.edu

Chair 256-824-2373

Lyndsey Torok lnt0001@uah.edu

Staff Assistant 256-824-6320

Cindi Brasher brasher@uah.edu

Staff Assistant 256-824-6321

Online at: uah.edu/la/departments/english

Director of Graduate Studies

Dr. Laurel Bollinger laurel.bollinger@uah.edu

256-824-2380 Morton Hall 206B

Director of Business and Technical Writing

Dr. Ryan Weber Ryan.Weber@uah.edu

256-824-6934 Morton Hall 232C

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MH 232K

Dr. Beth Quick beth.quick@uah.edu

Chair 256-824-2325

Chantaye Robinson-Jones 256-824-6220

Certification Officer robinsc1@uah.edu

TESTING SERVICES Wilson Hall 225

256-824-8725 testing.uah.edu

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES MDH 134

Dr. David Berkowitz, *Dean* 256-824-6002

ADMISSION

General Considerations

Before applying to the master's program, it is a good idea to review the program options herein and, if necessary, consult with Dr. Laurel Bollinger, Acting Director of Graduate Studies, about your particular situation. You are welcome to set up an appointment for a meeting via email at laurel.bollinger@uah.edu or 256-824-2380.

If you have a B.A. in English you can usually enter the program without having to take any prerequisite courses. Students who have

degrees in other fields may be required to take up to 24 hours of undergraduate classes before proceeding to graduate work. The Director and the Chair will evaluate your transcripts and determine what courses, if any, you will need to take. The situation is somewhat different for students seeking Certification to teach English in public schools through the Non-Traditional Fifth-Year Program (see also below). The State of Alabama's Department of Education requires teachers to have a background in Language

Arts, which includes classes in speech, journalism, and acting not usually taken as part of an undergraduate English major. Any deficiencies in these areas will have to be

made up before admittance to the program. (Additional prerequisite courses in linguistics and composition pedagogy can be taken as part of the graduate program.)

HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY

Pick up an application for admission to the Graduate School at Charger Central in the University Center, or you may download a form from the Graduate School website. Fill it out, write a check for the application fee, and arrange for transcripts and test scores to be sent to UAH. Although there is no application deadline, it is best to file the application at least two months before the start of the term you plan to begin your studies. (Keep in mind that your application has to be approved by the English Department, Dean of the Graduate School, and in the case of those seeking a teaching certificate, the UAH Education Department; all of this takes time.)

If you apply later than that, you should fill out an application for Graduate Non-Degree status for the semester immediately upcoming, and then also file for Graduate Degree status for the following semester. This will allow you to register for classes without having to wait for the paperwork to go through channels.

NOTE: Students who are applying for an M.A. in English with a Technical Communication Certificate need to check off on the graduate

application both the M.A. in English and the Technical Communication Certificate. Two Programs of Study (POS's), one for the degree and one for the certificate, will need to be signed and submitted, as will an Application for Graduate Degree and Application for Graduate Certificate (initiated by the student near the end of a graduate program). In other words, there are separate "paper trails" (application to grad school, POS, application for degree and/or certificate) for the degrees and the certificate. If the appropriate paperwork is not completed, degrees/certificates will not appear on students' transcripts.

Note that if you do require undergraduate courses as prerequisites, you should defer applying to the Graduate School until you have completed them. Otherwise you will have to pay the higher graduate tuition for undergraduate courses. (At UAH the rule is—once a graduate student, always a graduate student!). If you have any questions about your particular situation, check with the department before you file an application.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To receive unconditional admission to the program, you must have a 3.0 grade point average for previous college-level work, and a GRE score in the 65th percentile for verbal reasoning (= score of around 155) or an MAT score in the 50th percentile (= raw score of around 410) or above. (The MAT, or Miller Analogies Test, is offered regularly on the UAH campus. Check with UAH Instructional and Testing Services for dates and times.)

If you do not meet those requirements, you may be granted conditional admission. This means that you can take classes, but that you must have the approval and signature of the Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair.

