



# 2025-2026 Handbook

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## Welcome

Dear Incoming English Graduate Students:

We welcome you to our Master of Arts in English Graduate Program! We are excited to have you join our community of learners, and we welcome the special knowledge and talents you bring to the group.

Our program prepares you to be great thinkers, readers, and writers, which will prepare you for a number of exciting career futures. We will train you in writing studies, literary studies, and applied linguistics to give you a broad foundation. Also, flexible course requirements mean you will be able to choose in which areas you want to gain more expertise.

This handbook will serve as a valuable resource during your time in the program as it contains procedures, policies, and resources. You will want to refer to the handbook often to make sure you are aware of the requirements for the program.

Also keep up with our department website and Facebook page to find out more about our super faculty, students, and activities.

We look forward to working and learning with you during this important time in your life. Again, welcome to our learning community!

Sincerely,  
Kelly L. Bezio, PhD  
Coordinator, MA English Program

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## Graduate Faculty and Staff

[Read more about our faculty on our website](#)

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## General Information

### General Information

This section of the handbook includes standardized information about rules and policies pertaining to graduate education at Texas A&M University. It is not intended to be comprehensive. You are strongly encouraged to read the sections of the catalog pertaining to graduate students, which will provide more detail and additional topics that may impact you. You will also find information about your program.

### Graduate Admissions

To be admitted to a program of graduate study, an applicant must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education in the United States or an equivalent foreign institution. *(Note: The requirement to hold a bachelor's degree does not apply to students enrolling in the RN-MSN option in nursing.)* Decisions concerning admission to graduate study are based on all admission criteria. To be considered for a graduate program, a minimum last 60-hour GPA of 2.5 is required.

Some programs may have higher GPA requirements; review specific program information in the graduate catalog or elsewhere in this handbook. All applications must be made through [Apply Texas](#). For more information about the application process, visit the [Application Process](#) page on the CGS website or see the Catalog, [Graduate Admissions section](#).

Graduate students should be aware of their enrollment status, as it may impact financial aid, veteran's benefits, or other important aspects of graduate life. In addition, international students have specific requirements about enrollment status. Enrollment status for graduate students is as follows:

Full-time graduate student

Fall or spring term = 9 hours

Combined summer terms = 6 hours

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Three-quarter-time graduate student Fall or spring term = 7 hours

Combined summer terms = 5 hours

Half-time graduate student:

Fall or spring term = 5 hours

Combined summer terms = 3 hours

### **Continuous Enrollment**

The University does not have a continuous enrollment policy for master's students. However, you should be aware of your own program's requirements, which may differ from general University requirements. Master's students should also know that if they do not attend for two years, they will be required to reapply to the University. Students should consider applying for a leave of absence (see below), especially if the time-to-degree and recency of credits requirements will be impacted by a needed absence.

### **Leave of Absence**

Students experiencing life changing or catastrophic events should consult with their program coordinator and/or department chair and request a [Leave of Absence](#) in writing from the College of Graduate Studies using the [Request for Leave of Absence form](#). A student who is in good standing may petition for a leave of absence of no more than two full academic terms. The maximum number of leave of absence requests permitted in a program is two. A request for a leave of absence requires approval in advance by the faculty advisor, Program Coordinator, College Dean, and Graduate Dean. If the Graduate Dean approves the petition, the registration requirement is set aside during the period of time of the leave. Students should be aware that leaves of absences require suspension of all activities associated with the pursuit of the degree. See the catalog for more information.

### **Maximum Course Load**

Graduate students may not register for more than 12 hours in a regular semester, 6 hours in a single session of summer school, or 12 hours in the combined summer session (not including Maymester)

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without the approval of the appropriate college dean. See the [Maximum Course Load](#) section in the catalog.

### **Time Limit to Degree**

The requirements for a master's degree at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must be completed within seven years subsequent to admission to the program. The seven-year period begins the first semester of enrollment and is calculated from the date of degree conferral. Credit that is more than seven years old will not be counted toward a master's degree. Exceptions will require **strong** justification in writing from the student requesting the exception as well as submission of a revalidation plan. Credits earned at another university are not eligible for an exception. Written approval from the major department chairperson, the dean of the college offering the degree, the graduate dean, and the Provost are required. See the revalidation process below.

### **Revalidation of Courses Beyond Degree Time Limit**

In order to revalidate dated courses, students should carefully attend to information in the catalog (see [Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements](#) section of the catalog. Revalidation requests should be made using the [Revalidation Request Form](#).

