

# ENGLISH GRADUATE HANDBOOK

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## ***Welcome!***

This Handbook is a guide and resource for graduate students admitted to KU's Department of English graduate programs. Students should consult the Handbook for information about the programs' policies, procedures, and resources. They are also encouraged to consult at any time with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or the Graduate Program Coordinator.

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## **General Department Information**

The Department of English offers the M.A., M.F.A., and Ph.D. degrees. M.A. students choose one of three concentrations, while students admitted to the Ph.D. program may tailor their programs to their research and teaching interests within the two concentrations. A student may expect to finish the M.A. in approximately two to three years, the M.F.A. in three years, and the Ph.D. in five to seven years beyond the M.A.

The Graduate Program is administered by the faculty of the Department of English. The Voting Department—a body comprised of all full-time, tenure-track faculty, plus representatives of the lecturers and SAGE (Student Association of Graduates in English)—approves requirements for the M.A., M.F.A., and Ph.D. in English. The College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) oversees the student's completion of all requirements.

In the Department of English, the Graduate Committee, working with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), reviews departmental requirements, proposes new policies, and acts on student petitions. The Graduate Admissions Committee is responsible for reviewing applications for admission and recommending students for available fellowships and graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs). Graduating students seeking employment may consult, in addition to other faculty, with the Job Placement and Professionalization Officer.

## **Admission**

Required application materials for degree-seeking students:

1. Completion of the online application
2. A resumé or curriculum vitae.
3. A statement of approximately 500 words describing your interests, training, experience (including teaching experience), academic ability, and goals.

4. Three letters of recommendation.
  - a. Recommenders are required to submit their letters electronically.
  - b. Letters should, if possible, speak to potential as a teacher, although they should primarily be focused on academic and scholarly ability.
5. One official transcript or copy of an official transcript from each university previously attended. Scanned or electronic copies are acceptable for the application. If you are uncertain what constitutes an appropriate transcript or grade report, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.
6. M.A. and Ph.D. applicants in tracks other than creative writing must submit two examples of academic writing. Academic sample length can vary--between 8 and 20 pages is generally recommended.
  - a. M.F.A. candidates must submit approximately thirty total pages of prose (fiction or nonfiction)--multiple stories or a longer piece are acceptable. Screen or Playwriting candidates should submit at least one one-act play.
  - b. Ph.D. applicants primarily interested in Creative Writing must submit one example of creative writing (prose, poetry, or a one-act play), and one example of academic writing.
7. Applicants who are non-native speakers of English are required to meet the University's English Proficiency Requirements. An interview is also required for non-native speakers before they can hold a GTA position.

Students who are interested in applying for non-degree-seeking status should first make an appointment to speak to the Director of Graduate Studies as well as the specific instructor(s) of the class(es) they wish to take before applying.

PhD applicants are required to have OR to be completing an MA or MFA degree.

The deadline for all applications and supplemental materials is in early January. The English department only admits new incoming students for fall semester. Applications that are incomplete or missing materials after the deadline will not be considered for admission for the following fall semester.

There is not a separate application to be considered for funding. Funding considerations are made alongside admissions decisions.

Non-native speakers of English must also demonstrate English proficiency by submitting scores on either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the Academic Format of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The university has additional score requirements for employment as a graduate teaching or research assistant (GTA or GRA). Please see the University Policies and Degree Requirements section for university level English proficiency requirements.

Master's graduates of the KU English program who wish to apply to the KU English Ph.D. program must submit the materials required of any new applicant, including a new application form and fee. The student need not resubmit transcripts that were included in the M.A. application.

### **Changing Programs or Tracks Within the Department**

A student wishing to switch between programs within the department must write a short letter of application to the DGS, detailing the reasons for the change. If the change is approved, the letter will be placed in the student's file. The application should also include relevant writing

samples for evaluation by at least three faculty members in the proposed program (Creative Writing; Rhetoric and Composition; Literature/Literary Theory). These faculty members will be selected by the DGS based on field of study and availability. Students will not be able to switch programs until the completion of their first year of coursework. □

## Enrollment

For all students employed as GTAs/GRAs, you are required to enroll in a full-time credit load (6 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters). Students are not required to enroll in the summer term, unless graduating that summer, but there may be financial or other reasons why GTAs/GRAs may prefer to enroll in the summer. Students are encouraged to discuss these requirements with their advisor or the Graduate Program Coordinator. After doctoral students have passed their oral comprehensive exam, at least 1 of the credit hours of enrollment must be in the form of dissertation hours (ENGL 999) every Fall and Spring, with the exception of the semester in which you defend.

After you have (a) completed your required coursework, (b) successfully defended your oral comprehensive exam, and (c) have completed 18 hours of post-comprehensive exam credit, you can enroll in as few as 1 hour per semester of ENGL 999 if your advisor agrees this is reflected in your coursework and workload. You may apply the credit hours of the semester in which you pass your comprehensive exam toward the 18 hours requirement, provided you are enrolled in at least 6 credit hours that semester. If you are employed as a GTA, you may reduce the number of credit hours in which you enroll, provided you have met the minimum 18 hours post-comprehensive exam and have the proper paperwork submitted by your Graduate Program Coordinator—you may then enroll in as little as 1 credit hour and retain both your full-time status and GTA/GRA appointment.

### Transfer Credit

Students planning to transfer graduate credit from other institutions are urged to secure advance approval from the DGS; to have the DGS consider counting this credit, they must submit, to the Department, an official transcript showing the work done elsewhere and graded A or B, and indicating clearly that it was taken for graduate credit while enrolled in a graduate program but was not counted toward a degree. Students may request up to nine hours of transfer credit. Please see the “University Policies and Degree Requirements” section at the end of the handbook for the University requirements for transfer credit.