You will also be required to earn at least a "B" in each of your courses. After having done satisfactory work for 12 hours (four courses) your admission status automatically changes to unconditional. From that point, you are required to maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0 (thus it is possible to get a "C" as long as each such grade is balanced by an "A").

NOTE ON PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER CERTIFICATION: The Department of Education requires that students admitted to any of the following programs that include teacher certification have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5, in addition to the requirements noted above.

**THE [GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP \(GTA\)/SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION](#)
DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 15 TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE FOLLOWING SCHOOL YEAR.**

PROGRAM OPTIONS

(Based on current catalog.)

Please note that three requirements apply to M.A. programs in the English Department:

- At least half of the hours you take toward your degree (but not including thesis hours) must be taken at the 600 level.
- At least 18 hours in your program must be in literature (except for those students seeking Class A teacher certification as Reading Specialists). Literature courses include all those listed in the catalogue except courses with the prefix “EHL”; EH 501, EH 502 and EH 602 (technical writing); and EH 500: Composition Studies for Teachers and EH 601: Writing Pedagogy. Some Special Topics courses may also not apply.
- All work must be completed within six years of the first course taken toward the degree, or within five years for teacher certification. Courses taken between six and ten years of your degree completion date may be re-validated by departmental exams; any graduate course more than ten years old may not be used.
- EH 540 and EH 649 indicate “Special Topics” courses. Often these are new courses, or courses taught by visiting faculty. You may include any number of these classes in your program of study, as long as you meet other requirements.

Master’s Degree in English, Plan I: This is the thesis option. You take 24 hours, plus a minimum of six hours of thesis. There are no specific courses required. Whether you choose to write a thesis or not is entirely up to you. (See below for more information about theses.)

Master’s Degree in English, Plan II: This is the non-thesis option. You take 33 hours of coursework; as in Plan I, there are no specific course requirements.

Master’s Degree in English with Certificate in Technical Communication: This certificate can be useful in seeking employment in the field of technical writing. In addition to the 18 hours in literature, the 18 hour certificate component includes EH 501: Theory and Practice in Technical Communication, EH 502: Problems in Technical Editing, and two additional English

electives (including one at the 600 level); students also take two graduate-level courses in an allied field such as linguistics, psychology, computer science, engineering management, or information systems. Please see Dr. Ryan Weber for further information.

Class A Teacher Certification in English/Language Arts: Traditional Master’s Program, strengthened subject matter option: This program is designed for people who already have a Class B teaching certificate in English/ Language Arts. Requirements include 24 hours in graduate English courses (at least 18 in literature) plus the following graduate Education courses:

- ED 604: Contributions of Psychology to Education
- ED 606: Principles of Curriculum Development or ED 530: Applied Multiculturalism
- ED 607: Educator as Evaluator
- ED 520: Computer-Based Instructional Technologies or another instructional technology course

Students may also need ED 593: Education of Exceptional Children and Youth if they have not previously satisfied the Special Education requirement.

Class A Teacher Certification in English/Language Arts: Non-Traditional Fifth Year Program: This program is for people who have earned a bachelor’s degree, and have now decided that they want to teach English in Alabama’s public schools. At the end of this program you will have both an M.A. in English and a recommendation for a Class A teaching certificate. If you have an undergraduate degree in Language Arts you will probably not have to take additional coursework before being admitted to the program. Prerequisites for other types of applicants are as follows:

B.A. in English – ED 301: Introduction to Education Practicum; EHL 307: Linguistic Structure of Modern English, unless you incorporate EHL 505: Survey of General Linguistics or EHL 507: Advanced English Grammar Studies into your M.A. program; EH 400: Composition Studies for Teachers, unless you incorporate either EH 500: Composition

Studies for Teachers or EH 601: Writing Pedagogy into your M. A. program.

B.A. in a discipline other than English – 32 hours of English overall; 19 hours of upper-level English literature courses (300 or above), including EH 360: Shakespeare; ED 301: Introduction to Education Practicum; EHL 307: Linguistic Structure of Modern English, unless you incorporate EHL 505: Survey of General Linguistics or EHL 507: Advanced English Grammar Studies into your M.A. program; EH 400: Composition Studies for Teachers, unless you incorporate either EH 500: Composition Studies for Teachers or EH 601: Writing Pedagogy into your M. A. program; Speech (CM 113) and one course in each of the following two areas: Drama (CM 122 or CM 221 [preferred]), Journalism (CM 205 or CM 430 or CM 530).