### **Academic Requirements for Graduate Work**

**Good Standing.** Graduate students, including degree-seeking, certificate-seeking, and non-degree-seeking students, are considered in “good academic standing” if they maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) on all graduate course work and earn a grade of S (Satisfactory), IP (In Progress), or CR (Credit) on all course work that does not affect GPA. A higher GPA may be required by some programs. In such cases, the higher standard will be substituted for 3.0 in all other matters related to good academic standing. A complete discussion of academic requirements including but not limited to scholastic probation and enforced withdrawal may be found in the [Graduate Academic and Degree Requirements](#) section of the catalog. For information regarding the effect of scholastic probation and enforced withdrawal, see the [Financial Assistance Suspension Policy](#) in the Tuition, Fees, & Financial Assistance section of the catalog.



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## Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, which include but are not limited to illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, plagiarism, or collusion in any of these behaviors. All students should familiarize themselves with the full Academic Integrity Policy as well as the processes and procedures used to address violations thereof. You can find additional information in the [Academic Integrity](#) section of the catalog. Students can also access University Rules and Procedures [13.02.99.CO.04](#): Student Academic Misconduct Cases.

## Additional Information

Information, policies, and procedures about tuition, fees, financial assistance, scholarships, and other topics important to graduate students can be found in the catalog. In addition to the catalog, web pages for offices and services on campus provide expanded information, forms, and contact names/phone numbers. Some of those webpages include the following:

[Office of Student Financial Assistance](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[Office of International Education](#)

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## **Program Mission, Outcomes, and Standards**

### **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi - Mission Statement**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is a premier institution of higher education, recognized by the Department of Education as a Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution, dedicated to providing an unparalleled commitment to student success, developing professionals and engaged leaders, and providing intellectual capital through research, creative activity, and innovation for South Texas, the Gulf of Mexico, and beyond.

### **College of Liberal Arts - Mission Statement**

- Our college values learning that results from purposeful relationships within vibrant and dynamic communities.
- Our college values learning that affects the whole individual through all aspects of our humanity (from the emotive to the rational).
- Our college values learning that produces responsible citizens who engage in the communities around them.
- Our college values learning that engages in research and produces scholarship which extends knowledge and, through this, our regional, national, and global reputations.

### **English Graduate Program - Mission Statement**

The MA in English Program offers all candidates the opportunity to grow intellectually and creatively through the advanced study of language, literature, and writing. The program offers a variety of opportunities designed to:

- further students' understanding of academic fields pertaining to writing, composition theory, language, applied linguistics, literature, and literary and cultural theory
- encourage awareness and application of diverse humanistic, social scientific, and creative methodologies for and theoretical approaches to analyzing texts, especially pertaining to their engagement with belonging, difference, racialization, gender, sexuality, class, accessibility, and

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other topics

- involve students in community-oriented and/or public-facing ways of making knowledge
- develop accomplished professionals, who may pursue careers in non-profit, private, and academic areas such as teaching at the secondary and community college levels; professional, grant, and technical writing; communication and content creation; project management; publishing and editing; philanthropy; research development; academic advising; and more
- provide students with the background and skills needed to pursue terminal degrees in fields such as English, American Studies, Cultural Studies, Technical Communication, Composition and Rhetoric, and more

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the program, students will demonstrate:

- proficiency in critical reading, writing, and thinking at the graduate level;
- understanding and application of core knowledge, vocabulary, and concepts in the discipline;
- proficiency in scholarly methods of research and inquiry; and
- appropriate preparation for individual career paths within the profession.

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## **Connection to Careers**

One of the main goals of the MA English Program is to prepare students for the next step in their careers, which for most students in this program involves finding a job or enrolling in advanced academic programs. The major areas of employment include K-12 teaching (mostly middle and high school level), non-tenure track teaching at the college/university level, tenure-track college/university level positions, and business/industry positions (corporate relations, non-profit, government). Some students who focus on applied linguistics find international positions teaching ESL. Information is not available for all students in the program in regard to placement.