### Academic Integrity, Good Standing, and Academic Misconduct

The Department of English expects students to demonstrate academic integrity in conducting their coursework and research. Academic integrity rests on two principles: first, that academic work is represented truthfully as to its source and its accuracy, and second, that academic results are obtained by fair and authorized means. Academic integrity requires honest performance of academic responsibilities by students. Academic misconduct by a student can include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; and plagiarizing of another's work. Students are subject to sanctions by the University for Academic Misconduct if they violate these principles. The [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USSR\) governance policy](#) contains further discussion of university procedures and penalties regarding academic misconduct.

Written work done for one class will not be accepted in another class. Questions of interpretation of this rule must be cleared with the instructor in advance. Work submitted for any course is expected to be substantially original (i.e., original with the student) and designed to meet the requirements of the course.

The accumulation of three Incompletes, or the failure to have any Incomplete removed within one year, will result in a graduate student falling out of good academic standing and in non-reappointment to a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA-ship) for at least one semester until the student returns to Good Standing. The student will not receive reappointment to a GTAship until they return to Good Standing.

Students who receive one LP/NP (Limited/No Progress) grade for ENGL 897, 899, 997, or 999 will receive written notice of the potential of falling out of good standing from the DGS. Any combination of two LP/NP grades will result in a student falling out of good standing. If these two LP/NP grades occur in *non-consecutive* semesters, the graduate will fall out of good academic standing and in non-reappointment to a graduate teaching assistantship for at least one semester until the student returns to good standing by receiving an SP the next semester. If these two LP/NP grades occur in *consecutive* semesters, the graduate will fall out of good academic standing and in non-reappointment to a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA-ship) for at least two semesters, until the student returns to good standing by receiving an SP in the two subsequent semesters.

If a student falls out of good standing and has not returned to good standing after one semester, their name will be forwarded to the College and the student will be put on academic probation for one additional semester. Following the probationary period, the DGS and Graduate Committee senior staff will review the student's progress. If satisfactory progress has not been made, the student may be dismissed from the program. They can also withdraw voluntarily. If dismissed, the student cannot re-enroll at the university at any point in the future. Voluntary withdrawal maintains a student's eligibility to re-enroll at a future time. To re-enroll after voluntarily withdrawing, a student must first re-apply to the program and be admitted by the Admissions Committee.

Please see the "Probation and Dismissal" section at the end of the handbook for more information on University policy and procedures.

#### Sample probation timeline:

##### Sample probation timeline

	Event	Outcome
Spring 2021	Due to poor performance in the Spring 2021 semester, Student B drops out of good standing	Student B is placed on academic probation by college, and GTAship is suspended in Fall 2021 semester.

	Student B returns to good standing at the end of the Fall 2021 semester	Student B is removed from academic probation and their GTAship resumes in Spring 2022 semester.
Fall 2021	Student B fails to return to good standing at the end of the Fall 2021 semester	Student B remains on academic probation and GTAship is suspended in Spring 2022 semester. DGS and Graduate Committee senior staff will review Student B's progress.

### Grading

Only grades of A–B are normally taken as indications that a graduate student has done satisfactory work in the course. Instructors may assign + and - grades, as well as full letter grades. At least a 3.0 average in graduate work is required for the M.A.; a 3.5 average or higher is expected of Ph.D. aspirants.

The grade “I” (Incomplete) is used to indicate work of passing quality in a course, some part of which is, for good reason, unfinished. Since an Incomplete can hinder a student’s ability to focus on work in the next term, and since there is a strong correlation between Incomplete grades and poor outcomes for graduate students, I’s should be regarded as exceptional and to be requested only in the event of medical emergencies or other urgent situations.

Except in truly unusual circumstances, instructors will require Incomplete work to be handed in within one month of the end of the semester. Incompletes of longer duration require a statement from the student concerning their timetable for finishing incomplete work. Additional time may be granted, but only with the consultation of student, instructor, and DGS. Incompletes are given only with advance arrangement between instructor and student. Some instructors may reserve the right not to give I’s. Students are advised to make the removal of any I’s on their record a matter of first priority.

The letters SP/LP/NP (Satisfactory Progress/Limited Progress/No Progress) are used to indicate participation in M.A. exam, M.A. or M.F.A. thesis defense, doctoral exam, and doctoral dissertation defense credit hours. Please see the Academic Integrity, Good Standing, and Academic Misconduct Section (above) for the consequences of a student receiving LP or NP for one or more semesters.

See Grading in the University Policies & Degree Requirements section for further information regarding University minimum grading requirements.

### Advising and Mentoring

Mentoring is an extended and ongoing conversation between the student and the graduate

advisor—whether about classes, the thesis or dissertation process, professional expectations, or post-graduation plans.

All students during their first year at KU are advised by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Incoming students will also be assigned a faculty advisor by the DGS, who will take into account each student's preferences as to advisor. At the minimum, the advisor will confer with the new student about course selection; will assist the student in developing (or articulating) a specialty; and will suggest avenues for pursuing the student's professional goals. Assignments of doctoral advisors must be evenly distributed among tenured faculty members; junior faculty are permitted, at their choosing, to opt out of advising incoming doctoral students until they are tenured, and should not be asked to advise more than one new doctoral student at a time.

Doctoral students will be assigned advisors during their first two years of study or until they designate a chair for the doctoral exam committee, whichever comes first. M.A. students are required to find advisors no later than the end of their third semester. MFA students are required to find advisors no later than the end of their second year/4th semester. Advisees are encouraged to meet with their advisors regularly to discuss progress and plans. Each Ph.D. student should confer regularly with the DGS regarding their progress toward the doctoral exam and the dissertation defense.