The M.A. program itself consists of 24 hours English, of which 18 hours must be in literature, plus 18 hours of graduate education courses, plus 9 hours of student teaching:

- ED 520: Computer-based Instructional Technologies or another instructional technology course
- ED 521: Teaching English in Middle and Secondary School
- ED 530: Applied Multiculturalism
- ED 593: Education of Exceptional Children and Youth
- ED 604: Contributions of Psychology to Education
- ED 607: Educator as Evaluator
- ED 608: Expanded Reading Ability through Content Area Instruction
- ED 609: Classroom Behavior Management
- ED 698: High School Internship (6 hours)

We usually advise you to take the English component first, because in the event that you

change your mind and decide against becoming certified, the English courses, unlike those in Education, will still lead toward an M. A. degree.

Class A Certification as a Reading Specialist, Pre-School through Twelfth

Grade: Advising for this program is handled through the Education Department. Please see the chair of that department for more information.

Foreign Language Requirement

The English Department requires that you demonstrate reading competence in one foreign language. You may demonstrate this in either of two ways: completion of at least nine hours of college classes in the language with a grade of “B” or above taken within five years of beginning your graduate study at UAH or satisfactory performance on a reading exam prepared by the faculty of the UAH Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

Alternatively, you may fulfill the requirement by taking one of the following courses: EHL 505: Survey of General Linguistics or EHL 507: Advanced English Grammar Studies (In some semesters EHL 509: Special Topics in Applied English Linguistics can also be used with departmental approval.) This will be an additional class for students in the 30-hour Plan I program, as well as for students in the 33-hour Plan II or M. A. with Certificate in Technical Writing programs. Students in all other programs with 36 or more hours may include this course in their programs. Note: anyone considering doctoral work should be advised that most PhD programs maintain the traditional requirement of reading knowledge in one, and in some cases, two foreign languages.

PROGRAM OF STUDY (POS)

When you are formally admitted into the Graduate School, you will receive a letter of welcome from the Department Chair that also advises you to meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to draw up a program of study. The POS is a one-page document that outlines the courses you will be taking, and serves as a contract between you and the Department. Of course, because the schedule

only looks forward about one year, in many cases the POS will serve as a guide or template, noting such things as the requisite number of 500- and 600-level courses and the required courses in particular programs.

During your next-to-last semester in the Department you will need to fill out and file Applications for Advanced Degree. At that time you should also meet with the Director of

Graduate Studies to prepare for graduation. Your POS will be reviewed and brought up to date at that meeting. This provides an

opportunity while there is still time to correct errors and make necessary adjustments.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S COURSES

Although instructors have their own individual teaching styles, there are certain elements common to most graduate courses. Most 500-level courses will have enrollments limited to 25, and will include a mix of graduate students and undergraduate students. 600-level courses are limited to 15, graduate students only (with rare exceptions). In addition to reading assignments, you will write research papers and / or analytical essays, take a final exam (possibly a take-home), and perhaps make oral presentations. As a rule of thumb, plan to commit about 12 hours per week (including class time) to each graduate course; some weeks during the semester will be less demanding, but others more so, especially before a paper is due. Remember that to remain in good standing you have to maintain an overall B average. Note that you must have a program with at least half of your coursework at the 600 level. Also, any student who has taken a 400-level course as an undergraduate must receive permission from the instructor before enrolling in the same course at the 500-level. All 500-level courses are cross-listed with 400-level courses.

[NOTE: COURSES WITH THE PREFIX "EHL," PLUS EH 500, 501, 502, 601, AND 602 DO NOT COUNT TOWARD THE REQUIREMENT OF EIGHTEEN HOURS OF LITERATURE. IN ADDITION, EH 501, 502, AND 602 DO NOT FULFILL ANY REQUIREMENTS IN NON-TRADITIONAL FIFTH-YEAR PROGRAMS OF STUDY.]