[Read more about our graduates' accomplishments on our website.](#)

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## Application Requirements

[For complete information about the admissions process visit our website.](#)

- Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate coursework taken at any accredited college or University attended (International College credits/transcripts require an official international evaluation). TAMU-CC transcript is not required. Applicants with a GPA of 3.0 or higher are eligible for admission, and those with a GPA of 2.5-2.9 may be conditionally admitted.
- A statement of interest (500-1000 words) from the candidate addressed to the English Graduate Committee. This statement should introduce the candidate and describe:
  - academic background
  - short- and long-term professional and intellectual goals
  - how graduate study in English at TAMU-CC may meet intellectual and/or professional goals
  - additional details about the candidate's background, language proficiency, and other personal information relating to individual/career goals that may have influenced the decision to pursue graduate study.
- A recent writing sample of at least 2000 words, which the applicant believes displays exemplary analytic and stylistic features and demonstrates potential for graduate-level study in English Studies. Academic essays, teaching philosophies, professional writing, and other options may be submitted. Please consult the graduate coordinator on the suitability of potential writing samples beyond those listed here.
- One letter of recommendation, which addresses the applicant's readiness to undertake graduate study. The recommender may speak to the applicant's ability to rise to new

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challenges, work ethic, passion for subject matter, organizational and project management skills, academic potential, interpersonal and communication skills, writing and critical thinking ability, and other topics. Applicants may choose to submit one or two additional letters of recommendation in the case that another recommender may be able to speak to significantly different aspects of the applicant's readiness to undertake graduate study. One letter of recommendation is considered sufficient for a complete application; additional letters will not be weighed more or less heavily in the holistic assessment of the application file.

While reviewing application materials, the English Graduate Committee will determine how our program's strengths will help applicants meet their intellectual and professional goals. The English Graduate Committee attends to several factors when reviewing these materials and assesses them holistically. We welcome applicants who may exhibit at least some of the following characteristics:

- demonstrate enthusiasm for continuing their studies, recognize the value of continuing their education, and have high aspirations as well as academic standards for themselves; they demonstrate academic potential as well as interests in possible fields of study
- may have pursued diverse paths through higher education in the U.S. or international settings
- have skills in formal and informal modes of communication, which may involve abilities in multiple languages and/or vernaculars, code-switching or code-meshing, and cross-cultural engagement
- open to trying different technologies, software, and apps as a part of the educational process
- seek peer collaborations, networking, and validation amongst people from diverse backgrounds and with varied future aspirations
- can navigate multiple social contexts and have the ability to operate in multiple worlds as well as diverse educational or geographical contexts
- show perseverance, inner strength, and determination to succeed
- are self-aware, willing to give back to their community, and/or serve as a role model

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## **Admissions Requirements**

Admission to the program will be granted based upon undergraduate performance, writing ability, demonstrated commitment to professional goals, and other favorable indicators presented in the portfolio. All criteria will be considered, and no factor will be assigned a specific weight. Based upon the English Graduate Committee's evaluation of the student's application portfolio, the student will be unconditionally admitted, conditionally admitted, or denied admission. If the student is conditionally admitted, the conditions of acceptance will be stated in writing.

The English Graduate Committee may recommend that applicants lacking the English undergraduate major complete certain upper-division undergraduate English course work before applying to the program.

Students can be admitted under one of the following categories:

### **Degree Seeking Student**

- Full Admission
- Conditional Admission

### **Non-Degree Seeking Student**

To be accepted as non-degree seeking status, students complete the ApplyTexas application, meet the 3.0 GPA status and submit transcripts from all colleges attended.

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## **Advising Requirements**

Upon entering the program, the Graduate Coordinator will serve as the students' advisor and will be available to discuss courses, degree plans, the thesis option, scholarships, and any other matters pertaining to the program. If choosing the thesis path, students will choose their own faculty advisor in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. The advisor should be a faculty member who can provide direction related to the area of study the student will focus on for the thesis.

For matters related to required paperwork and to check your degree progress, two resources are available:

### **DegreeWorks**

[DegreeWorks](#) is an excellent online resource that you can check anytime to see what you have left to take in your program.

### **Academic Advisor**

The [Academic Advisor](#) is available to work with you and your faculty advisor to make sure you complete all requirements and fill out all required forms. See contact information above.



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## **Degree Requirements**

Please consult the Program Requirements in the Catalog through this [link](#).

### **Transfer of Credits**

In addition to the University's general policy on transfer of credit, the following regulations will apply to the MA in English program: Up to 9 semester hours of graduate-level study may be transferred from other regionally accredited institutions of higher education if appropriate to the degree. No course with a grade of less than a "B," and no course that has counted toward the earning of another graduate degree, will be accepted as transfer credit. Credit that is more than seven years old at the time of graduation will not be counted toward the MA degree.

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# Curriculum

## **Course Delivery**

Each semester, options to take face-to-face, hybrid/blended, and fully online courses will be offered. Students may choose to complete the degree fully online or face-to-face. Students should be aware that not all courses will be offered in their desired modality in the semester in which they wish to take it. Please work with the graduate coordinator to ensure timely progress to degree, especially if pursuing the fully online path to completion.

