Program Policy

English Graduate Program

University of Delaware

2022-23

Part I. Program History and Purpose

A. Statement of purpose and expectations of graduate study

The Department of English offers an innovative, interdisciplinary, and rigorous straight-to-PhD degree program. Our program is informed by three research clusters—Black Cultural Studies, Environmental Humanities, and Material Culture Studies—that reflect our faculty strengths, guide our admissions decisions, and help us design a coherent curriculum of course offerings each year. Students are guided by faculty mentors through a series of program milestones—coursework, qualifying exam, specialty exam, proposal, doctoral project, defense—that teach them to ask compelling scholarly questions and design engaging humanistic research studies.

Our program is structured to maximize students' opportunities for an inter- and intradisciplinary graduate education. Students take three required courses (7 credits) during their two years in coursework. Their remaining courses are chosen from several electives offered by the English department each semester. Our courses reflect the cutting-edge research interests and methodologies of our faculty and students. . Our course topics are open-ended and invitational ("Studies in," "Special topic in"), while remaining grounded in essential areas of concern in our discipline (race and ethnicity, print and material culture, literary history, fiction studies, environmental humanities).

We uphold our commitment to interdisciplinarity by encouraging students to take up to three courses outside the Department of English. Students are also permitted to design up to one independent study to allow them to work closely with individual faculty on topics outside of, or at the intersections of, formal course offerings.

Teacher training is an important part of our mission. In collaboration with the English Composition Program, created a year-long mentoring and training program that prepares students to teach first-year writing (ENGL 110: Seminar in Composition) and literature courses as instructors of record. First-year students also take ENGL688: Introduction to Composition Theory and Pedagogy in their first Spring semester. This course is as much practical as it is theoretical, requiring students to prepare the actual materials they will use to teach their own classes the following year. Students are paired with mentor-faculty with exceptional teaching records and assist in courses as a cohort to build their teaching skills in a supportive environment. Ongoing mentoring and professional development opportunities help students become effective and self-reflective teachers in a variety of contexts.

Because our PhD program is small, students have ample opportunities to work closely with accomplished and prominent faculty scholars in their fields. Seminars are intimate spaces for students to receive one-on-one mentoring and training. Beyond coursework, students work closely with a dissertation chair and other faculty members on a major doctoral project. We encourage students to consider alternatives to the traditional proto-monograph dissertation. Our Job Placement Committee, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), helps

prepare students for competitive job markets in academia and beyond the academy.

B. Date of permanent status

The straight-to-PhD English program began admitting students in Fall 2015.

C. Degrees offered

- *PhD English*: Students are encouraged to build their own degrees through flexible course requirements and broadly defined areas of emphasis.

- *MA English*: The MA English is awarded after the second year of the straight-to-PhD program. Students continuing in the PhD program are awarded the MA English after completing 37 credits of graduate coursework and passing the Qualifying Portfolio. Students who wish to withdraw from the PhD program after the second year may submit a degree application for the MA English if they are on track to complete all requirements for this degree by the end of the term. . **We do not admit students directly into the MA English.**

D. Term when first students may enroll

The straight-to-PhD English program began admitting students in Fall 2015, replacing the two-degree program (MA and PhD degrees) with a single degree. The program was revised in Fall 2021 and will admit its first cohort in Fall 2022.

E. Factors that identify student demand for the program

- Strong applicant pool every year
- Innovative straight-to-PhD program that invites exceptional students with bachelor's and master's degrees in English or closely related fields
- Cutting edge research methodologies
- World-class graduate faculty
- Strong job placement record and a focus on professional development for diverse career paths
- Ideally situated between Philadelphia and Baltimore/DC
- Fully funded admission offers that include a stipend, 100% tuition scholarship, subsidized health insurance, and one semester guaranteed on fellowship to support doctoral project research and writing
- Competitive teaching load for teaching assistants (2 courses per year)
- Supportive teacher training program that includes theoretical frameworks and experiential learning opportunities
- Highly competitive, small program with emphasis on individualized attention
- Well established first-year peer and faculty mentoring program

F. The college and department in which the program resides

The English PhD degree program is offered through the Department of English, which is housed in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Part II. Admission

A. Admission requirements

The following items are required in the applicant's online application:

- **Resume or CV**
- **Statement of Objectives and Interests**. Please be sure your personal statement answers the following questions (1–5 pages):
  - What are your intellectual objectives and how will your proposed plan of graduate study relate to them?
  - Within English studies, are there areas of special interest to you? Please explain.
  - How will the resources at the University of Delaware (faculty and otherwise) help you to achieve your objectives and pursue your areas of interest?
  - Note: because special scholarships may be available for members of historically underrepresented groups in the humanities, including African and Asian-American students, first-generation college students, students with disabilities, and former members of the military, we encourage applicants who may be eligible for these awards to signal their eligibility in their statement.

- **Unofficial Transcripts from All College/Universities Attended**
- **TOEFL/IELTS Requirements**: Please read the linked instructions carefully and note that applicants must score 100 or higher on the TOEFL, or 10.5 or higher on the TOEFL Essentials, to be considered as a Teaching Assistant. All of our students are admitted on Teaching Assistantships and should meet the minimum requirements for Teaching Assistantships for any English language proficiency exam as described in the above policy link. . A waiver of the TOEFL exam is only allowed when:
  - A bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree has been or will be earned from a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association in the United States.
  - A bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree has been or will be earned from a university recognized by the ministry of education in a country where English is the primary language. Countries approved by the ministry of education are: Anguilla, Antigua, Australia, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Cameroon, Canada (except Quebec),Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Ghana, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Montserrat, New Zealand, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts

and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks and Caicos, The United Kingdom, Zambia and Zimbabwe

- **Three Letters of Recommendation.** Be sure letters of recommendation are submitted by your faculty advisors prior to the January 1 deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- **Critical Writing Sample** (10–20 pages)

Admission Notes

- We are a straight-to-PhD program and do not accept applications for a terminal MA degree. Our PhD students have the opportunity to earn the MA degree on their way to the PhD.

- The application fee is $75. View information regarding [fees and possible fee waivers](#).

- Students must accept the offer of admission no later than April 15.

- All incoming students are subject to a criminal background check as per [UD policy 4-111](#)

B. Prior degree requirements

We admit students who hold either a BA or MA in English or a closely related field.

C. Application deadlines

- January 1 for consideration of funding
- January 31 for consideration without funding

Note: Applications are accepted each year for Fall admission only. Applicants should submit a complete application via the [Slate](#) application portal by January 1. All applications received by January 1 are considered for full funding (stipend, tuition remission). Applications received after January 1 and before January 31 will not be considered for funding.

D. Special competencies needed

We welcome applications from students with diverse educational backgrounds. While a college degree in literary or cultural studies is preferred, we will consider applicants with a BA or MA in areas other than English studies.

E. Admission categories

Only regular admission is offered. We do not consider applicants for conditional, provisional, or part-time admission.

F. Other documents required

Please see section "A" for all required documents. No other documents are required by the Department of English to apply for admission. Applicants who wish to be considered for

special scholarships should indicate their interest in the personal statement and/or submit required additional essays as described in the SLATE application system.

G. University statement

Admission to the Graduate Program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

Part III. Academic

A. PhD degree requirements

1. Course requirements
   a. Students must complete a total of 37 credits of coursework plus 9 credits of ENGL 969: Doctoral Dissertation for a minimum total of 46 credits. The coursework will consist of 30 elective credits plus 7 credits of required courses.

   b. Required courses:

      - ENGL600: Introduction to Graduate Studies (1 credit)
      - ENGL684: Introduction to Literary Criticism & Theory (3 credit)
      - ENGL688: Introduction to Composition Theory & Pedagogy (3 credit)

   c. Elective courses:

      - 30 credits of electives are required.