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

EH 500 - Composition Studies for Teachers
Introduction to effective strategies for the teaching of writing. Strategies include creating and implementing writing prompts, fostering writing as process, working with grammar in context, investigating response strategies for teachers and students, and developing and implementing assessment rubrics.

EH 501 - Theory and Practice in Technical Communication

Explores the relationships between common practices in technical communication and the theories that legitimize those practices. Introduction to research and theories about fundamental issues in technical communication which may then become the basis for further graduate study in technical communication.

EH 502 - Problems in Technical Editing
Advanced study of research and practice in common problems of technical editing, including documentation standards, document design, and management of complex editorial projects. Involves collaborative project with professional writers in industry.

EH 503 - Literary Criticism and Theory
Major texts and approaches from Plato to the present..

EH 504 - Literary Research Methods
Introduction to the method and practice of advanced literary studies with emphasis on the development of literary critical research skills, the building of a critical lexicon, and the application of theory and criticism.

EH 508 - History of the English Language
History of the emergence and development of English from the pre-Anglo-Saxon period to the present. Emphasis on cultural contexts.

EH 510 - Advanced Fiction Writing
Workshop in advanced fiction writing. Prerequisites: Approval of instructor.

EH 511 - Poetry Writing
Workshop in advanced poetry writing. Prerequisites: Approval of instructor.

EH 512 - Special Studies in Creative Writing
Topics in creative writing, professional writing, or other advanced writing announced in advance.

EH 513 - Children's and Adolescent Literature
Course content will include the study of various genres of children's and adolescent literature and their relationship to beginning reading, enhancement of reading comprehension, and intervention instruction in the various content areas. Same As: ED

513. Limited to students seeking teacher certification.

EH 515 - Studies in Anglophone/Postcolonial Literature

An introduction to major concepts, figures, and works with emphasis upon historical and cultural context. Specific focus will vary.

EH 520 - Modern and Contemporary Poetry
American and British poetry from the 1890s to the present: Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Frost, Stevens, and others. Poets will be studied against the background of the social, political and technological revolutions that characterize the modern world.

EH 522 - Modern Novel
Considers responses to the experience of modernity; focus on English and American but texts will also be drawn from Continental, Latin American, Asian, or African traditions.

EH 523 - Studies in Contemporary British Literature
Major works after 1945 with emphasis on historical and cultural contexts. Specific focus will vary.

EH 525 - Literature and Technology
Considers the relation between technology and culture as it has been understood since the classical period through a broad range of literary texts.

EH 533 - William Faulkner
Critical study of the major novels.

EH 535 - Special Studies in American Literature
Topics announced in advance.

EH 538 - African American Literature
Themes, concepts and imagery in the Black American literary tradition.

EH 540 - Special Studies in English Literature
Topics announced in advance.

EH 548 - The Bible as Literature
An introduction to the major literary forms of the Bible. Material will be approached analytically, involving both socio-historical and literary-critical perspectives.

EH 551 - Middle English Literature
Emphasis on literature of later medieval England, excluding Chaucer, chosen from the Gawain poet, Piers Plowman, romance, drama, religious meditation, the short poem, and Margery Kempe.

EH 570 - Milton
A study of the development of Milton's thought and art as it appears in his early poems, selected prose, and later poetry, with particular attention given to Paradise Lost.

EH 571 - Renaissance Drama
Non-Shakespearean drama of the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries in its historical and cultural context. Specific focus will vary from term to term.

EH 572 - Seventeenth-Century Poetry
Emphasis on major figures (Donne, Jonson, Herbert), their followers, and major themes and genres of the period. Excludes Milton.

EH 595 - The Literature of Transition
Considers all genres, including intellectual and philosophic works, 1890-1915, to explore the transition from Victorianism(s) to Modernism.

EH 601 - Writing Pedagogy
Analysis of and research on the teaching of writing.

EH 602 - Practicum in Technical Communication
Designed to give technical communication graduate students on-the-job experience in industry or government, either through an internship or a major research project connected with an industry problem. Requires completion of a substantial internship report. Prerequisites: EH 501, 502, and instructor's approval of a project prospectus.