[Find information about courses in the online graduate catalog.](#)

[Find the current course rotation on our website.](#)

[Find the current course offerings on our website.](#)

## **Modalities**

This degree program offers courses in a range of modalities:

- **Face-to-Face:** all students attend in-person in a classroom on campus.
- **Fully Online, Synchronous:** all students attend via video conference (e.g., Zoom, Teams, etc.).
- **Fully Online, Asynchronous:** all students complete work via a learning management system (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard, etc.).
- **Hybrid:** certain class sessions are face-to-face and require meeting in-person campus. Other class sessions will be held fully online (synchronous or asynchronous).
- **Stacked, Synchronous:** students can take the course face-to-face or fully online. Two sections of a graduate course will be opened: one face-to-face and one fully online. Once students are enrolled in a section, they are expected to attend the course in the modality in which they are registered. All students meet at the same time, either in-person or via video conference.

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Each semester, options to take face-to-face, hybrid/blended, and fully online courses will be offered. Students may choose to complete the degree fully online or face-to-face. Students should be aware that not all courses will be offered in their desired modality in the semester in which they wish to take it. Please work with the graduate coordinator to ensure timely progress to degree, especially if pursuing the fully online path to completion.

Faculty members will set expectations for any collaborative assignments and how students will interact with one another, given the course modality. When choosing courses for a given semester, students should consider how modality may impact their learning. Students are encouraged to meet with the graduate coordinator and/or their faculty to discuss strategies for how to succeed in each modality.

### **Directed Individual Studies**

Under special circumstances, students may request a Directed Individual Studies (DIS) course (ENGL 5396). A student must identify a faculty member willing to offer a DIS. All DIS proposals must be approved by the English Graduate Committee **by the end of the semester prior** to the semester during which the student will register.

Students will be asked to define their area or subject of study, outline objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and detail the method of evaluation (what kinds of writing assignments will be produced). A working bibliography is required. The English Graduate Committee typically does not approve 3-hour DIS proposals when the content is covered in regularly scheduled seminars. Students may apply one DIS (ENGL 5396) toward their graduate degree. (It will be counted in the elective section of the degree plan.)

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## Thesis Option

Students may choose to complete a thesis as a part of their degree plan. A thesis is the culmination of a formal scholarly or research inquiry, and it is typically a 50-80-page project divided into chapters, including an introduction and a conclusion.

The thesis option may be an appropriate choice for students depending on their long-term scholarly goals, writing skills, targeted doctoral programs, and plans for further specialization. A thesis project may be the right choice if you can say yes to some of the following conditions:

- You enjoy long-term research and writing projects
- You feel confident writing and researching under self-directed and semi-independent conditions
- You have developed research and/or scholarly interests in a specific area and are perhaps already doing independent reading on the subject.
- You may have been using writing projects in earlier coursework to think through related research questions in an area of interest
- You've begun discussing your specific interests with faculty members whose expertise overlaps with your proposed subject matter
- You anticipate applying to further graduate study or pursuing a career that is research and/or writing-intensive
- You feel ready to draft the proposal while still completing your assignments in your coursework

Students choosing the thesis route will work with the graduate coordinator to determine an area of research interest and suitable faculty for the committee. Once a faculty member has agreed to serve as director, she, he, or they will guide the student in establishing a committee and developing a proposal, which will articulate the research question(s), methodology or theoretical approach, primary source material, analysis, and other aspects of how the research will be conducted. The Graduate Committee approves the proposal, after which the student works with her, his, or their committee to conduct the research, draft and revise chapters, and finalize the

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written thesis. An oral defense of the thesis is required. A majority of the thesis committee members must pass the thesis and its defense.

Students should consult with the Graduate Coordinator after taking 12 hours to determine if a thesis or coursework option is best, given their career goals, time constraints and other concerns. Occasionally, students may be approved to complete a thesis in areas in which there can be fewer course offerings within the degree program, such as creative writing or applied linguistics. Faculty with expertise in these areas must be consulted prior to such a project being proposed. Students will need to demonstrate a foundation in the area, such as an undergraduate certificate or extended coursework, a body of creative work, or other experience.

Students may apply to write a thesis after completing 18 hours of coursework. Prior to applying students must write a thesis proposal, so students should begin working on the proposal after completing 12 hours of coursework. Once the proposal is approved and the student is accepted as a thesis candidate, students are expected to work closely with their thesis committee in designing and executing the thesis. The 6 credit hours towards the thesis (ENGL 5395) must be taken (repeated) in two separate and sequential semesters. An oral defense of the thesis will be scheduled at the end of the second semester. If the defense is not completed and passed at that time, the student should meet with the Graduate Coordinator and Thesis Committee Chair, review all of the requirements necessary to complete the thesis work, and develop a plan.

