

ENGLISH M.A. GRADUATE PROGRAM PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

OUR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- A choice of three concentrations: literature, composition, or creative writing
- Small “graduate-student-only” seminars that focus on intensive discussion
- Numerous exciting seminars (32+ a year) on wide-ranging topics and research clusters
- Final projects that feature one-on-one writing and research with a faculty advisor
- Teaching assistantships and research assistantships for qualified students
- Inventive programs, such as our rare books courses at the Boston Public Library
- Cross-listed programs and activities in partnership with our M.F.A. program
- Teaching licensure options in partnership with the College of Education
- Mini-courses, volunteering, and internships that explore career directions
- Extracurricular groups, “First Thursday” socials, and an annual student conference

OUR PROGRAM GOALS AND FEATURES:

Our graduate program in English encompasses traditional approaches to English studies and encourages reexaminations of those approaches. We offer a **flexible program of study with three areas of concentration: literature, composition, and creative writing**. Students often create an integrated “intra-disciplinary” program of study that includes courses from two or three areas. All of our students engage with the imaginative worlds that texts create—worlds created and shared by literary authors, analytical writers, responsive readers, and reflective thinkers.

Our M.A. program attracts a **dynamic mix of students** who bring a diversity of opinions and ideas to our lively classrooms. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds; while some apply directly from undergraduate or foreign colleges, others have been out of school for a number of years. Our students pursue a broad range of goals, including preparing for Ph.D. study, preparing for English-related careers, developing talents as creative writers, honing professional writing skills, or seeking personal enrichment. Many are teachers or are planning to teach at the secondary school or community college level.

One of the M.A. program’s central goals is to create a **community of critical and creative readers and writers**. Our courses are taught as small seminars with approximately 15 participants, offering students the opportunity for ongoing interaction with each other and with faculty in a challenging yet friendly academic environment.

We offer a large number of small “**graduate student only**” seminar courses designed specifically for our M.A. program (M.A. students are not simply added into B.A. courses, which occurs in many programs). The courses we offer feature:

- a focus on the close reading of texts, whether the texts have been produced by those traditionally defined as the major writers in the British and American traditions or by writers whose work was overlooked or excluded from that tradition;

- an interest in reexamining, both theoretically and practically, traditional boundaries among different types of literature, languages, and writing, such as between canonical and non-canonical literature, between traditional and experimental writing, and among genres;
- significant attention to the reading and writing, both critical and creative, produced by graduate students, with a genuine interest in students' development as readers and writers at an advanced graduate level.

Coursework prepares students to complete an **original, self-defined, faculty-advised final project or thesis**. Students develop their intellectual interests while taking our seminars, and ultimately create a final project that captures those interests. As they approach their final projects, students select their own project advisors.

Our M.A. students are encouraged to create self-defined programs of study in one of our concentrations or by combining concentrations. “**Research clusters**,” or connected sequences of M.A. courses, are advertised each semester; it is recommended that students use research clusters to add depth and organization to their program of study. Research clusters can help direct students towards their final project topic.

We offer several **special program opportunities**. For example, through a partnership between the English Department and the Boston Public Library, we offer seminars in the Boston Public Library’s Rare Books Room focusing on archival research using rare books. As another example, our partnership with UMass Boston’s College of Education allows English M.A. students to earn preliminary licensure in middle and secondary school teaching.

Our M.A. students often work as **teaching assistants**, being prepared to teach through a competitive program that features carefully-sequenced teaching experiences. This training includes pedagogy coursework, tutoring work, and an apprenticeship; successful teaching assistants can move onto teaching their own self-designed literature or composition course. M.A. students also work as **research assistants**, with a focus on rare books and manuscripts research; this research is performed at area libraries with unique collections of primary source materials such as the Boston Public Library and the Massachusetts State Archives.

Students seeking guidance in shaping their **future English career trajectories** can take a special “English Studies” workshop course. This course helps students define and plan for internships and careers in areas such as teaching, publishing, and non-profit administration. This course also helps interested students prepare applications for Ph.D. programs.

Our **faculty** members are dedicated to advising and mentoring our M.A. students. Our faculty bring many areas of expertise to the M.A. program, exploring both the longstanding concerns and the latest trends that define the study of literature, composition, creative writing, and pedagogy. All of our M.A. faculty have significant records of publication.

PLEASE CONTACT US! information • materials • meet the director

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<http://www.umb.edu/academics/cla/dept/english/gradprograms.htm>