The student and the advisor should clearly outline the expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship. Here are some questions you might consider:

1. What is considered good academic progress when preparing for oral exams? What are the key milestones and timelines for completion?
2. What is considered good academic progress toward the thesis or dissertation? What are the key milestones and timelines for completion?
3. What is expected of students to prepare for meetings with the advisor/committee members? What is the appropriate way to submit draft materials? Should something written be prepared?
4. What happens if the student doesn't meet these expectations as discussed and agreed upon with the advisor? (i.e. What might be the short- or long-term consequences?)
5. The student and the advisor should clearly outline the expectations for the advisor.
6. What is the turnaround time on feedback from the advisor? How frequently should meetings occur? What is the extent of written comments/suggestions for revision? etc.
7. The student and the advisor should establish a realistic timeline for completion of the independent study paper / thesis / dissertation / degree that takes into account past performance, the work that remains, amount of time the student can reasonably dedicate to the work, and any extenuating circumstances or challenges that might affect progress.
8. The timeline and expectations should be revisited regularly (each semester or annually) and adjusted as needed.

Students and advisors are encouraged to fill out the Graduate Mentor Agreement after this initial conversation, which is located in the Appendix.

Students need have no doubt as to their academic standing and should not hesitate to approach the DGS and appropriate graduate faculty members for counsel about scholarly, academic, or professional matters. In each course, the instructor will be glad to discuss the student's work with him or her. The same is true of faculty advisors throughout the exam, thesis, and/or dissertation process. Regarding more general questions, the DGS is available for consultation during scheduled office hours and by appointment.

### **Switching Advisors**

Shifts in intellectual interests or interpersonal challenges with an advisor may necessitate changes to a graduate student's dissertation or thesis committee. This decision should not be made frivolously, however. While academic compatibility is of great importance, not agreeing with an advisor's feedback would **not** be considered an acceptable reason for making a switch.

The student's preferences as to the membership of the dissertation committee will be carefully considered; the final decision, however, rests with the Department. Please feel free to discuss your decision to change advisors before finalizing it with the DGS. If you feel that you need support from outside of the English Department, consider consulting with the [University Ombuds](#).

To formally change advisors, both the former and new advisors must be sent written notice of the change and confirm receipt of this notice with the DGS. If a student determines that a change in advisor is necessary, they have **eight weeks** from the time they inform the DGS in which to designate a new advisor. If the student has not secured an advisor within the 8 weeks, they will be assigned an advisor by the DGS.

### **Annual Student Progress Review**

The department reviews each student's progress in the program every year with a questionnaire distributed at the end of the academic year. All graduate students are expected to fill out these forms with as much detail and specificity as possible.

### **Department Loan Fund / Emergency Fund**

**Loan Fund:** Graduate students in English, as well as undergraduate English majors, may borrow up to \$500 from the Kansas University Endowment Association, interest free, for periods of up to a year, as long as the money lasts. Potential borrowers should speak to the Chair of the Department about their needs; they will ascertain if these can be met from available resources at any given time and will initiate the necessary communication with KUEA.

**Technology Award:** Graduate students can apply for a technology award of up to \$500. This is meant to help offset the cost of a computer or other necessary technology-related expenses. Graduate students apply directly to the Chair for these funds.

**The Justin Hampton Memorial, Patricia Clearly Miller, and David Cicotello Funds:** Students facing challenges with food insecurity, healthcare costs, or other quality of life issues should contact the Chair and provide a request and a receipt or invoice. They are not expected to disclose private information, but some documentation is necessary to ensure appropriate stewardship of donor funds. Individual disbursements from the Hampton Fund are not to exceed \$500 per request, although disbursement is at the discretion of the Chair.

### **Grievance Procedures and Petitions**

Should a grievance arise, the student affected should make the circumstances known to the DGS, either directly or through the SAGE Ombuds. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the departmental level, the next recourse is the University Ombuds. The last resort is the College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA). Here are [instructions and department policy](#) on filing an official grievance. Note: there is a separate grievance procedure for GTAs, which can be found in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#).

If a graduate student has a compelling reason to seek exemption from program requirement or

University policy, they may submit a petition to the graduate committee. Petitioners should write a letter, addressed to the graduate faculty, explaining the reasons why the student is seeking exemption from specific rules, as well as how the educational goals the rules reflect will still be fulfilled. Where applicable, this petition should be accompanied by a letter of support from the student's advisor and/or the appropriate supporting materials. The letter should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who then refers the petition to the graduate committee, which will convene to consider the petition.

In cases where the policy or requirement is a departmental requirement (for example, a course requirement for degree) the graduate faculty will issue a final decision (for example, the student may be exempt from a Ph.D. course requirement based on coursework taken at the M.A. level at a previous institution).

In cases where the policy or requirement being petitioned is a University policy, the graduate committee will decide whether to support the student's petition. If the committee is in support, the department will submit a petition form to the College Office of Graduate Affairs accompanied by supporting materials as required.

These materials must accompany the petition sent to COGA. Additional information regarding the more common University petitions, such as Leave of Absence, Enrollment requirements, and Time Limit Extensions may also be found in the University Policies & Degree requirements section of this document.

In cases where the graduate committee declines to support a University petition, no paperwork may be submitted to COGA. COGA only accepts student petitions in cases where there is documented departmental support and when the petition itself is submitted by a representative of the department. Students should always consult with the DGS prior to submitting a petition to the graduate committee to ensure that a petition is necessary and that all the appropriate supporting documentation is accounted for.

## **GTA Policies and Procedures**

### **Appointment and Reappointment of GTAs**

**Policy:** *Appointment* to a Graduate Teaching Assistantship is based on the candidate's record as a student and potential as a teacher as suggested by personal qualifications, and, where applicable, successful teaching experience. **GTAs may not be appointed in excess of sixteen semesters without extenuating circumstances.** Departments may petition on behalf of a student to extend this limit if there are extenuating circumstances. If the College endorses the petition, the Dean of Graduate Studies will review the request to determine whether such an exception is in the best academic interest of the student. Please note that this policy does not apply to summer session GTA appointments. Semesters in which a student's sole appointment is as a GRA do not count against the GTA-semester limit.