      - All courses must be at the 600 or 800 level to count toward the MA/PhD English.

      - Electives may be ENGL, non-ENGL, or an Independent Study (see policies below).

      - Topics courses may be repeated for credit if the topics are different.

      - The University of Delaware does not transfer coursework used to complete degrees at other institutions. If a student has taken a course similar to ENGL684: Introduction to Literary Criticism in their master's program, the student may petition to substitute the course with an elective.

      - A selection of elective courses

         ○ ENGL 606 - Issues in American Material Culture
         ○ ENGL 610 - Introduction to Theories of Material Culture Studies
         ○ ENGL 621 - Medieval Literature and Culture
         ○ ENGL 625 - Early Modern Literature
         ○ ENGL 634 - Studies in Nineteenth Century Literature

- ○ ENGL 636 - Twentieth Century Literature
- ○ ENGL 639 - Studies in Modern/Contemporary Literature
- ○ ENGL 641 - Studies in American Literature
- ○ ENGL 642 - Black Literary History
- ○ ENGL 660 - Race & Inequality in Delaware
- ○ ENGL 671 - Studies in Fiction
- ○ ENGL 673 - Studies in Poetry
- ○ ENGL 674 - Studies in Print and Material Culture
- ○ ENGL 675 - Studies in Film and Media
- ○ ENGL 677 - The Structure of English
- ○ ENGL 680 - Seminar
- ○ ENGL 685 - Cultural Theory and Criticism
- ○ ENGL 698 - Studies in Rhetoric and Composition
- ○ ENGL 830 - Special Topics in Nineteenth Century Literature
- ○ ENGL 840 - Special Topics in Twentieth Century Literature
- ○ ENGL 844 - Special Topics in American Literature
- ○ ENGL 846 - Special Topics in British Literature
- ○ ENGL 866 - Special Problem (Independent Study) (may not be repeated)
- ○ ENGL 870 - Special Topics in Literary History
- ○ ENGL 872 - Special Topics in Race and Ethnicity
- ○ ENGL 874 - Spec. Topics in Print & Material Culture
- ○ ENGL 875 - Special Topics in Transnational Studies
- ○ ENGL 876 - Special Topics in Film and Media
- ○ ENGL 884 - Studies in Literary and Cultural Theory
- ○ ENGL 890 - Studies in Linguistics
- ○ ENGL 891 - Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition

d. One Independent Study course (3 credits of ENGL866) may be counted toward the PhD degree. All Independent Study courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee and result in a substantial piece of written work.

Students are required to email a formal proposal, including a syllabus and cover letter to the Director of Graduate Studies, copying the faculty member with whom they propose to take the course. The deadline for independent study submission will be announced at the beginning of each semester. The cover letter should explain the rationale for the creation of the course and explain why these purposes cannot be fulfilled through regular coursework or through the student's normal program of independent research. The syllabus should be a formal document that includes the kinds of readings and writing assignments that would normally be included in a graduate seminar. To allow for flexibility, students may leave a few weeks open for subsequent adjustment according to where their reading and research takes them during the term. In evaluating the proposals, the Graduate Committee will consider whether the rationale for the course justifies the creation of an independent study, and whether the syllabus is equivalent in rigor and cohesion to that expected in a regular

graduate seminar. A formal syllabus for each approved Independent Study course will be kept on file in the English Department.

e. Policy for Interdisciplinary Coursework: Students may take up to three courses (9 credits) outside of the English department to count toward the PhD English. Prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies is required to enroll in non-ENGL coursework. Approved courses taken outside the English Department will count toward the elective requirement.

f. Petitions for variance in degree requirements: All petitions for course substitutions, teaching portfolio waivers, and program milestone extensions (e.g. adjusting deadlines) should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies. When relevant, the DGS will work with the student and the student's primary advisor on a solution.

g. Minimum GPA & Grading Policy: To be considered in good academic standing, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative graduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale each semester. To be eligible for an advanced degree, a student's cumulative grade point average shall be at least a 3.00 and the student's grades in courses counted toward the degree requirements of the program shall equal at least a 3.00. A grade below a C- will not be counted toward the course requirements for a degree but is calculated in the student's cumulative grade point average.

h. Courses which may not be used toward degree requirements

- ENGL964: Pre-candidacy
- Audited
- Extra /1-credit/internship credits
- Undergraduate
- Courses graded on a P/F/S basis, except ENGL969: Doctoral Dissertation

i. Facility of expression in English (oral and written): We expect students to possess a high degree of competence in written and spoken English.

2. Qualifying portfolio

By February 1 of the second year all students will be required to submit a Portfolio of written work and a brief letter of assessment from two faculty members. At this time, students should also indicate whether they intend to continue in the PhD program or exit with a master's degree. The Portfolio will include three seminar-style papers or the equivalent of the student's choosing, along with a brief 300-500 word statement in which the student explains how specific aspects of the Portfolio materials (a) demonstrate their ability to engage in scholarly dialogue in their field(s) and (b) grasp the conventions and critical expectations of work in their field(s). Each item in the portfolio should be the "capstone" project for the course. Given the diversity of writing assignments faculty assign students, all of the papers or projects need not be argument-driven essays, but at least one

should be.

All materials should be submitted in digital form to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Faculty letters should explicitly state whether the student's performance meets the criteria, that is, whether the student is deserving of the MA or not and whether the student is prepared to continue to the next step of the Field Exam. Faculty should refer to the criteria below in their letters. It is the student's responsibility to contact faculty in a timely way (at least a month before the materials are due) and direct them to the criteria.

The Portfolio will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis by the graduate committee. A Portfolio will receive a passing grade if the work demonstrates the student's ability to engage in scholarly dialogue in their field, which in our department might be literary studies, rhetoric and composition, the digital humanities, or another emerging area.

Students should demonstrate that they grasp the conventions and critical expectations of work in their field. The letters from faculty will attest to the student's ability to meet the minimum requirements for the MA, which include the ability to formulate arguments appropriate to their field. A failing Portfolio will include essays or assignments that do not achieve their rhetorical purpose. For example, argumentative essays that do not prove their theses or demonstrate the student's ability to link evidence and claims. The letters from faculty in a failing Portfolio will point to the student's limited capacity to engage the defining questions in the field.

3. Field exam

By December 15 in their third year, students take a Field Examination which is meant to give them 1) an intensive knowledge of their teaching and research fields, and 2) a strong basis from which to craft a dissertation prospectus. The Field Exam will be given by the Director of Graduate Studies and two graduate faculty members chosen by the student. One faculty member will agree to chair the committee.

In preparing for the exam, students choose one primary and two contributing fields or areas of specialization. They assemble a reading list of 30 texts for the primary field and 20 texts for each of the contributing fields. The field lists may include primary and secondary sources, and they should be discussed and assembled in close consultation with the student's Field Exam committee. In literary studies, the primary field is typically organized by historical period, textual genre, and/or geographic area; the contributing fields are typically organized by theoretical tradition, literary or cultural thematic, or critical problematic. In rhetoric and composition, the primary field is typically organized around composition theory or literacy studies; the contributing fields are typically organized around research methodologies, composition pedagogies, or an adjacent field related to the student's specialization, such as gender studies or disability studies. Please note: together, the lists should not contain more than 70 works total. Each list should be prefaced by a

rationale of approximately 250 words. Rationales should be very brief descriptions of each field and should include key questions or problematics to be examined in individual lists as well as the exam as a whole.