Candidates will submit the thesis according to College of Graduate Studies procedures and submit an approved bound copy of the completed thesis to the English Graduate Coordinator. Prior to that submission, students will work with the School of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Advisor to ensure that their thesis meets the publishing requirements set forth by the university. Pay close attention to the information posted by the College of Graduate Studies related to [Master's Students](#). On this page you will find the guidelines, forms and deadlines related to completing a thesis project.

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## Proposal for Thesis

Once students have received confirmation about pursuing the thesis option, they need to prepare a thesis proposal in consultation with the English Graduate Coordinator and the faculty member who has agreed to chair the thesis committee. Students should begin to prepare at least one full semester prior to the semester that the proposal will be submitted for approval.

Thesis proposals should be submitted through the Graduate Coordinator to the MA Graduate Committee **at least one month before the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to begin the thesis course sequence** (6 hours/ENGL 5395 repeated twice) over the course of two semesters). Very often the proposal is negotiated; the Committee may ask for clarification or expansion of specific sections. Students must have received written approval of their proposal before the Academic Advisor can establish a section in which the student may register for thesis hours. If all revisions are completed in a timely fashion and approved by the committee, the student will be able to register on time, but please keep in mind that this process may cause the student to incur a late registration fee. If a revised thesis proposal is not approved by the Graduate Committee, the student will complete coursework to finish the degree.

## Forms Required by the College of Graduate Studies

All thesis students must complete the required thesis forms with signatures required by the College of Graduate Studies found on the [Master's Students](#) webpage:

Form A: [Thesis Advisor Committee Appointment Form](#)

Form B: [Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis Defense](#)

Form C: [Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report](#)

These forms must be routed for signatures on the College of Graduate Studies [Master's Forms](#) page. Students only need to fill in the names of those who must sign, and any other pertinent information at the top of the forms. Once uploaded to the [link](#) on the College of Graduate Studies site, the forms will be routed through e-sign for all signatures.

Students should pay close attention to the deadlines for each form as posted on the College of Graduate Studies [Master's Students](#) webpage.

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## **Required Thesis Courses**

When students are prepared to begin taking the required thesis courses, based on the approval of the thesis committee, students and thesis chairs must follow the procedures for setting up a thesis course.

## **Form Required by the College of Liberal Arts**

All thesis students must also complete the required thesis form with signatures required by the College of Liberal Arts:

<https://www.tamucc.edu/liberal-arts/departments/english/assets/documents/graduate-thesis-request-2021.pdf>

Once the graduate coordinator and department chair sign the request form, please forward the form and approved thesis proposal to the associate dean's administrative associate, who will obtain the associate dean's signature and then send it back to the department administrative associate, who will create the course. The graduate advisor housed in the College of Graduate Studies, will be copied on the email to the department in order to collect the forms and keep them with the students' records. No courses can be created until the department administrative associate receives the fully signed form back from the Associate Dean. The graduate coordinator will retain copies of this paperwork, since the records in the advisor's office will be spread among the students, as opposed to being kept together by program.

## **Institutional Review Board**

Research that involves working with human subjects (e.g., student writing) must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students should work closely with their thesis committee chair to determine if this approval will be necessary, and the steps involved in obtaining it. Human subjects research ethics training (offered by CITI through the university) is required. The IRB approval process can be lengthy and time-consuming with the potential for multiple revisions.

More information about this process is available on the [College of Graduate Studies website](#).

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### **Formatting Guidelines for Thesis**

Formatting requirements are available from the College of Graduate Study. It is the student's responsibility to get a copy of these guidelines and to adhere to them in preparing and submitting the thesis. Students must submit the final thesis in the correct form into the online system by the deadline set by the graduate college. Make sure to schedule several days to complete this final step so there will be time to handle any unforeseen computer issues.



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## **Ethical Standards**

### **Graduate Studies Standards**

Faculty in the English MA Program assume that seminar members are good-faith graduate students. Bona fide graduate-school behavior is distinguished in at least four ways:

- Students read weekly assignments on time, completely, to the last page, and they come to the seminar with serious responses and a willingness to discuss.
- Students do not assume that an assignment is legitimate only if it will be “tested.” The work is done for its own sake.
- Students expect that they will attend 100% of the time, and make home arrangements so that this will happen. They don’t assume that there are a certain number of allowable “skips.”
- Students assume that open and equitable discussion and critique is the soul of a graduate seminar. Everybody participates. Students don’t put the burden on the teacher or on other students to originate or maintain discussion. They themselves take on the responsibility to keep some seminar members from dominating others, and they do it by offering their share of talk.