*Reappointment* is based on teaching ability and progress toward an advanced degree. The First Year Writing program, acting in compliance with the policies of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, hires Graduate Teaching Assistants, by the usual procedures, only from those graduate students who are seeking and making normal progress toward degrees in the Department of English, or, rarely, in other departments or programs. Graduate Teaching Assistants who started studies in the English Department and were employed as GTAs but who are now seeking and making normal progress toward degrees in other departments,

programs, or schools, may also be reappointed if they have satisfactory teaching records in the Department of English. (In the event that graduate teaching assistantships must be terminated for reasons of budgetary exigency, a special subcommittee constituted from the Graduate Committee and the FYW Committee will make decisions for individual terminations on the basis of criteria concerning normal progress). Additional information on the appointment and reappointment of Graduate Teaching Assistants is included in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#) between the University of Kansas, Lawrence, the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Public Employees (KAPE).

**Application of Policy:** Graduate Teaching Assistants are usually appointed on an annual basis, and their appointment is based on recommendations to the Directors of First Year Writing and the Department Chairperson by the Graduate Admissions Committee. Reappointments are made by the FYW Directors, usually on an annual basis. In unusual circumstances, the Directors seek the advice of the Department Chair and FYW Committee.

### **Evaluation of GTAs**

The University's [Performance Evaluations for Graduate Teaching Assistants policy](#) requires that the assessment of the performance of GTAs be based on the job duties assigned to the GTA in his or her contract.

GTAs must be evaluated each semester, and a performance evaluation, including classroom observations and a written performance evaluation, must be completed each year. During the first year of a GTA's appointment, a documented classroom observation must be conducted during each semester of the academic year. For continuing GTAs, a documented classroom observation must be conducted at least once during the academic year.

In order to give GTAs an evaluation of their work as teachers in a way both helpful to the teachers and manageable for the Department, the Department has instituted a system of Teaching Advisors to supplement the existing academic advisors.

At the beginning of each year after the GTA's first, the FYW Assistant Director, in consultation with the Chair of the Department, will assign each GTA a Teaching Advisor, a member of the full-time faculty whose task will be to become familiar with the work of the GTA, to advise the GTA about teaching issues, and to give feedback each semester about the quality of teaching.

### **Annual Performance Review System for GTAs**

Each year in late spring, the Director of FYW and Director of Composition evaluate the performance of all GTAs, based on the reviews written by Teaching Advisors or the FYW Teaching Mentor and student evaluations. If a GTA has taught a summer session, that course will be included in the following academic year's review. The Directors will rank the GTA's performance based on the evaluative criteria found on the Graduate Teaching Assistant Annual Review Form.

The annual reviews are due to the Human Resources office in June of each year. GTAs will be sent a copy of the review to sign and return and will receive a finalized, signed copy for their records. If GTAs would like to discuss the annual review, they can make an appointment with the Director of FYW or the Director of Composition, and the review will be finalized after that appointment.

If performance deficiencies exist (i.e., overall rankings of "needs improvement"), the GTA must

meet with the Director of FYW or the Director of Composition to establish specific performance improvement goals and be counseled in how to achieve them.

A GTA can grieve the results of an evaluation if they assert that the evaluation was based on factors other than job performance and adherence to the University and Kansas Board of Regents policies or if they receive an overall evaluation ranking of unsatisfactory. The grievance will be handled in accordance with procedures described in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#) and in consultation with Human Resources.

### Course Assignments

GTAs usually teach English 101 and 102. After their first two years of employment, they may request assignment to a 200-or 300 level as the schedule permits.

#### Assignments of GTAs to teach 200- and 300-level courses

##### 200-level Courses (excluding creative writing courses, see below)

- ENGL 203: Topics in Reading and Writing
- ENGL 262: Professional Communication (online) (Was 203: Professional Communication) ENGL 209: Introduction to Fiction
- ENGL 210: Introduction to Poetry

#### Eligibility and priority:

GTAs and lecturers usually teach English 101 and 102. To be eligible to teach a 200-level course, you must have taught for the department for four semesters, and a course must be available. Sections of 200-level courses will be assigned first to those who have at least two years of experience teaching 101 and 102, who have made adequate academic progress, and who have demonstrated their excellence as teachers (exceptions may be made for those on altered timelines due to fellowships or in rare situations when there are no faculty or more experienced GTAs available). Priority will also be given to PhD, then M.A., then MFA candidates who have not taught a 200-level course before. GTAs can apply and may be selected in multiple years, but which 200-level and above courses the applicants have previously taught, how many times applicants have taught each course, and the last semester each course was taught by the applicant will be taken into account, and teachers who have taught the fewest number of upper-level courses, the fewest number of times, and least recently will be given priority. Lecturers may request assignment to 200-level courses and will be assigned these courses as the schedule and enrollments permit.

#### 203 scheduling:

Please keep in mind that instructors selected to teach a **203** may be assigned a section of **101 or 102**, if it looks like the topic may generate enough enrollment for one section but may not generate enough for two. Please check the blanks on the scheduling form that indicate your willingness to teach two preparations.

#### Applying to teach 200-level courses (the Course Proposal):

Teachers interested in teaching 200-level courses must submit a proposal outlining the topic of the course, the texts the teacher will choose, the approach the teacher will take,

and the purpose, audience, and type of writing for each of the writing assignments. This proposal needs to include the ways that the course will achieve the course goals. The Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Associate Chair will review these proposals. When reviewing proposals, they consider whether the proposed topic overlaps other offerings (to generate a wide range of topics for students to choose from) and whether a teacher has taught the class before (giving preference to new topics and new teachers). **Teachers proposing a course that they taught before will need to resubmit a proposal**, emphasizing the changes they are making in the course. The Undergraduate Director office doesn't keep proposals on file.