EH 617 - The Novel
Formal and theoretical history of the modern novel from seventeenth-century precursors to contemporary global incarnations.

EH 618 - Studies in Women and Literature
Selected authors, genres, and issues.

EH 629 - Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature
Selected poetry and prose with an emphasis on the Anglo-American Modernist tradition.

EH 630 - Studies in American Literature to 1865
Major movements from Colonial times to 1865; selected major figures or special problems.

EH 631 - Studies in American Literature since 1865
Major movements since 1865; selected major figures or special problems.

EH 639 - Ethnic American Literature
Selected authors, concepts, histories, and cultures.

EH 649 - Special Studies
Study of significant issues in literature, technical communication, or composition studies, announced in advance.

EH 650 - Chaucer
The Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde, and other works, especially in relation to relevant literary and religious traditions.

EH 660 - Shakespeare
Selected Shakespearean plays, with special attention to the major criticism, problems of interpretation, and current issues in Shakespearean study.

EH 665 - Renaissance Poetry and Prose
Selected topics, authors and genres of 16th and 17th-century English and continental literature.

EH 680 - Eighteenth-Century Studies
Extensive and intensive study of various early modern texts, with attention to interdisciplinary contexts.

EH 690 - Studies in the Romantic Period
Representative writing, selected from prose, poetry, or fiction, with attention to aesthetic theory and philosophical and psychological backgrounds.

EH 691 - Studies in the Victorian Period
Representative writing, selected from prose, poetry, and fiction, with emphasis on social and cultural changes that inform the literature.

EH 698 - Independent Study
Individual investigation into significant issues in linguistics, literature, technical communication, or composition studies under direct supervision of instructor. Prerequisites: Written approval by the instructor and the department chair of a project prospectus.

EH 699 - Master's Thesis
Required each semester during which a student is working and receiving direction on a master's thesis. No more than 6 hours credit may be applied toward the degree. Prerequisites: Approval of instructor.

EHL 505 - Survey of General Linguistics
Survey of phonology, morphology, and syntax, language universals and typology, history of

English and other major world languages, topics in psycho- and socio-linguistics such as language acquisition, situational language change, and the study of regional and ethnic varieties as they reflect and construct the linguistic and cultural diversity of the United States.

EHL 506 - Critical Issues
This class reviews critical issues impacting the progress of English Language Learners (ELLs) in K-12 classrooms in the U.S. The categories of issues covered will remain responsive to TESOL/NCATE Standards for P-12 Teacher Education Programs. Among representative issues are historical overviews of relevant legislation, coverage of current and developing regulations (federal, state, local), advocacy options, and assessment at the programmatic level. Cross listed with EHL 406

EHL 507 - Advanced English Grammar Studies
In-depth study of English syntax within contemporary theoretical paradigms. Includes comparisons between modern syntactic analyses and traditional methods, comparisons between Standard American English and regional and ethnic varieties, the inevitable historical changes in English grammar, and pedagogical contexts/teaching issues. Recommended: With some exceptions, EHL 405/505 is recommended but not required as a preliminary to courses beyond EHL 505.

EHL 509 - Special Studies in Applied English Linguistics
Special topics in linguistics. Particular focus and emphasis announced in advance. Recommended: With some exceptions, EHL 405/505 is recommended but not required as a preliminary to courses beyond EHL 505. Some topics may meet the English M.A. language requirements; consult Department Chair.

EHL 608 - Second Language Acquisition
An investigation of the process of language acquisition, both for first and second language learners, including a survey of language acquisition theory, with a focus on the innateness of human language, the elements considered essential in the acquisition process, and different contexts in which languages are acquired; collection and analysis of data; and integration of theoretical

material with practical problems of learning and teaching. Acquisition of regional and ethnic varieties is also covered. Prerequisites: EHL 505, or permission of instructor. Recommended: With some exceptions, EHL 405/505 is recommended but not required as a preliminary to courses beyond EHL 505.