The exam: By December 15, the third-year student's committee and the DGS meet with the student for a 120-minute period for the oral examination. This exam will consist of a 90-minute discussion between the student and their exam committee about their reading lists and rationales. After this meeting, the committee will meet briefly without the student to assign a grade of high pass, pass, or fail. The results of the exam and feedback for moving forward will then be discussed with the student. Students who fail the exam will be allowed to retake the exam once. Within two weeks of the failed exam, the committee will deliver a one-page letter to the student describing strengths and areas for improvement. The student must complete the new exam before April 15. If a student fails the second exam, they may not continue in the PhD program. They will be dismissed from the program and exit with the MA English earned in the previous year.

4. Graduate apprenticeship

Teaching assistantships: We strive to send well-prepared teaching assistants into the classroom and to help our graduate students develop dossiers that show a range of teaching assignments. We currently qualify students to teach writing after they complete one semester as a TA in ENGL110 and by successfully completing ENGL688 (Composition Theory and the Teaching of Writing), which is offered in the second semester of the program.

Students qualify to teach a literature course in their third year (or later) by serving as a teaching assistant in a literature course taught by a graduate faculty member. The Graduate Program arranges for students to TA for a literature professor in the spring of their first year.

Both of these first-year TA experiences (in a section of E110 and in a literature course) are required to fulfill student's teaching assistantship contracts. For more information, see Teaching Assistantships below.

Please note that teaching is not a requirement for the PhD but for students on teaching assistantships.

Graduate teaching apprenticeships: Graduate students who wish to teach courses in a field in which they have not yet completed an assistantship (e.g. film, business writing, etc.) may set up what we call an apprenticeship at any time after completing the Qualifying Portfolio. The apprenticeship should be arranged in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, the Associate Chair, and a faculty member teaching a 200 or 300-level course in literature, film, or journalism. In most cases the course chosen will correspond to the student's future emphasis in teaching. The student is expected to learn about teaching

by "shadowing" a faculty member from the planning stage through the completion of a course. The student's role as an apprentice is not to be confused with that of a teaching assistant. While each faculty member and apprentice should arrive at their own written set of expectations, typically the apprentice would:

- Meet with the faculty member to discuss the nature of the course (genre, period, issue), the development of a description for the course booklet, and the development of the syllabus
- Discuss goals and methods for several sessions, which the student would attend. Methods may include lecturing, eliciting discussion, group work, problem-based learning, in-class writing
- Discuss the rationale and preparation for writing assignments and tests and the commenting and grading involved
- Participate in some way in the teaching of the course (teach or team-teach a few sessions, grade a set of papers)
- Make a retrospective assessment of the course, including possible changes for the next time

At the start of the apprenticeship, a written plan will be drawn up by the faculty member and the student, and at the end, the faculty member will certify that the student has carried out these expectations, supplying a signed copy of the plan, revised any significant changes, for the student's file in the graduate office.

The faculty member will remain a mentor available to review course materials, respond to concerns, and visit classes when the student teaches his or her literature course. Faculty will be able to offer support for the student's dossier, writing letters based on performance as an apprentice as well as an independent teacher.

5. Teaching evaluation and teaching portfolio

Graduate students' teaching will be supervised by the Director of Composition over the course of their teaching career in the program. During their first semester of teaching, students will meet biweekly with the Assistant Director of Composition to discuss their teaching. Graduate student teachers will also be formally observed and reviewed by the Composition Program each year they teach ENGL 110..

A comprehensive review, which all students will complete in the Spring of the third year, will be conducted by the Director of Composition and the Director of Graduate Studies. This comprehensive review requires students to submit a Portfolio, described below. In case of a disagreement, the matter will be referred to the Chair. Any student whose teaching is deemed unsatisfactory as a result of this review will not be funded for the last two years of the Teaching Assistantship.

Each student must submit a **Teaching Portfolio** by April 15 of their third year. This

Portfolio will include: 1) A 250-500 word statement of teaching philosophy 2) Sample syllabi and sample assignments 3) A direct observation report 4) A summary of and reflection on numerical teaching evaluations 5) A letter of support from at least one faculty member other than the student's faculty advisor (this can be combined with the observation report).

Please note that teaching is not a requirement for the PhD but a requirement for students on teaching assistantships.

6. Doctoral project proposal and proposal defense

Before being admitted to formal candidacy, the student must submit a doctoral project proposal to two faculty advisors (both of whom must be graduate faculty) and the DGS by May 1 of their third year. The proposal should be a thorough document, including a statement of the subject, its exigency and audience, a survey of the significant primary and secondary materials, and an outline of the sections or chapters (in the case of a conventional doctoral project). The proposal should be approximately 10-12 (double-spaced) pages in length. Once the director and the second reader have approved the student's proposal, they should signify their approval by signing and dating the final draft. The student will then submit the signed draft to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Oral defense of dissertation proposal: Before June 1, the student will meet with their two advisors and the DGS for a 60-minute oral defense of the proposal. The defense begins with a 10–15-minute presentation by the student of the proposal. After the presentation, the committee members will ask questions about the proposal and the doctoral project described therein. After this meeting, the committee will meet briefly without the student to assign a grade of pass or fail. Should a committee decide that a student has not passed the proposal defense, the student may submit a revised proposal and schedule a second defense with the approval of the committee and the DGS. No student should work extensively on the doctoral project until the proposal defense has been passed.

Dissertation Proposal Outline: Feel free to use simple headings (introduction, methodology etc.) or more descriptive headings in your proposal to separate sections.

Introduction/description

- should clearly state questions, issues, or problems you wish to address through your study

- should include a clearly defined thesis and set of arguments or interventions you intend to make based on your preliminary analysis

- indicate why your project is significant: how is your work different from other scholarship? Does it revisit or rework particular questions or issues? Does it re-read a given historical record differently? Does it shed light on a

problem or set of issues that have been neglected? Does it address critical gaps?

Lit Review/Engagement with major debates

- outline the areas of scholarship you wish to engage and demonstrate your knowledge of this scholarship

- elaborate on your introductory comments in this section. Frame your project within your field, provide scholarly foundations on which to rest your own arguments and interventions

- What problems, opportunities, or gaps exist in the scholarly literature? Review the literature and zero in on one key gap or new opportunity.

- if drawing on more than one field or historiography, it is important for you to discuss why you are bringing them together. What are points of connection and departure between these bodies of scholarship? What is useful to draw out between them and what is problematic in this endeavor? What major challenges do you face, and how will your project ultimately benefit from such comparisons?

Methodology

- What body of texts are you proposing to study? Why does it make sense to think about this collection of texts together? If your chosen texts differ substantially from those examined by other scholars in your field, then why should your field engage with them? What would be the arguments *against* such engagement, and how would you respond to them?

- If you're constructing a historicist argument, what are the beginning and end dates of this project? Why do these dates make sense?

- explain how you intend to make your interventions. What other scholarly works provide good examples of methodology, how will you draw on them in developing your own approach to your subject matter?

- provide an explication of your approach. May be written as a timeline or as a narrative plan of how you intend to organize your research (archival visits, data collection etc.).

- if you have done any preliminary research, it may be valuable to reference it here and discuss how it has informed your sense of how much time will be needed at a given institution, how it has redirected your sense of the project, etc.

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Chapter Outline

- Demonstrates to readers that you have a way of organizing your questions, research material, and discussion of them.

- short provisional titles

- for each, a brief paragraph describing the content you would include in this chapter, which should reflect your thinking of how your original inquiries fit in with your methodology and research

- preliminary articulation of the argument you want this chapter to make/what role it will play in the dissertation as a whole

Bibliography

- include any works mentioned in the proposal + works you may not have mentioned, but which you intend to consult in your framing and methodological approach.