### **Process for Assigning 200-level courses:**

The Associate Chair will:

- 1) Determine how many sections of 200-level courses we can offer based on enrollment patterns in the previous year and how many courses are left after faculty scheduling.
- 2) Consult with the Directors of FYW to determine which applicants are eligible to be considered for these positions and how the applicant list should be prioritized, according to the eligibility and priority considerations described above.
- 3) Send the course proposals to the Undergraduate Director and work with the Undergraduate Director to determine which proposals and topics will best serve the needs of undergraduate students.
- 4) Once applicant eligibility and priority (#2) have been matched with curriculum needs (#1 & #3) to determine a short list of potential 200-level courses, consult again with the Directors of FYW to balance staffing needs between FYW and upper-level courses.

### **Creative Writing Course Scheduling**

There are currently six Creative Writing courses open to eligible GTAs:

- **English 220 Introduction to Creating Writing:** In-depth reading and writing in multiple genres (e.g. poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, playwriting). Creative assignments combine with critical analysis to help students identify, analyze, and employ forms and techniques across various genres, audiences, and contexts. Written assignments include creative works in multiple genres and critical responses to reading.
- **English 351 Fiction Writing:** A study of narrative techniques and practice in the writing of fiction.
- **English 352 Poetry Writing:** A study of prosody and practice in the writing of verse.
- **English 353 Screenwriting:** An introduction to the practice of writing and evaluating scripts for film.
- **English 354 Playwriting:** An introduction to the practice of writing and evaluating scripts for stage.
- **English 355 Nonfiction Writing:** An introduction to the literary techniques of nonfiction and practice in the writing of one or more of the genre's subtypes, such as the personal essay, the familiar essay, the lyric essay, the memoir, nature writing, or travel writing.

**Eligibility and priority:**

To be eligible to teach a creative writing course, you must have completed four semesters of teaching in the department and be in the MFA or PhD CW degree programs. These courses are assigned first to those who have at least two years of experience teaching 101 and 102, who have made adequate academic progress, and who have demonstrated their excellence as teachers. In assigning GTAs to 220, priority is given to graduate students enrolled in the PhD CW degree program; in assigning GTAs to 300-level workshops, priority is given to graduate students enrolled in the MFA program.

GTAs can apply and may be selected in multiple years, but which 200-level and 300-level courses the applicants have previously taught, how many times applicants have taught each course, and the last semester each course was taught by the applicant will be taken into account, and teachers who have taught the fewest number of upper-level courses, the fewest number of times, and least recently will be given priority.

**Process for Assigning Creative Writing Courses:**

The Associate Chair will:

- 1) Determine which creative writing classes still need to be covered after scheduling creative writing faculty and multi-term lecturers.
- 2) Consult with the Directors of FYW to determine which applicants are eligible to be considered for these positions and how the applicant list should be prioritized, according to the eligibility and priority considerations described above.
- 3) Consult with the Director of Graduate Creative Writing to match eligible GTAs to needed creative writing courses.
- 4) Once GTA eligibility and priority (#2) has been matched with curriculum needs (#1 & #3) to determine a short list of additional creative writing courses, consult again with the Directors of FYW to balance staffing needs between FYW and upper-level courses.

**300-level Course Scheduling in Literature, Rhetoric, and Upper-level Composition**

There are currently three types of teaching assignments open to GTAs and one type of teaching assignment open to lecturers at the 300-level in literature, rhetoric, and upper-level composition:

- Online teaching of courses designed by faculty. These courses are either 8- or 16-week courses. A faculty member is also listed as an instructor of record and serves as the GTA's teaching advisor. (Open to GTAs.)
- Co-teaching/grading in an in-person course with a faculty member. These courses enroll as a double section with the GTA doing the majority or all of the grading in the course and a limited amount of classroom teaching. The faculty member is the instructor of record and, as such, is responsible for the syllabus, assignment, and Canvas site design, for classroom instruction, for overseeing grading, and for serving as the GTA's teaching advisor. Both the faculty member and the GTA should plan on holding office hours and responding to student correspondence (emails, texts, Canvas maintenance). (Open to GTAs. This is a 20 hour/week

- appointment.)
- In-person sections of courses as the sole instructor of record when faculty staffing cannot meet the requirement needs of the major. (Open to GTAs and lecturers.)

**Eligibility and priority for online and co-teaching/grading**

**appointments:** GTAs usually teach English 101 and 102. To be eligible to teach a 300-level online or co-teaching/grading course, you must have taught for the department for four semesters, and a course must be available. Sections of these 300-level courses will be assigned first to those who have at least two years of experience teaching 101 and 102, who have made adequate academic progress, and who have demonstrated their excellence as teachers. Priority will be given to PhD, then M.A., then MFA candidates who have not yet had the opportunity to hold one of these teaching appointments.

**Eligibility and priority for in-person 300-level courses as the sole**

**instructor of record:** To be eligible to teach a 300-level course, you must have taught for the department for four semesters. GTAs must also have passed their comprehensive exams, and have demonstrated both meritorious teaching and timely progress to degree. Lecturers must have a terminal degree and expertise in the field. The following priorities are used in determining which GTAs and Lecturers are assigned 300-level literature, rhetoric, and upper-level composition courses, both in person and online:

1. Senior Staff
2. Those holding a PhD in English from KU who have completed the doctorate in good time and within the previous year.
3. Other lecturers with a terminal degree and expertise in the field
4. Graduate students who have passed their comprehensive exams and are below the University's semester-limit of eligibility—presuming teaching promise, meritorious performance in the classroom, and timely progress to degree.