EHL 609 - Strategies for Research and Teaching Methods in TESOL

Designed to give current and future ESL instructors the foundation for informed and effective classroom teaching. Includes theoretical underpinnings of historical and contemporary ESL, instructional methods, analysis and critique of methodologies, and strategies for pedagogically sound classroom

activity development and lesson planning within linguistically and culturally diverse instructional contexts. Recommended: With some exceptions, EHL 405/505 is recommended but not required as a preliminary to courses beyond EHL 505.

EHL 610 - Practicum in TESOL

Current issues, techniques, and materials in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). Direct and supervised teaching of English to non-native speakers of English. Prerequisites: Graduate standing and EHL 609, or permission of the instructor. Recommended: With some exceptions, EHL 405/505 is recommended but not required as a preliminary to courses beyond EHL 505.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S FACULTY

Listed below are the names of the Department's Graduate Faculty, the institutions from which they received their doctorates, and their general areas of interest. You should feel free to approach any one of them to inquire about the courses that they teach.

Angela Balla (University of Michigan):
Seventeenth Century Literature

Diana Bell (Illinois State University):
Composition Pedagogy, Feminism, Critical Theory, Writing and Learning Center Pedagogy

Laurel A. Bollinger (Princeton): Twentieth-Century American Literature; Gender Studies

Joseph Conway (Washington University):
Early U.S. Literature and Culture

Julie English Early (University of Chicago):
Victorian Literature; Gender Studies

Anna Foy (University of Pennsylvania): 18th Century Literature

Alanna Frost (University of Louisville):
Rhetoric and Composition Pedagogy;
Composition Director

Holly Jones (Pennsylvania State University):
American Ethnic Literature

David S. Neff (University of Illinois):
Romanticism; Literary Criticism and Theory

Jeffrey N. Nelson (University of Chicago):
Renaissance Literature; Shakespeare

Daniel Schenker (Johns Hopkins University):
Modern and Contemporary Literature

Eric Smith (University of Florida): Anglophone Literature

Joseph Taylor (University of Texas at Austin):
Medieval Literature

Chad Thomas (University of Michigan):
Shakespeare; Dramatic Literature;
Performance; Sexuality

Ryan Weber (Purdue University): Business and Technical Writing

Andrea Word-Allbritton (University of Alabama): Linguistics

THE THESIS (PLAN I)

Writing a Thesis

The decision of whether or not to write a thesis is up to you. From a professional standpoint, there is little or no difference between an M.A. degree that includes a thesis and one that does not. The only exception might be if you were planning to go on for a doctorate, in which case the experience of writing a thesis might be desirable (though some PhD programs may prefer the additional coursework).

The challenges of producing a good thesis are probably as much psychological as intellectual. Unlike a term paper, a thesis is something that you will be living with for months, rather than weeks. Instead of responding to an assignment, you will choose (in consultation with an advisor) the topic. But like most freedoms, this one also comes with responsibilities: you will have to define issues and organize large amounts of material in ways that you probably have not done before.

The project also requires a good deal of self-discipline when it comes to setting up a research and writing schedule, and sticking to it.

The procedure for doing a thesis goes something like this. At a time no later than the completion of 18 hours of coursework, you approach a member of the faculty, and ask whether he or she would be willing to serve as advisor to the project you have in mind. Assuming the answer is yes, you then write a short proposal (4-6 pages) in which you:

- identify your topic
- indicate the present state of scholarship on the topic
- discuss what contributions your work will make
- offer a tentative chapter by chapter outline
- provide a tentative bibliography

You will also register for “thesis hours.” To graduate you must have six thesis hours in your program, though you do not necessarily have to complete the thesis in two consecutive semesters. Be aware, however, that you must enroll in--and pay for!--thesis hours during any semester when you receive any advisement from a faculty member, which includes the actual thesis defense, and review of the thesis by the Liberal Arts and Graduate Deans.

Before you begin writing, make sure to obtain a copy of UAH Thesis and Dissertation Manual, which is available from the book store, or may be downloaded and printed from the Graduate School website, <http://www.uah.edu/graduate/resources/thesis-manual>. This provides an overview of the approval process and specifies University standards for formatting and documentation.