Evaluators' questions:

- Is it clear what scholarly problem, gap, or opportunity the dissertation will address? How does this gap or opportunity generate specific research questions for the dissertation? How have these questions been answered by other scholars (what theories, methods, approaches)?

- Are there sufficient citations to show an understanding of the field and conversations in which the writer proposes to intervene?

- Does the proposal make clear the methodology of the project and why that approach supports the project's intervention?

- Are the texts/corpus/data described in detail and defended?

- Does the proposal answer the questions it raises and follow through on its claims? (For example, if the proposal frames its intervention as "shifting" or "broadening" a field, does the proposal explain the nature of that shift or expansion? Does it say how the project will offer something new?)

- Why should we care? Why does any of this matter to the field(s)? Does the proposal make a clear case for the proposed project, keeping in mind readers outside the field?

7. Doctoral project
   The student is responsible for assembling their doctoral project committee in keeping with

the [committee requirements](#) of the Graduate College. If the student has difficulty identifying an external member, the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's doctoral project director, will appoint an outside examiner who is not a member of the Department of English. All doctoral projects must conform to the University of Delaware "Thesis and Dissertation Manual," available online from the Graduate College. The doctoral project could take any number of forms including a traditional dissertation (monograph), a digital or public humanities project, a new edition of a text, a series of thematically related essays, or an interdisciplinary project. Regardless of the form that it takes, the project should draw on the student's training and coursework to incorporate the skills of textual interpretation and/or formal analysis to explore a specific cultural, political, or social question. The final project should include an introductory essay, in which the student demonstrates its logic, need, and contribution to literary and cultural studies. We invite students to develop new kinds of projects that will serve them in a variety of possible careers upon completion of the PhD.

We encourage students to consider a variety of approaches to developing their dissertation or doctoral project. Students may also design their own research project to fit alternate career paths. These projects must incorporate literary modes of analysis, sustained research, and critical writing. In other words, they must build on the skills students have developed in their coursework.

Given that we are at a turning point in doctoral education at which new approaches to the dissertation are being encouraged by the MLA, we value the MLA's "Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media." In this document, the MLA outlines several key principles for ensuring symmetry between departmental expectations and the student's work, which could be adapted to multiple project forms:

- describe how their work may blend, redefine, or render obsolete the traditional boundaries between teaching, research, and service
- describe the process underlying creation of work in digital media (e.g., the creation of infrastructure as well as content) and their particular contributions
- describe how work in digital media requires new collaborative relationships with clients, publics, other departments, colleagues, and students

We encourage students to read the [MLA's guidelines](#) in full.

Below we briefly describe the contours of several of the typical kinds of projects students might undertake, but this list is not meant to be comprehensive. We hope students with varied interests will expand upon and innovate new kinds of projects. In all cases, the Doctoral Project should include an introductory essay, in which the student demonstrates the work's logic, need, and contribution to literary and cultural studies.

Monograph: A monograph is a work of literary criticism that explores a sustained argument

over the course of a series of chapters (usually at least four) to examine a particular thematic, formal, or theoretical problem. Each of the chapters of the monograph takes up a different aspect or iteration of the topic.

Edition: Typically an editing project that brings to light a previously unavailable text or reassembles a known text on the basis of new archival evidence, such as newly available manuscripts, or new contexts for framing the work. Editions will include an analytical introduction describing the exigency of the project and extensive annotations.

Thematically-linked essays: A series of essays (at least 6) that engage a particular question or theme across several different iterations that explore the intersections between a set of related and/or overlapping fields. The series of essays should sustain an interest in a particular theme, form, or topic and the ways it has manifested in different fields or disciplines.

Digital Humanities Project: A rapidly evolving field, DH explores the ways new digital technologies allow new kinds of interpretive and analytical approaches to texts. DH projects can take a variety of forms, from a digitized and hyper-linked edition of a text or body of texts, to new ways of using digital tools to assemble, reassemble, and analyze texts. In all of these cases, the goal is to use computers and other technical tools both to open up new ways of analyzing texts and also to rethink our relationship to the text.

8. Defense of doctoral project

Upon completion, and in accordance with the university requirements, students will defend the doctoral project. The defense will be a 90-120 minute discussion with the student's committee members of the major methodological, conceptual, literary, historical, and formal questions addressed by the project. The defense will be open to the public. Defense guidelines and tips are included below.

B. MA Degree Requirements

1. Course requirements

Students remaining in the PhD program can file for their MA degree after earning 37 credits (which must include the required courses: ENGL 600, 684, and 688).

Students who wish to leave the PhD program after their second year can file to receive a terminal MA degree. They must have completed at least 37 credits of coursework with a grade of B or better, including ENGL 600, 684, and 688. They must also successfully pass the Qualifying Portfolio requirement.

2. Qualifying portfolio

To earn a master's degree, students must successfully pass the Qualifying Portfolio

requirement in year two. See above for directions on completing this requirement.

C. Guidelines for Exam and Dissertation Committees

1. Initial procedure for advisor and advisement

First-year peer mentor: We have created a robust first-year mentoring support system. Each incoming PhD student is paired with a faculty mentor and peer mentor. We ask peer mentors to set up at least one in-person or zoom chat each semester to talk with their mentee about their experience in the program, adjusting to graduate school, and living in Delaware. Peer mentors can help new PhD students connect with on-campus or local resources, as well as faculty and students who may be helpful as their interests evolve.

First-year faculty mentor: In the summer before their first year, students are assigned by the DGS and Graduate Program Coordinator to a first-year faculty mentor. The first-year faculty mentor helps new students navigate our department and our expectations for doctoral study. We ask faculty mentors to make the following time commitment:

- Meetings once per month during each semester or inclusion in your monthly, weekly, or biweekly group advising meetings with your advanced students.
- Because the first year can be very intimidating for new students, we ask that faculty initiate the scheduling of these meetings.

We also ask faculty mentors to abide by the following responsibilities:

First-year faculty mentors do not need to be in the same field as the student, and agreeing to be a mentor at this stage does not mean you are agreeing to work with the student in the future as an exam or dissertation committee member. The goal is to have a faculty member who can help the student transition and adapt successfully to the rigors of graduate school at UD. First-year mentors should advise the student regarding evolving research interests, coursework planning, academic and professional development opportunities, and experiences/challenges throughout the first year. If the faculty member will not be working with the student after the first year, we ask them to help guide the student to the appropriate faculty so that they can begin to form their Field exam committee and have support moving into the second year.

The Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Program Coordinator may reach out to the faculty mentor to ask how the student is progressing and what we can do to help support the both of you. Faculty are also encouraged to reach out to the DGS anytime if the advisee may need a wellness check or any other support as they progress through the early years of the program.

2. Student committees needed and procedures for selecting committee members

Students are responsible for asking faculty members to serve on their exam and dissertation committees. To help students select committee members, we encourage them to seek advice

from their first-year mentors, their professors during coursework, and the DGS.

During coursework, students should be getting to know their professors with the intention of building a team of faculty advisors to serve on their exam committee and, later, their dissertation committee. (These two committees may or may not be identical in composition; students are welcome to make changes to their team of advisors following their Field exam.)

The most important advisor is the faculty member who has agreed to chair the exam or dissertation committee. We recommend that students find a faculty member to serve as their exam chair at least nine months before the Field Exam. Once a faculty member has agreed to serve as the student's chair, the student and their chair should work together to build out the rest of the student's committee.