### **Academic Integrity**

The English graduate program adheres to the Student Code of Conduct policy detailed in the Academic Integrity section of the catalog. Students can also access University Rules and Procedures 13.02.99.C0.04: Student Academic Misconduct Cases.

English graduate students are expected to “conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty.” Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation, in addition to “any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.” Plagiarism occurs when a student “intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly present[s] the work of another as one’s own

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without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge.” If you are in doubt about what you're doing, it is your responsibility to speak to your instructor before submitting the assignment. Violation of academic honesty may result in an automatic F for the course and dismissal from the program.

(Refer to [Academic Integrity](#) in the General Information Section.)

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## **Student Development**

### **Professional Organizations**

An important aspect of a graduate and professional experience is collegiality, or working with peers. The following organizations provide opportunities for such experiences:

#### **Sigma Tau Delta: English Honors Society**

Sigma Tau Delta is an international English honor society to confer distinction for high achievement in undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies.

Advisor: Dr. Eric Luttrell

[eric.luttrell@tamucc.edu](mailto:eric.luttrell@tamucc.edu)

#### **Islander Creative Writers**

Advisor: Dr. Robin Carstensen, 361-825-3627

[robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu](mailto:robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu)

### **Conference Presentations**

Graduate faculty mentor students to further develop student work begun as a class project, often working with students to prepare their work for conference presentations. Graduate students with creative writing publications also regularly present at conferences organized by creative writing faculty that draw major authors. Faculty mentor students and help them prepare to submit a proposal to the conference, and then present upon acceptance. Faculty notify students of other conference opportunities, and students can apply for travel funding from the College of Liberal Arts

### **Opportunities for Publication**

#### ***Switchgrass Review and Windward Review***

Publication highlighting Art and Literature from the University and Civic Communities.

Editor: Dr. Robin Carstensen, 361-825-3627

[robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu](mailto:robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu)

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**Island Waves:** University student newspaper

<http://islandwaves.tamucc.edu/> 361-825-5862

[editor-in-chief.islandwaves@tamucc.edu](mailto:editor-in-chief.islandwaves@tamucc.edu)

Faculty mentor students in finding other sources for possible publication of outstanding work students have developed in their courses.

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## **Campus Resources**

TAMU-CC provides many resources to students, both for their academic success and wellness. Please consult the following links for information about the Writing Center, student health services, counseling services, and disability services:

[Writing Center](#)

[University Health Center](#)

[University Counseling Center](#)

[Disability Services](#)

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## Other Important Policies/Procedures

### **Incompletes**

Under special circumstances, students may apply for an incomplete at the end of a semester. The student must initiate this procedure, not the professor. An incomplete notation may be given to a student who is passing but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student's control other than lack of time. The missing materials must be turned in by the end of the next long semester; however, we strongly urge that students complete the work over the semester break. Trying to finish an incomplete while simultaneously fulfilling the requirements of 2-3 new courses can be an onerous burden. If the student fails to complete the assignment(s) or forgets about the deadline altogether, the grade is automatically changed from an "I" to the letter grade previously determined by the professor.

### **Credit/No Credit**

Students may apply a total of 6 semester hours of credit/no credit to their degree plan. Only a few graduate courses are graded this way: ENGL 5396 (DIS) and your thesis work (ENGL 5395).

### **Graduation**

Please be sure to apply for graduation online through your S.A.I.L account. Information regarding the graduation application deadlines and fees can be found online at [http://registrar.tamucc.edu/Degrees\\_and\\_graduation/Apply\\_for\\_grad.html](http://registrar.tamucc.edu/Degrees_and_graduation/Apply_for_grad.html).

### **Student Travel**

The English Department encourages graduate students to present at professional disciplinary conferences; however, funding is very limited. Students whose work has been accepted for presentation are eligible to request travel funding. Those students must work with a supervising faculty member to both arrange travel funding and draft and practice their presentation. **Check with the English Department Administrative Assistant before**

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**starting any travel procedures, as some of the information listed here may have changed!**

### **Get Approval from English Chair**

As soon as they hear of their acceptance to present at a conference, students should, in consultation with the faculty sponsor (the instructor who supervised the writing of the work to be presented), prepare an email to the English Chair outlining their travel budget.