By this time, you and your advisor should also decide on your thesis committee, which consists of the advisor plus two other faculty members. The proposal will then be circulated among the committee members for approval

and / or revisions. Throughout the writing process you will keep your committee apprised of your research and writing. Draft sections of the thesis should be submitted chapter by chapter (not all at once within a week or two of the deadline!), with sufficient turn-around time for committee comments and your revisions.

Although there are no hard and fast rules, theses in the English Department typically run anywhere from 50 to 100 pages; of course, quality is more important than quantity. A thesis might be divided into three or four chapters of 15-20 pages each, along with short introductory and concluding sections. (You can ask the graduate advisor to show you some recent examples.)

The School of Graduate Studies—not the English Department—sets all the deadlines for theses defenses and submissions, and these can also be checked at the Graduate School website,

<http://www.uah.edu/graduate/admissions/dates-deadlines>. At a time no later than the end of the semester before you plan to graduate, set up an appointment with the graduate advisor to review your POS and set a date for your thesis defense. Keep in mind that the deadline for a defense is usually about six weeks before the end of the semester. What this means is that you will have only about half of that final semester to actually work on the thesis. (Of course, it is possible to do the defense after the completion deadline for a particular semester. In this case the conferring of the degree will take place in the following semester; e.g., if you defend in November or December, you will be considered a Spring semester graduate.)

You also need to file an Application for Advanced Degree and pay a \$50 fee at Charger Central by September 1st, February 1st, or June 1st for Fall, Spring, or Summer graduation, respectively.

THE THESIS DEFENSE

For those students writing a thesis (Plan I) the last requirement before graduation is the successful oral defense of their work. Because you have probably been involved with your project for several months, the defense does not usually require extensive preparation. On

the occasion of the exam, which lasts about an hour and a half, you begin with a 15-20 minute extemporaneous presentation of your research. This is then followed by 20 minutes of questioning from each member of the thesis committee. There will also be a fourth faculty

member from outside the Department who acts as an observer, and is permitted to ask questions. At the end of the exam the committee deliberates for short time to decide whether or not the student has performed satisfactorily. If not, a second examination may be scheduled. [NOTE: SINCE MOST

FACULTY MEMBERS ARE ON NINE-MONTH CONTRACTS AND THUS NOT EMPLOYED BY THE UNIVERSITY DURING THE SUMMER, IT IS USUALLY NOT POSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE THESIS DEFENSES BETWEEN MID-MAY AND MID-AUGUST]

FINAL EXAMS (PLAN II)

[NOTE: SINCE MOST FACULTY MEMBERS ARE ON NINE-MONTH CONTRACTS AND THUS NOT EMPLOYED BY THE UNIVERSITY DURING THE SUMMER, IT IS USUALLY NOT POSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE EXAMS BETWEEN MID-MAY AND MID-AUGUST]

All students except those in the Reading Specialist program should contact the Graduate Advisor at the beginning of the semester before they plan to graduate to review their POS, file an Application for Advanced Degree with the required \$50 fee through Charger Central (by September 1st, February 1st, or June 1st for Fall, Spring, or Summer graduation, respectively), and set up their exam committee.

Students prepare for the exam by selecting three major literary texts, preferably from among those studied in their graduate courses, along with one critical, theoretical, or historical text (which might be a book or an article). This process should be undertaken in consultation with three faculty members who will form the prospective examination committee. From among these three the student should select one to serve as Committee Chair, who will be the student's primary advisor during preparation for the exam. Once the whole committee approves the text selection, students will then compose a 6-8 page précis explaining what brings their chosen texts together and indicating how their understanding of the texts contributes to the ongoing critical conversation about them. Note that the précis should justify the principle governing selection of the literary works with

reference to the fourth text which will suggest a method of approach to the other three. The précis is intended to be brief; it is neither a full-length seminar paper nor a thesis. Ideas outlined in the précis can be further expounded upon in the exam.

All exam proposals are due September 1st for Fall graduation and February 1st for Spring graduation. (These are also the dates by which you must file an Application for Advanced Degree form with the Graduate School.) Proposals must receive approval from the student's committee (as recorded on a signed Exam Approval Form) by October 1st in the Fall and March 1st in the Spring. The exams themselves will be conducted during the period October 15-November 15 in the Fall and March 15-April 15 in the Spring.