By September 10th of their third year, students should finalize the composition of their exam committee. We recommend that students receive confirmation from faculty members in writing (e.g. via email) that they have agreed to serve on your committee. These confirmations should be shared with the DGS and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Because the Graduate College requires students to have an [external faculty member](#) on their dissertation committees, we also recommend that students begin as soon as possible getting to know faculty in other departments and on other campuses. We suggest that students discuss this requirement with their exam/dissertation chair, who can introduce their students to external faculty.

Exam committee: The exam committee is composed of two graduate faculty members (one of which will serve as committee chair) and the DGS. In the event that the DGS is serving as the committee chair or second member, the student will work with their committee chair to find a third English faculty member to proctor the exam.

Doctoral project proposal committee: The dissertation proposal needs to be approved by two graduate faculty members (one of which will serve as committee chair) before it can be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies.Students should not begin working on their dissertations until their proposals have been approved by their dissertation committees.

Dissertation committee: We adhere to the Graduate College's requirements for [dissertation committee composition](#):

Each dissertation/executive position paper committee shall consist of not less than four and not more than six members approved through appropriate departmental procedures. At least two members shall represent the major field, one of whom shall be the committee's chairperson. One member shall represent the area of minor study (where appropriate) and at least one member shall be an external examiner chosen from a

different academic unit or from outside the University. The chairperson shall have established a record of publication and/or scholarship in the field of the dissertation/ execution position paper and shall be a member of the faculty of the University; the definition of faculty shall include professional staff who hold secondary faculty appointments. Faculty who have retired or resigned from the University may chair committees of students whose work began under their direction prior to their retirement or departure from the University. An adviser who is not employed by the University of Delaware may serve as co-chair of the committee providing that the other co-chair meets the conditions stated above.

Because the dissertation proposal only requires approval from two faculty members and the DGS, students should discuss with their dissertation committees as early as possible how to satisfy the four-member and external-member requirements.

3. Dates of Qualifying Portfolio, Field Exam, Proposal Defense and retake options

- Fall Year 1: ENGL600 + ENGL684 + 6 elective credits
- Spring Year 1: ENGL688 + 6 elective credits
- Fall Year 2: 9 elective credits
- Spring Year 2: 9 elective credits
  - Submit Qualifying Portfolio by February 1
  - Upon passing Qualifying Portfolio, develop your Field Exam Reading List (March-May). Students should determine who will serve as chairperson and second field examiner for the Field Exam by the end of Spring semester. Email names and roles of committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and Program Coordinator no later than June 1.
- Fall Year 3: ENGL964: Pre-Candidacy
  - Prepare for Field Exam. Reading list should be approved by Field Exam Committee by September 1 and forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies and Program Coordinator. Students should determine a date for their Field Exam at this time.
  - Take Field Exam no later than December 15.
- Spring Year 3: ENGL964: Pre-Candidacy
  - Submit Doctoral Project Proposal to Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies no later than May 1. Students should schedule the Defense of the Doctoral proposal for no later than June 1. Upon successful Defense of the Doctoral Project Proposal, students should complete the Recommendation for Doctoral Candidacy form to advance to ABD-Sustaining (Doctoral Candidacy).
- Fall Year 4: ENGL969: Doctoral Dissertation (9 credits)
  - Doctoral Project Research and Writing

- Spring Year 4: UNIV999: Sustaining
  - Doctoral Project Research and Writing
  - Submit a progress report to the Director of Graduate Studies by May 1
- Fall Year 5: UNIV999: Sustaining
  - Doctoral Project Research and Writing
- Spring Year 5: UNIV999: Sustaining
  - Schedule Doctoral Project Defense for no later than April 1 (to graduate in May)
  - If an extension for the expected graduation term is needed, appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies by March 1

The **Qualifying Portfolio** is evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) on a pass/fail basis. Decisions will be sent to students usually within 2-3 weeks. In the event of a failing Portfolio, the student will be permitted to revise the Portfolio based on the committee's feedback and resubmit it within one month of the decision. If the Portfolio receives a second failing grade, the student will be dismissed from the program.

The **Field Exam** is evaluated by the student's two-person committee and the DGS on a pass/fail basis. The decision is shared immediately with the student at the conclusion of the exam. Students who fail the exam will be allowed to retake the exam once. Within two weeks of the failed exam, the committee will deliver a one-page letter to the student describing strengths and areas for improvement. The student must complete the new exam before April 15. If a student fails the second exam they may not continue in the program.

The **Doctoral Project Proposal Defense** is evaluated by the student's two-person committee and the DGS. In the event of a non-passing proposal defense, the student will be permitted to revise-and-resubmit based on detailed feedback from the student's doctoral project committee. The revision timeline will depend on the nature of the revisions required. Students are not dismissed from the program if their proposal does not pass a second time. Rather, the DGS will schedule a meeting with the student and the student's dissertation committee to determine the best course of action for revising the proposal.

4. Guidelines for approving research proposals involving human or animal subjects

Our students usually study texts and not people. As such, nearly all of our PhD students' research projects do not require approval from a human subjects review board (also called IRB or Institutional Review Board). Students who are interested in the following research methods should discuss the IRB process with their dissertation chair and/or the DGS:

- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Classroom studies

- Observations

In addition, if the research will involve collecting ethically sensitive texts, even if the texts are publicly available (e.g. responses posted to an online breast cancer support forum), the student should discuss whether IRB approval is warranted. The IRB process will ensure that responses are anonymized if necessary, that the data are secured, and that participants are informed about the benefits and risks of the study.

5. Procedures for dissertation approval in the department

We have created a helpful checklist for PhD candidates preparing for graduation. Your first stop should be the Graduate College's Steps-to-Graduation page. You should email Dr. Mary Martin as soon as you have confirmed your graduation term and scheduled a time for your defense. She will send you further details for submitting your dissertation to the university and can help answer questions as well.

Committee confirmation: Submit your Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form to the Graduate Program Coordinator as soon as possible. Be sure to specify the institution/department affiliated for each faculty member. University rules for putting together your committee are included on this form as well. This form will be saved by the Graduate Program Coordinator and the original will be forwarded to the Graduate College on your behalf.

Application for advanced degree: The Advanced Degree Application form and proof of payment should be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator once you have your chair's signature. The Graduate Program Coordinator will request the other two signatures for you, scan a copy of the form into your record with the department, and submit everything to the Graduate College on your behalf. If anything on this form is unclear to you, please leave it blank and it will be filled in for you. This form should be printed and submitted on campus (drop it off, slide it under the Graduate Program Coordinator's office door, or put it in her mailbox in the lounge). If you have extenuating circumstances preventing you from submitting in-person, let us know. Note: There are no official degree concentrations. Your degree is PhD English.

- Fall (Dec) Graduations: Submit form to me before September 15
- Spring (May) Graduations: Submit form to me before February 14

Scheduling your defense: The defense must be scheduled with ample time to revise (if needed) and secure all signatures prior to submission to the Graduate College. You should plan to defend no later than two weeks before the submission deadline. If you anticipate the need for revisions, consider a longer buffer period. If you end up needing a bit of an extension for submission, you can request it from Dr. Martin. Or, you can postpone your graduation term to Winter or Summer. Let the Graduate Program Coordinator know right away if you would like to graduate in Winter or Summer so she can send you further

instructions for graduating in an irregular term.

- ● Fall (Dec) Graduations: Submit Materials to Graduate College by November 15
- ● Spring (May) Graduations: Submit Materials to Graduate College by April 18

The materials required and procedure for submission on the steps-to-graduation page does not include instructions for submitting virtually. Dr. Martin will send you detailed instructions when you inform her of your defense and graduation term.