The memo must include:

- Title of the student's presentation
- Title of the conference, scope of the conference (national, international, regional, etc.)
- Travel dates and city
- Estimates for airline tickets/rental car, food, registration, and hotel

The acceptance letter/notice from must be attached to the email.

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### **Get Faculty Support**

The faculty sponsor should then write a short memo endorsing the student's application, including information about the student's status (graduate) and course for which the work was created. These two memos should go to the English Department Chair, who will determine if funds are available to support the trip. If funds are available, the English Department will support student travel for the academic year for those who are presenting.

### **Work with an Administrative Assistant**

Once funding is secured, the chair will email students, faculty mentors, and the appropriate administrative assistant who will manage the travel process. Students are responsible for working with an administrative assistant to get all travel documents arranged *before* they incur any expenses, or they may not receive reimbursement.

Students who are employees of the university must request a CONCUR account (at "Single Sign On" at <http://hr.tamucc.edu/>) and must designate the English Department's administrative assistant as their delegate. Once the travel is prepared,

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students must approve the authorization request to get it through the approval process before travel begins. Students who are not employees will be given further instruction by the chair.

### **Credit Card Warning**

Students should be aware that most hotel chains and car rental agencies require a credit card to check in or get a car. If this is a debit card, a large charge may be placed on the card. If you do not have a credit card or sufficient funds, please talk to the administrative assistant with whom you are working or your faculty mentor for options.

### **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Students must follow all state/university travel policies and must turn in all travel receipts no later than two days after their return to the administrative assistant with whom they worked. It may take a week or several weeks to get the reimbursement processed. No expenses will be reimbursed until travel is completed and all documents submitted.



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## **If Conflicts Arise . . .**

While our classes should be sites of learning, collegiality, and trust, there are occasions when this atmosphere may break down. Students might find themselves in such a situation, either as a student in a graduate course, as a grader for a core literature course, or as a teacher in a composition course. Remember, a third party should not *interfere* in a student-teacher relationship, but there are ways that problems can be *mediated*. Here are guidelines for faculty and students to follow:

**For a course-related situation between a graduate student and a faculty member** If a student and his/her teacher cannot resolve a problem, the issue should be taken to the Department Chair.

**For a course-related situation between students in a First-Year Writing Course** Conflicts between students should be resolved by the Teaching Assistant. If that fails, the conflict should be mediated by the Coordinator of the First Year Writing Program. Do not ask other students or other teachers to become involved.

**For a course-related situation between Teaching Assistant and his/her student(s)** These conflicts should be mediated by the Coordinator of the First-Year Writing Program. If a Teaching Assistant is approached by a student who is having problems with another teacher, advise the students to try to resolve it with their own teacher and, if that fails, to go to the Coordinator of the First- Year Writing Program. Under no circumstances should one professor try to mediate the student/teacher conflict of another teacher. This is true whether the teachers involved are teaching assistants, adjuncts, or tenure-line faculty.

### **For a conflict between graduate student and supervisor**

Conflicts between a TA and the Coordinator of the First-Year Writing Program or between a grader and the sophomore literature instructor should be resolved by the Department Chair.

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**In other work-related capacities**

If you are serving in a capacity with some other on-campus office such as the Writing Center, Intercollegiate Athletics, or Information Services, you should follow the conflict resolution procedures governing that office.

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## **Sources of Financial Support**

### **Graduate Assistantships**

The English Department will accept applications for graduate assistantships (GAs) typically during the spring semester for the upcoming academic year. The Graduate Coordinator will put out a call for applications. Assistantships may support projects in the graduate program, faculty research, or teaching appointments in the First Year Writing Program.

An assistantship may require enrollment in either 6 or 9 credit hours per semester. Typically, these positions are 20 hours per week, receive a monthly stipend of approximately \$1200, and may be benefits eligible. Teaching assistantships require you to teach 2 sections of 1301 or 1302 per long semester.

Compensation, benefits, and enrollment requirements may vary depending on funding source for the position and/or the type of position. Teaching assistants will be provided mentorship and training from qualified faculty in the department.