**Process for Assigning 300-level courses:**

The Associate Chair will:

- 1) Determine which 300-level courses are needed based on program needs, enrollment patterns, and faculty staffing.
- 2) Consult with the Directors of FYW to determine which GTAs and lecturers who have expressed interest are eligible to be considered for these positions and how the applicant list should be prioritized according to the guidelines above.
- 3) Consult with relevant faculty who will be working closely with GTAs in online and co-teaching appointments to match eligible GTAs with courses.
- 4) Consult again with the Directors of FYW to balance staffing needs between FYW and upper-level courses.

### **Priorities for Appointing GTAs and Lecturers and Assigning Courses**

The following priorities are used to determine which GTAs and Lecturers are appointed, and which are assigned FYW and other relevant courses, presuming competent performance or promise in the classroom. The number of lines in any year that is available for GTAships is determined according to budget, enrollments, capacity to train new teachers, and the need to sustain a competitive graduate program.

1. Senior Staff.
2. Incoming graduate students and continuing graduate students who are below the University's semester-limit of eligibility (including students who have not been but wish to be GTAs), presuming teaching promise, competent performance in the classroom, and timely progress to degree. This priority reflects the Department's commitment to provide multiple years of support to our incoming graduate students.
  - a. Those holding a PhD in English from KU who have completed the doctorate in good time and within the previous year.
  - b. FYW lecturers not covered in the above categories. Sections will be awarded according to merit, as judged by the FYW Committee.

### **Training for New Teachers**

All new GTAs are required to attend a pre-semester orientation and to take English 801: Study and Teaching of Writing during their first year of teaching in the Department (2 hours in fall and 1 hour in spring).

### **Research Assistantships**

Depending on availability and funding, doctoral students at the dissertation stage may be selected as research assistants, in order to facilitate their research and progress toward the degree. Students must be assigned to a faculty mentor, whom they are expected to assist with research. Research not directly related to the student's dissertation may be minimal in many cases and is at the discretion of the faculty mentor and GRA. Students are expected to benefit and learn from assisting with the faculty mentor's research as well as having more time to work on their own research without the pressures of teaching.

Students who are working towards a PhD may also apply to the Graduate Committee for a spring-semester dissertation-stage research assistantship, using a form to be supplied by the DGS in the middle of the Spring semester. Applicants must have completed their doctoral exams and the Review of Dissertation Proposal before the GRAship begins the following Spring. The applications are evaluated by faculty members of the Graduate Committee based on how much progress the student has already made toward the degree and whether the research assistantship is likely to facilitate degree completion. All things being equal, students who have never received the assistantship will be given preference. GTAs and Lecturers who are not granted the assistantship but applied for it receive official notification indicating why they did not receive it so that they can make the changes necessary to be eligible in the future.

### **Mail**

All English GTAs and first-year graduate students have a mailbox. Non-teaching graduate students who wish to keep their mailbox after their first year must request one from the Administrative Associates. These mailboxes should be checked frequently, and they should not normally be used for the transmission of valuables or confidential communications, since they

cannot be locked. Graduate students should keep the departmental office and Registrar informed of any changes in their names, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses.

### **SAGE (Graduate Student Organization)**

In 1967, students in the Department organized the Student Association of Graduates in English (SAGE) for the purpose of stimulating and coordinating student activity in such areas as curriculum, academic standards, ethics, graduate teaching assistantships, and orientation of new graduate students. All graduate students in English become members of SAGE when they begin their graduate studies, and the association encourages active participation. In addition to an annual picnic at the beginning of the school year, SAGE sponsors colloquia and readings.

SAGE is represented by voting members on the following departmental committees: Advisory, Graduate Committee, First and Second Year English, Graduate Assembly, GTA/Lecturers Committee, Lecturers and Readers Committee, Library Committee, and SAGE Events committee. Other SAGE Officers include Secretary, SAGE Advice Editor, and Treasurer.

One to three graduate student members of SAGE sit as voting members of the Graduate Committee during discussions of general policy. Among the important functions of the Graduate Committee is the consideration of student petitions for the waiver or modification of departmental requirements in individual cases.

### **Thesis and Dissertation Defenses**

After a successful defense, [Master's students](#) and [Doctoral students](#) must submit their theses and dissertations in an electronic version to fulfill graduation requirements. Instructions and guidelines for submitting the thesis may be found at the [Graduate Studies ETD](#) (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation) website. Please see [the Embargo policy](#) for information on how to delay digital publication of your thesis or dissertation.

It is the responsibility of the student to bring to their defense a printed copy of the Acceptance Page. This page must be signed by the committee chair and submitted to the College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) by the deadline for graduation. The correct format and layout for these can be found on [KU's Thesis and Dissertation Formatting webpage](#).

Students cannot bring snacks, drinks, treats, or gifts for committee members to an exam or defense. Professors should avoid the appearance of favoritism that may occur if they bring treats to some student exams/defenses but not others.

### **Best Practices for Chairs and Committee Members**

It is important that committee members give students timely and regular feedback on their thesis and dissertation work, as well as exam lists, drafts of Reviews of Literature, dissertation proposals, and grant proposals.

Generally speaking, items should be returned with comments within two to three weeks—this includes items submitted near the end of the spring semester. Students should be able to progress with confidence through the summer. It is also helpful to schedule a meeting with the student to discuss revisions of each chapter. Such a meeting provides more extensive feedback, and also sets a de-facto deadline by which the chapter will have been read.

Committee members should be honest and straightforward with graduate students about the degree of revision required before a chapter would be ready to defend. If students ask for an assessment of whether a chapter (or the dissertation as a whole) has been revised satisfactorily, committee members should be willing to offer a candid assessment of this.

As the final oral defense approaches, dissertation directors need to be offering their advisees feedback not just on necessary (or desirable) revisions but on whether the director feels the dissertation is close to ready to defend. Directors do their students no favors by being reassuring as the defense date approaches at the expense of a clear-sighted assessment of readiness. If a student is producing substantial new writing at the last minute, or is producing revisions which have not had time to be properly vetted by the committee, the defense date should, in all likelihood, be postponed. Also see the Advising and Mentoring section of the handbook.