Announcing your defense: Defenses are open to the public. You must [post your defense date and time](). If you will defend via Zoom, do not put the link on this schedule.

After the defense: The [Certification of Doctoral Dissertation Defense Form]() should be completed immediately following the conclusion of the defense. This form goes directly to the Graduate College with your other signatures/materials. To schedule a room for your defense, please email the Graduate Program Coordinator with the title of your dissertation, the day/time of your defense and the zoom link/location so they can be announced to the department.

Review your transcript: You cannot graduate with grades of "I" or "S" on your record. Sometimes professors input "S" grades for candidacy credits or you may have some other lingering error on your transcript. Candidacy credits should be changed from "S" to "P." Candidacy credits should be associated with your project chairperson. Sooner rather than later, go to your UDSIS account and view your course history. If you have an "I" or an "S" contact the professor and ask them to submit a [change of grade form](). If you have problems, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Embargo or not? Before submitting your dissertation to Proquest ETD as required by the Graduate College, you should discuss with your dissertation chair whether you should embargo it. When you embargo or sequester your dissertation, you prevent Proquest ETD from making it available to the public for a set period of time. If you are expecting to publish part or all of your dissertation as articles or a book, you should seriously consider selecting the embargo option.

6. Departmental and student obligations for finding committee members

Students are responsible for finding committee members to serve on their exam and dissertation committees. While it can be stressful and even intimidating to ask faculty members to serve on their committee, students should keep in mind that graduate faculty members are eager to be involved with students' research projects. It's one of the most fulfilling and important aspects of our jobs.

Once you've secured an exam or dissertation chair, you should work closely with them to build out the rest of your team of advisors. It is not recommended that students put a

committee together without consulting with their exam or dissertation chair. In other words, the process of finding committee members should begin with the most important member of the team: the committee or dissertation chair.

Some faculty will only agree to serve on a student's committee if the student has already taken (or is taking concurrently) one of the faculty member's courses.

How should you approach a faculty member about serving on your committee? If possible, make an in-person or Zoom appointment to discuss your research interests and to ask them to serve on your committee. Because so much work in academia is done over email, most faculty will be fine discussing committee membership over email and then, if necessary, moving to a face-to-face or Zoom meeting.

Some members of our graduate faculty are serving on several PhD committees and may just not have time to advise and mentor an additional student. Being turned down can feel like a rejection, but students shouldn't take it that way. When turning down requests from students to serve on exam or dissertation committees, faculty are not rejecting the student's research; they may just not have room in their schedules for an additional student at that time. If you think a faculty member is too busy to take on an additional student, you should still ask them to be on your committee. Don't let your perception of a faculty member's popularity prevent you from approaching them about committee membership.

Finally, students should feel free to reach out to the DGS for advice on approaching faculty members or removing and replacing committee members.

7. Departmental and student procedures for changing committee members

We encourage our students to involve themselves in new research questions and learn new methods and skills. At some point in your studies, you may find yourself turning towards a new area of research. When your research focus changes, you may need to replace a member of your committee with another faculty member who seems like a better fit. While you should never make committee decisions lightly, you should also never feel like you're stuck with a committee member who isn't the best fit for you. It is your responsibility to inform the committee member (email should be fine) that you have replaced them on your committee. Prior to the exam stage, you should simply let the DGS and Graduate Program Coordinator know in writing. We do not need a reason for the change and trust that you are making decisions that will serve you best. If you'd like to discuss committee dynamics or problems confidentially with the DGS, please reach out at any time.

Prior to the dissertation defense, students are required to fill out the Dissertation Committee Confirmation form and send it to the Graduate Program Coordinator. If this form has already been filled out, the student will need to fill it out again and re-submit it to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Finally, we want to remind you, again, that committee decisions (asking a faculty member to serve or removing a faculty member from a committee) should never be made lightly, even if the process of replacing a committee member is easy in terms of the paperwork required.

D. Timetable and satisfactory progress towards the degree

1. Academic load expectations

We only admit full-time students into our English PhD program. Every student we admit into the program is offered funding (usually a teaching assistantship). We do not accept part-time students.

During their first two years in the program, students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 9 credits per semester. While students are taking courses, they are evaluated at the end of every semester. The DGS asks each professor teaching a graduate course that semester to submit a short evaluation of each student in their class. The DGS and Graduate Program Coordinator use these evaluations to determine whether any students need extra support.

2. Grade requirements

Students are required to maintain a minimum average of B (3.0) in their course work. Any grade below B (including B-) may place the student's academic status and financial aid in jeopardy. The Graduate College requires that students maintain a B (3.0) average. Note that a B- grade counts for 2.667 points.

3. Dissertation progress timetable guidelines

By May 1st of every year, the DGS requires doctoral candidates (ABDs) to submit a progress report on the work they've accomplished on their dissertations in the previous 12 months. The report should be detailed in terms of chapters drafted, feedback received from faculty, chapters revised based on feedback, research conducted,conferences attended, publications submitted or revised, and/or archives visited. The report should be emailed to the DGS, with the Graduate Program Coordinator and the student's dissertation chair copied on the message.

The DGS will also request a brief written assessment from every dissertation chair on whether their dissertation students are making satisfactory progress.

If necessary, a meeting with the student and their chair will be requested by the DGS to determine whether additional support is needed.

4. Doctoral project defense guidelines and suggestions

The Graduate College requires all doctoral degree candidates to pass a final oral exam upon completion of the dissertation. Dissertation committees, and especially dissertation chairs, have wide latitude and flexibility to run the defense as they see fit. To help dissertation

chairs and graduating students prepare for the defense, we offer the following guidelines and tips for the doctoral dissertation defense.

Announcing the defense: The doctoral project defense is a public event. Anyone who is interested in attending, whether they are in academia or not, should be welcome. The defense should be advertised widely no less than one week before the scheduled defense time. The student should make sure that the defense date and time, along with the dissertation title and abstract, are advertised on the English Department's major mailing lists. The event should also be submitted to the university's Graduate College for posting on their public events calendar. The event details may also be shared on social media.

Doctoral project defenses should be held in person unless the committee unanimously agrees that extenuating circumstances warrant a remote defense (via Zoom or similar video conferencing software). If the event is being held remotely, certain security precautions should be taken in advance, such as requiring participants to RSVP, adding password protection, using the waiting room feature, and/or preventing audience members from screen sharing.

Preparing for the defense (for the student):
1. Work with your committee to produce a dissertation draft that all four committee members believe is defensible.
2. Send the complete, revised dissertation to the four committee members one month before the defense date.
3. Prepare a formal presentation that is similar in format to a conference presentation and no longer than 20 minutes. You will give this presentation at the start of your defense. Keep in mind the multiple audiences for this presentation, including audiences who have not read the dissertation. Strongly recommended: Create a slide deck in PowerPoint, Google Slides, or a similar program that will provide an overview of the major components of the dissertation.
4. Practice the presentation before the defense. If necessary, write a script or outline to help you stay on track and progress through your slides in the allotted time of 20 minutes maximum.
5. Attend as many defenses in the Department of English as you can before it's your turn. It's never too early to sit in on your peers' dissertation defenses to get a feel for how defenses at UD work (and to support your peers). When preparing for your own defense, stage a "dry run" one or two weeks before the real defense. Invite your friends and peers to play the role of the committee. Ask your audience during the dry run to critique your presentation and to pepper you with as many hard questions as they can.