The exam consists of a 20-30 minute extemporaneous oral presentation of your ideas followed by about 20 minutes of questions from each of the examiners. At the conclusion of the exam the committee will decide whether the student has passed or passed with distinction. If not, the committee will determine the scope and procedure for re-testing (which might include additional written work and / or a second oral exam).

Students in the Reading Specialist program should contact the chair of the Education Department no later than the semester before they plan to graduate to set up their final exams. Exams in this program are given in a written format.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Department offers two kinds of support for graduate students. Tuition scholarships will cover all or part of your tuition for an academic year. The sole requirement is that you take at least nine (9) hours of coursework each semester. In addition to a minimum of

nine (9) hours of coursework per semester, Graduate Teaching Assistantships require that you teach one or more sections of EH 100S: Intensive Writing Studio each semester and that you work as a consultant in the University Writing Center. (Assistantships must typically be held for an entire academic

year. They cover tuition and pay a stipend of \$4230 per semester. Students may not hold other paid employment during the time of the appointment.) Usually the Department has two tuition scholarships (which may be divided up among as many as four students) and four assistantships per year. Because there are often more deserving students than

we have money to support them, competition for these awards is keen.

The Department meets each spring to make awards, and reaches its decisions based on the students' past academic performance. To apply for financial support, please pick up an application in the Department and return it by February 15th.

SIGMA TAU DELTA

Sigma Tau Delta is the English honorary society. The national organization offers scholarship, publishing, and internship opportunities, as well as advice on writing CVs tailored for the discipline. (Please consult their website at www.english.org). Admission to UAH's chapter is open to any student who has

maintained a 3.0 average in at least 9 hours of English courses. Activities at UAH include an annual book sale, a reception and dinner for the performers of the Shenandoah Shakespeare Express, and occasional out-of-town trips to special events. For more information please contact Dr. Eric Smith, the chapter advisor.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE

Faculty members expect to write letters of reference for you. This is a fundamental part of our involvement in your graduate career. The most effective letters are tailored to the position or program you are seeking, are specific and detailed, and thus indicate that the referee knows you well. For this reason you should provide your referee with as much information as possible:

- The due date for the letter (please make your request at least one month in advance)
- A specific mailing address, preferably with a name and title if this is available
- Details of the program or position you are applying for
- If you have written it, a copy of your application letter
- A copy of your C.V. or resume
- A note on what courses you've had with the referee (including undergrad if applicable), or other kinds of engagement such as work supervision, training, club or event activities (include approximate dates)

Keep in mind that the less information you provide the more generic a letter will necessarily be. Help us to do our best for you. In addition, you should inform Dr. Early of where you are applying. Our faculty may know faculty in our areas from conferences and so on, and may be able to put in a brief email word for you.

Confidentiality: Be aware that forms for a letter of reference ask you to check a box indicating whether the letter is confidential (you will not see it) or whether you waive confidentiality (you can see it if you like). For all practical purposes, this is not a choice. If the letter is not confidential, it will not be given much credence.

Mechanics: Some programs or employers ask referees to send letters directly to them; others ask the candidate to gather them and send them in one package. In the latter case, you should request that the referee seal the letter in a letterhead envelope and sign across the sealed flap.

UAH does not have a central service to keep letters on file to send out at your request. Many universities that used to provide such a service are now using an on-line service, Interfolio.com, and you might find it advantageous as well. If, for example, you are applying to a great number of programs, or plan to continue applying for a few years, using Interfolio may be an efficient option. Your referees send letters to the service, and you instruct the service when and where you want letters sent. There is an annual fee and a fee for each request. Visit their website for complete information: www.interfolio.com.

Finally, be sure to let us know the results of your job or program search.

Master's Program in English & Technical Communication Certificate
University of Alabama in Huntsville
English Department
301 Sparkman Drive
Morton Hall 222
Huntsville, Alabama 35899
256-824-6320 or eh@uah.edu