### **Post-Degree Employment**

During the summer before the academic year in which a graduate student plans to apply for full-time teaching or non-teaching positions, they should make their availability and particular needs known to the Job Placement & Professionalization & Officer (JPPO)—the faculty member in the Department primarily responsible for helping graduate students find employment. The Department is notified of many job openings and will make such notices available to interested and qualified graduate students who are known to be looking for positions; in order to get on the list of job seekers, the candidate should contact the JPPO. They regularly post e-mail notices of job openings to those on the list.

It seems fairly clear that, for the foreseeable future, those who confine themselves exclusively to traditional literary specialties will have a relatively hard time finding teaching positions. Those applying for academic jobs should carefully consider the advantages of doing some work in fields like education, journalism, speech and drama, film, linguistics, rhetoric and composition, English as a second language, or foreign languages, since many positions call for candidates proficient in more than one subject.

Many English graduate students who do not want to pursue an academic career find rewarding positions in business, industry, non-profits, and government, all of which remain extremely interested in job seekers with the skills afforded by an English degree. However, students seeking such employment should be aware of the requirements and expectations of the non-academic world. For information, contact the JPPO and/or consult the [University Career Center](#).

## **Graduate Programs**

### **Master of Arts**

The English department offers two concentrations for M.A. candidates. M.A. students enrolling for the first time must choose one of the concentrations listed below:

- Literature
- Literature and Literary Theory
- Rhetoric and Composition

#### MA Required Coursework

<b>Required Coursework</b>		<b>Hours</b>
ENGL 800	Methods, Theory, and Professionalism	3
ENGL 801	Study and Teaching of Writing	3
12 hours of	1. Literature:	12

coursework in a chosen concentration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At least one course must be pre-1700; at least one must be 1700- 1900; and at least one must be after 1900.</li> <li>2. Literature and Literary Theory: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At least one course must be pre-1800; at least one must be post-1800. At least two courses, besides the course used to fulfill other requirements must focus primarily on Literary Theory.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Rhetoric and Composition: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At least two courses in Rhetoric and Composition courses beyond the courses used to fulfill other requirements.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
6 hours of ENGL Seminars at the 900+ level		6
<b>Final Project</b>		<b>6</b>
ENGL 899- MA/MFA Thesis (6 hours)		
ENGL 898- Portfolio Preparation (6 hours)		
ENGL 897- Exam Preparation (3 hours) + ENGL elective at 700+ (3 hours)		
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>30</b>

Students are not permitted to take courses at the 500 level or below. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. Courses below the 600 level may not count towards degree completion. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. Two courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included with approval of the director of graduate studies.

### Final Project Options

#### Oral Exam

The oral examination is based on the student's reading lists and assesses the student's understanding of the works on it and their ability to make analytical, critical, synthetic, and historical judgments. The candidate should regard the examination as an opportunity to demonstrate their highest scholarly achievement.

If the student elects to take the final oral exam, they will ask a member of the graduate faculty of the Department to be the chairperson of the examining committee. The other two members of the committee will be chosen in consultation with the committee chair. To be eligible for the examination, the candidate must have completed coursework or be scheduled to complete coursework the semester of the exam.

Students preparing to take an MA exam should meet regularly with all of their committee members to discuss progress made on the exam reading list, which must consist of 30 texts. Informal conversations about the selected texts can help committee members assess the candidate's readiness for the exam.

At least three weeks before the examination, the student must submit to each member of the examining committee the list of 30 texts, prepared in consultation with the chair of the examining committee, on which they wish to be examined. **Failure to meet this deadline will necessitate rescheduling the defense.** The exam room is reserved for two hours to allow for committee deliberation. The exam itself is limited to no more than ninety minutes.

The procedure of the exam usually allows for rounds of questions from each committee member. The chair generally divides the ninety-minute period into two sections—of sixty and twenty

minutes—leaving the final ten minutes for committee deliberation. In the first hour, each of the three committee members has twenty minutes to pose questions. The second round provides five to eight minutes for each committee member to pursue follow-up questions or ask about new material. The candidate usually consults with the chair and committee to determine the order of committee members and so forth. Note that this procedure is a matter of tradition and experience, but not a formal requirement. If the candidate and committee agree on an alternate procedure, they may pursue it. For the student's official University record, the examiners will report one of two grades: Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory.

### **Portfolio Exam**

A portfolio defense includes both questions about the topics, arguments, and methodologies of the various pieces of writing, as well as questions that discuss the unifying principles and the significance of the writing within larger contexts in the field(s).

While the thesis consists of a single, scholarly piece of writing, the portfolio includes several shorter pieces, as agreed upon by the committee, plus a cover essay of 3–5 pages, all totaling 40–50 pages of writing (or the digital equivalent). The work should be of publishable or submission quality. Examples of scholarly pieces that might be included are a formal grant proposal; papers from the student's coursework, substantially revised; a review essay; or a digital project. The cover essay explains how those scholarly pieces fit together theoretically or methodologically, and, for revised coursework, what changes were made.

If the student chooses the portfolio option, they will ask a member of the graduate faculty of the Department (preferably their advisor) to be the chairperson of the portfolio committee. The other two members of the committee will be chosen in consultation with the committee chair.

At least three weeks before the examination, the student must submit the final draft of the portfolio to each member of the examining committee and inform the graduate program coordinator. **Failure to meet this deadline will necessitate rescheduling the defense.**

The exam room is reserved for two hours to allow for committee deliberation. The exam itself is limited to no more than ninety minutes.

### **Thesis Exam**

If the student elects to write a thesis, which consists of a single, scholarly piece of writing, they will ask a member of the graduate faculty of the Department (preferably his/her advisor) to direct the thesis and be the chairperson for the thesis defense. Thesis committees consist of three faculty members: a chair and two other committee members, selected in consultation with the committee chair.