A slideshow for a *monograph-style dissertation* might include:

- Title slide

- Background/context information
- Gap and/or entry point(s)
- Research questions
- Texts/data/artifacts that were collected
- Methodology and methods
- Major claims/findings/results (the argument)
- At least one major example of your analysis
- Why this argument matters (claims for significance)
- Limitations of the study
- Future work

A slideshow for an *alternative dissertation project* will be specific to the project itself. Consider the following tips for organizing the slides to accompany a dissertation project:

- Title slide
- Overview of the problem or opportunity
- Significance of the problem or opportunity
- Previous scholarship and other major sources of information (lit review)
- Research questions
- Methods for analyzing the problem and/or developing a solution
- An overview of the dissertation project with examples (i.e., the solution to the problem)
- How the project was tested or evaluated (e.g., surveys, usability evaluations, focus groups)
- Limitations and future work, including the long-term sustainability of the project

By providing a solid overview of your dissertation, you'll be able to orient outsiders and welcome them into the conversation. Our graduate program's emphasis on the public humanities deserves a more public-oriented defense format that invites everyone to learn more about what we do.

The defense format (for the student and the committee): The student's dissertation chair will moderate the defense. The chair and the committee have the flexibility to decide how the defense should proceed, so long as each committee member has an opportunity to question the student publicly about the dissertation. The defense should last about two credits total, but the committee and the student should reserve the defense room for up to three hours in the event the defense goes slightly over two hours.

Here is one approach to structuring the defense:

1. The dissertation chair welcomes everyone and briefly introduces the committee members.
2. The dissertation chair gives an overview of the format to be followed.

3. The student gives an overview of the dissertation (20 minutes max).
4. Committee members take turns questioning the student about the dissertation.

   Option 1: Each committee member takes turns asking one question, or one question and a follow-up (up to 1 hour total).

   Option 2: Each committee member is allotted a certain amount of time, such as fifteen minutes each, to ask the student several questions about their dissertation (up to 1 hour total).

5. Members of the audience are invited to ask the student questions about their dissertation project (5-15 minutes).
6. The dissertation committee meets privately to discuss the student's performance (~15 minutes). During an in-person defense, the student is asked to leave the room until the chair asks them to come back in. During a virtual defense, the committee moves to a breakout room to deliberate privately. During these private deliberations, the committee should discuss two things:

   Whether the student passed or failed the defense. Each committee member should state clearly whether the student passed or failed the defense.

   If the student passed the defense, what revisions, if any, the committee would like the student to make to the dissertation and how those revisions will be shared with the committee.

7. The student is invited back into the room (or, for a Zoom defense, the committee leaves the breakout room to rejoin the main room) and the results of the committee's deliberations are shared with the student.
8. Each member of the committee signs UD's Certification of Doctoral Dissertation Defense form.

Handling questions during the defense (for the student): You know your dissertation project and why it matters better than anyone. While it can be daunting to field difficult questions about your project from your professors in a public forum, you should try to approach the defense as a *conversation*. Your committee is invested in your success. At the same time, you should be prepared to *defend* your project in a collegial back-and-forth. The committee will typically ask you about:

- the significance of your research questions
- the strengths and limitations of your methods and analyses
- the texts or approaches you selected (and those you did not select)
- the implications of your arguments for theories in your field
- how your claims and interpretations differ from other scholarly works

- the significance of your claims, findings, arguments (why does any of it matter?)
- your understanding of key terms, such as "nonhuman agency"
- the limitations of your project
- possible future directions (whether the dissertation is a book project)
- what you would do differently or change

Questions from committee members are usually broadly focused on your arguments, texts, methods, and claims for significance, but make sure you have your dissertation close at hand because it is not unusual for committee members to cite specific passages and page numbers.

Not every question you receive will be well defined. The dissertation is a complex object that produces complex reactions. It's not uncommon for committee members to offer their thoughts on your dissertation, or perhaps describe what they feel is a tension in your work, and then say something like: "I'd like to ask you to talk about this some more." You should be ready to unpack readers' reactions and translate their statements and observations into questions that you can answer directly and succinctly.

To help you prepare for the types of questions you will receive, study the written and oral feedback your committee gives you on earlier drafts of your dissertation chapters. Take notes during your exams of the kinds of questions your committee members ask. Schedule regular meetings with your chair. When revising your chapters, keep track of your committee's questions and feedback. It is not unusual for committee members to repeat questions at the defense that they've asked you before in written feedback on earlier drafts.

5. Forms required

The English Graduate Program does not require any additional forms that are not already required by the Graduate College. Students should pay attention to emails from the Graduate Program Coordinator that include specific directions on applying for fellowships, assistantships, and graduation.

6. Consequences for failure to make satisfactory progress

In the event that a student fails to make satisfactory progress toward meeting the academic standards of the program, the Graduate Studies Committee will recommend that the graduate faculty vote to dismiss the student from the program. Each student's progress will be reviewed annually by the Director of Graduate Studies.

7. Protocol for grievance procedure

The university has detailed [procedures for filing a grievance](#). Students with complaints about grades or other matters should follow these procedures. Please note that the first step in a grade complaint is to request a meeting with the faculty member.

8. Dismissal policy

Students may be terminated from the program for any of several reasons. Review the
[Graduate College's dismissal policies](#), which includes a list of dismissal reasons.

In the case of dismissal, the program director is required to send a report to the Graduate
College that states the faculty vote on the decision causing dismissal and the justification
for this action. The Graduate College will notify a student in writing when the student is
being dismissed for failure to make satisfactory progress in the program.

The student may appeal the termination by writing to the Graduate College. This appeal
must be made within 10 class days from the date on which the student has been notified
of academic dismissal. The vice provost will review the appeal and may either uphold the
dismissal, grant reinstatement or refer the case to the Graduate Hearing Board for
resolution. If the vice provost grants reinstatement, the student must meet the conditions
of the reinstatement. Failure to meet these conditions will result in dismissal from the
program. A graduate student may be reinstated only once to a given major. The student's
academic transcript will reflect the reinstatement with the appropriate academic
probation status.

Part IV. Funding and Assistantships

A. Teaching assistantships

The typical funding offer for incoming English PhD students is teaching assistantship for up to
five years. Funding is for 9 months each year (Sept 1 - May 31).

The standard teaching assignment is ENGL110 (Seminar in Composition). To prepare you for
teaching, the department requires you to complete a year-long Graduate Apprenticeship in the
Teaching of Writing where you are assigned to assist the teaching of a large section of
ENGL110 with a master teacher during your first semester (Fall). As a teaching assistant in
your first semester in the program, you will teach or co-teach classes, help comment on and
grade student work, and conference with assigned students outside of the class. You are also
required during your first semester to tutor in the Writing Center for up to 5 hours per week.
During this first semester, all ENGL110 TAs will also meet weekly with the professors
assigned to their section.

In the spring semester of your first year, you will take ENGL688 (Composition Theory and the
Teaching of Writing). Graduate students must also attend workshop meetings for all instructors
in the composition program the week before each semester begins.

The program aims to provide students with a diverse teaching Portfolio, including tutoring in
the University Writing Center, teaching advanced and honors writing courses, and teaching
literature courses. In order to be eligible for a literature course assignment, students will TA for

a literature professor in the spring semester of their first year. This teaching assistantship will qualify students to teach a literature course in their third year or later.

Beginning in year two, students will teach ENGL110 as the instructor of record. The standard teaching load is one course in Fall and one course in Spring.

To ensure that each of our advanced PhD students has an opportunity to teach a literature course appropriate to their area of study—and to do so during a regular semester—the Director of Graduate Studies will consult with the Associate Chair to schedule such a course in a subsequent semester. The typical course offered is ENGL 280: Literature for Non-Majors. Students offered a section of ENGL 280 will develop their own topic or theme for the course that intersects with their own research or literary interests. Students must have fulfilled a Graduate Apprenticeship in Teaching Literature (i.e. served as a teaching assistant for a literature professor) and must have satisfactory teaching evaluations in their E110 section(s).