### **Minimum qualifications**

- 1) Bachelor's Degree or equivalent
- 2) Admitted to a degree seeking program
- 3) 3.0 GPA
- 4) 18 credit hours completed (teaching assistantship only)

### **Preferred qualifications (teaching assistantship only)**

- 1) Completed ENGL 5301, ENGL 5303, and one seminar in the ENGL 5360-69 sequence or, if approved by the graduate coordinator, another ENGL graduate course in Linguistics or Professional

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## Writing

- 2) Completed ENGL 5392: Practicum for Composition Instructors or another pedagogy course
- 3) 3.5 GPA

## Other Employment

Part-time graders for core literature sections may be needed. Arrangements are made through individual faculty members teaching those survey courses. The Core Literature Coordinator, and the Graduate Program Coordinator will help liaison between you and faculty members. Very often, graders are hired at the last minute, since sections must reach an enrollment of 50 to receive a grader.

When funding is available, the Writing Center in the Center for Academic Student Achievement (Located in the Glasscock Student Success Center) employs graduate students as English tutors in the Writing Center. For more information contact the Writing Center.

Other sources of support include Intercollegiate Athletics, the library and individual faculty members who have received grants to hire student assistants. Make sure to let the Graduate Coordinator know that you are seeking a position as we often get information from other offices and programs about open positions.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How many students are accepted each year?**

Since its inception in 1993, between 10 and 20 students have been accepted into the program each year.

### **What is the normal course load?**

While the University defines full-time as 9 credit hours, or 3 courses, per long semester, most of our students also work, so we encourage them to take a maximum of 6 credit hours during a long semester. Taking more than 6 hours during a summer session requires advisor or program coordinator approval.

### **How long will it take me to complete my degree?**

Usually it takes two school years, with one summer (for full-time progress) or two summers (taking 6 hours per long semester).

### **How large are the seminars?**

Courses usually have 7-15 students. Elective courses may be smaller.

### **What is the atmosphere of the department?**

Here is how some current students and alumni describe it:

- “Everybody in the English program has been very supportive.”
- “The English faculty are an exception to the long tradition of departments that espouse an attitude toward students of ‘us versus them.’”
- “The English faculty rarely treated me as only a student; they reinforced the idea that I and others in the program were to be future colleagues and we were treated as such.”
- “I have enjoyed my classes and am very impressed by the openness and approachable nature of our faculty.”

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### **What are the program's strengths?**

Ask our alumni!

- I graduated from the English MA program in 2019. The classes I took helped me develop a skill set that I use every day in my career. These skills include grant writing, analytical skills, proposal writing, research, and improved writing/communication skills. In addition to developing practical skills, the program helped me cultivate a broader worldview with critical thinking practice based in a variety of schools of thought. Many of the faculty take an interdisciplinary approach to achieving the learning outcomes outlined in the program and individual courses, which leads to a more holistic, overall liberal arts education. The ability to approach problems from multiple angles is critical for liberal arts majors entering various roles in the world. The program is also fun and interesting, with many opportunities to be involved on campus in organizations and activities that enrich the overall experience.
- The English Master's program provided hands-on experience in how writing is a flexible communication tool through variable coursework in writing, literary, and linguistic studies. My writing studies classes promoted my understanding of how writing is processed and interpreted by the intended and unintended audience. I now have a firmer grasp on how language is conveyed and can likewise more efficiently and effectively tailor my texts. My literary coursework sharpened my awareness of information-bias and evidence-finding when conducting textual research. I utilized these skills throughout my thesis work as I explored historical, fiction, and non-fiction scholarship both nationally and internationally. Finally, my linguistic coursework introduced me to how the nuances of the written language impacts the distribution of information. Regardless of my career, I need to be aware of how semantic and pragmatic cues assist with communicating to both English speaking natives and English Language Learners. All these experiences have opened different career opportunities beyond academia for me. The completion of my Masters of English degree, with a writing track emphasis, has brought me closer to a career in either healthcare administration or the federal government.
- Writing does not exist in a vacuum. The English Master's program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi broadened my skills to how versatile writing is, alongside my literary

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and linguistic analysis coursework. I entered the program, initially, to hone my creative and technical writing abilities for future employment in healthcare administration. Previously, I found that my scientific programs focused heavily on scientific techniques, and less on manuscript preparation, audience limitations, and general writing how-to (think publish or perish). The completion of my English Master's degree, along with my supplemental graduate healthcare administration coursework, will assist me in bridging the informational gap between clinicians and patients when it comes to health literacy. Additionally, the program's faculty encouraged me to consider career avenues beyond academia and the public sector. My English Master's has prepared me to organize, synthesize, and prepare complex written documents under tight and competing deadlines, which has made me a strong candidate for federal employment. I am currently waiting to hear the final selection process with several agencies as an analyst or information specialist. While my educational trajectory has been varied, the English Master's program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has been the best decision I made for myself in trailblazing a new path towards a scientific-writing-public service career.