The DGS will work with the Associate Chair in making assignments to teach literature courses. Teaching assignments are dependent upon high-quality performance in the classroom. Graduate students who are not receiving funding from other sources in Winter or Summer are eligible to teach for extra compensation during the Winter or Summer sessions.

B. Financial awards and other funding opportunities

Graduate Assistantships: After the first year, doctoral students can apply for competitive graduate assistantships both within the English Department and across the University. Graduate assistantship contracts generally come with a reduced or eliminated teaching requirement to be determined by the needs of the position. Graduate assistants are expected to serve no more than 20 hours per week in their assistant duties. Our students have held graduate assistantships with the Morris Library and Special Collections, the University Writing Center, the Composition Program, Winterthur Museum & Library, Center for Teaching & Assessment of Learning, UD Press, and the Center for Material Culture Studies – to name a few.

We are proud to support our doctoral students in their pursuit of a variety of professional goals both inside and outside of the academy. We strive to offer assistantship, funding, internship, and professional development opportunities tailored to your unique skills, interests, and vision for your future as a PhD in English.

Research assistantships: English graduate students are eligible for several assistantships. A few are research assistantships, sponsored by English Department faculty; others are jointly sponsored by English and other units in the university (such as Special Collections and the McNair Scholars Program). Assignments to these assistantships depend upon availability and are made in consultation between the sponsor and the Director of Graduate Studies. At the request of the sponsor, the Director of Graduate Studies will invite graduate students to submit applications for a given assistantship.

University fellowships: The Graduate Program nominates students each year for year-long university fellowships, awarded by the Graduate College. The university fellowships are:

- The University Graduate Scholars Award. This award is based on academic achievement as well as: membership in racial/ethnic groups historically underrepresented in your field; evidence of financial need; first-generation college student; or unexpected/extenuating personal circumstances/hardships that impacted your ability to dedicate complete attention to your academics for one or more terms.
- The University Doctoral Fellowship Award. Students entering their 4th or 5th year of the PhD program are eligible to apply as long as they have passed their dissertation proposal (i.e. reached candidacy).
- The University Dissertation Fellowship Award. This award is usually reserved for doctoral candidates about to enter their last year of contract-based funding. The applicant must describe their plans for finishing the dissertation during the academic year in which they would hold the award. Students who are in their last year of funding are also eligible to apply for a doctoral or dissertation fellowship award. In such cases, the fellowship would extend the student's funding by an additional year.

Nominations for the Doctoral Fellows and Dissertation Fellows Awards are made by the Graduate Studies Committee in November. By November 1, eligible graduate students who wish to be considered for the award should send an email to the DGS and Graduate Program Coordinator, which includes: A current CV, a two-page document providing a brief project description, an indication of work to date, and a work plan for the fellowship period, a letter of support from the faculty advisor for the doctoral project, and a 1-2 page statement describing the student's doctoral project and its anticipated impact on the field, along with the proposed work schedule for the period of the fellowship.

Departmental research fellowships and other funding: Once all coursework has been completed, all English PhD students are guaranteed one semester on fellowship to focus on their doctoral project research and writing. The semester in which guaranteed fellowships are granted will be determined on an individual basis by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may also apply for competitive 12-month fellowships offered by the Graduate College. Fellows are expected to devote full-time attention to their research and are not permitted to teach or accept other paid work.

C. Travel funding for professional meetings or presentations

The Department of English offers students competitive funding for academic conferences and research travel, as well as professional development programs. In the past, our students have received financial support to attend esteemed institutes such as Dickens Universe, Futures of American Studies Institute, Rare Books School, and HILT Digital Humanities. Travel and research support are contingent on the English department's ability to provide funding.

We welcome requests for funding to support graduate student travel for the purposes of

conducting original research in libraries and archives and presenting research at academic conferences. The Director of Graduate Studies solicits travel funding requests at the beginning of the academic year, and the graduate committee reviews the requests and announces awards by mid-October, typically. Because the call for requests happens only at the beginning of the year, students who anticipate travel to a library or a conference should make a request for funding even if their plans are not finalized.

Requests should be submitted electronically and should include the following:

- A letter explaining the purpose of the proposed travel (including conference paper and session titles or the specific collections to be consulted). Students are encouraged to submit their abstract for conference presentations
- An advisor's note of endorsement, attesting to the professional benefit of this conference or research travel
- A budget
- A vita

Students are encouraged to find matching sources for travel awards, from the [Graduate College](), the university's Office of Women's Affairs (up to $100), the Office of Alumni and University Relations, and professional organizations.

Normally, students will be limited to one travel award a year, and there will be no guaranteed minimum award. The size of travel awards will vary depending on the distance one needs to travel, the significance of the travel in terms of the applicant's research focus, and the number of conferences the applicant has previously attended. Upon completing the research or conference trip, students must notify the Director of Graduate Studies that their travel is complete and briefly report on the trip.

Part V. Departmental Operations

A. General student responsibilities

1. Email and up-to-date addresses

Please check your UD email at least once per day during the work week. The day-to-day operations of our department are mostly conducted over email.

If you change your home address, please update it by filling out a [change-of-address form]().

2. Laboratories and research equipment

There are no laboratories in the Department of English. If a graduate student needs to use specific research equipment or software that is owned by a faculty member (e.g. to conduct research for a graduate assistantship or research assistantship), the faculty member is

responsible for checking out the equipment to the student.

3. Hazardous Chemical Information Act

    The state of Delaware requires employers to provide [information regarding hazardous chemicals](#) to employees and students who may be exposed to such chemicals in the workplace, laboratory, classroom, etc.

    In the normal course of their education and research, graduate students in the Department of English are not exposed to laboratories, offices, or classroom spaces where hazardous chemicals are used.

4. Vehicles

    The Department of English makes no policies about the personal vehicles of graduate students, except to direct incoming students to the [Parking Services](#) website where parking permits can be purchased.

5. Keys, offices, mail, telephone, copy machine, computer terminals, etc.

    Prior to the start of the fall semester, new and returning students should receive emails about building and office access. New students will receive information on where and when to pick up office keys. Graduating students will also receive information on how to return office keys.

    The key that opens Memorial Hall will also give you access to printers on the ground and first floors, the Grad lounge/Mailroom on the second floor, the copy room on the second floor, and the third floor kitchen area. Keys must be returned to the department when a student graduates or otherwise leave the program.

    The Mailroom is located on the second floor. If it is locked, use your building key to open it.

    The copy machine on the second floor can be accessed with the first five digits of your UD ID number. Do not use the copy machine to print copies of your syllabi for your students or for any other large print job.

    Faculty offices and graduate student offices are not equipped with landline telephones.

    Questions about building operations should be directed to Ann Marie Green (amgreen@udel.edu), the Academic Support Coordinator for the Department of English.

B. Student government and organizations

Our graduate students are encouraged to participate in the governance of the English graduate program. The primary way to participate at the departmental level is by serving as a graduate

representative on the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) for a one-year term. Each year, two are nominated by their fellow graduate students in the department to serve on the GSC.

Beyond the department, our graduate students have served in various roles in Graduate Student Government, from Senator to President.

Beyond the university, students should talk with their faculty advisors about professional organizations and major conferences in their respective fields. English studies is a diverse collection of fields and disciplines. Each field has their own list of professional organizations and opportunities for graduate students to get involved.