The other two members of the committee and the topic for the thesis will be chosen in consultation with the thesis director during the start of the semester prior to that of the student's anticipated graduation. At this time, the roles of the readers should be agreed upon. During this penultimate semester, the student should submit to all members of the thesis committee a short (1-2 page) prospectus and initial bibliography that makes clear the contribution of the thesis to the field. Students preparing their thesis should show writing selections to all of their committee members as they go along, for feedback and revision suggestions. They should also meet periodically with committee members to assess their progress.

The thesis itself requires substantial research and original argument and is written with the aspiration toward eventual publication. Although there is no set page requirement for the thesis,

**the length should be 30-40 pages or the digital equivalent.**

At least three calendar weeks prior to the defense date, the student will submit the final draft of the thesis to all the committee members and inform the graduate program coordinator. **Failure to meet this deadline will necessitate rescheduling the defense.**

A thesis defense includes both questions about the thesis topic, argument, and methodology, as well as questions that discuss the thesis within larger contexts in the field. The exam room is reserved for two hours to allow for committee deliberation. The defense itself is limited to no more than ninety minutes.

NOTE: For either the MA or MFA exams, students with committee members who plan to attend the defense via remote technology must be aware of [college policy on teleconferencing/remote participation of committee members](#).

Also, although compelling arguments have been presented for eradicating the designation of "Honors" altogether, "Honors" on the written thesis is necessary for that work to be nominated for the CLAS annual competition for Outstanding MA Thesis. "Honors" will be given to theses that are rated "Outstanding" in all or most of the categories on the MA or MFA thesis rubric.

## Master of Fine Arts

### Overview

The University of Kansas' MFA is a three-year program. Typically, students in the program take course work for the first two years of the program and then take the third year to write their thesis.

### MFA Required Coursework

Required Coursework		Hours
ENGL 800	Methods, Theory, and Professionalism	3
ENGL 801	Study and Teaching of Writing	3
4 Creative writing workshops (in any combination)		12
2 courses in non-creative writing English electives		6
2 elective courses		6
ENGL 899	M.A./M.F.A. Thesis	15
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>45</b>

Students are not permitted to take courses at the 500 level or below. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level. ENGL 998 does not count as a seminar or 900-level class. Two courses (6 hours) outside the department may be included with approval of the director of graduate studies. Students who complete and are able to defend their thesis before completing the 15 hours of ENGL 899 may petition for a reduced credit degree.

### **Best Practices for the M.F.A. Thesis**

The M.F.A. thesis consists of original writing in fiction, poetry, drama, or prose. After the fall semester of the second year, normally halfway through the program, the student asks a member of the creative writing faculty to serve as the director of the thesis. Students preparing their creative thesis should be showing chapters or writing selections to all of their committee members as they go along for feedback and revision suggestions. They should also meet periodically with committee members to assess their progress.

The thesis in creative writing is the culmination of the student's training and preparation and constitutes the most significant requirement for the student to complete the program and receive the terminal degree. The thesis will consist of a portfolio of the student's best work in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, playwriting, or some combination thereof. In completing the thesis, the student will work under the supervision of the thesis director and two other members of the faculty, at least one of whom must be in creative writing. It is required that the thesis be of publishable quality, in parts or as a whole, and be of substantial length: at least one hundred pages of prose; at least fifty pages of poetry; or at least two one-act plays or one full-length play. More specific requirements will be determined for each thesis by the thesis director and other members of the thesis committee.

Toward the end of the third year, the student will present the thesis in a timely manner to their committee members, and a defense will be scheduled. The student must satisfactorily pass the thesis defense in order to receive the M.F.A. degree.

### **M.F.A Thesis Defense**

To be eligible to defend, the candidate must be on track to complete coursework and finish the thesis. It is the obligation of the candidate to advise the graduate program coordinator that they plan to take the thesis defense and confirm completion of coursework; this must be done at least one month before the date of the defense.

At least three calendar weeks prior to the defense date, the student will submit the final draft of the thesis to all the committee members. Failure to meet this deadline will necessitate rescheduling the defense.

The exam room is reserved for two hours to allow for committee deliberation. The defense itself is limited to no more than ninety minutes.

## **Ph.D. in English**

### **Course Requirements for the Ph.D. in English**

#### **PhD Required Coursework**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Hours</b>
ENGL 800	Methods, Theory, and Professionalism	3
ENGL 801	Study and Teaching of Writing	3
ENGL 997	Preparation for the Doctoral Examination	3
<b>Concentration Coursework</b>		
Students should work with their advisors to choose coursework appropriate to their concentration.		
2 ENGL seminars at the 900+ level*		6
6 credit hours of ENGL electives		6

6 credit hours of electives	6
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>27</b>

\* For students doing the concentration in Rhetoric and Composition, at least one of the 900+ seminars must be in Rhetoric and Composition.

Students are not permitted to take courses at the 500 level or below. No more than 6 hours may be taken at the 600 level.

If the MA or MFA was completed in KU's Department of English, a doctoral student may petition the DGS to have up to 12 hours of the coursework taken in the English Department reduced toward the PhD.

Doctoral students may take additional graduate courses outside the English Department if, in their opinion and that of the Graduate Director, acting on behalf of the Graduate Committee, those courses will be of value to them. Their taking such courses will not, of course, absolve them of the responsibility for meeting all the normal departmental and Graduate School requirements.

### **Responsible Scholarship and Research Skills (RSRS) Requirement**

For Doctoral students, [the university requires completion of a course in responsible scholarship](#). For the English department, this would be ENGL 800, 780, or the equivalent. This course must be completed by the end of the semester that the student takes their doctoral exam.

## **Doctoral Exam**

### **Overview**

Doctoral students must take their doctoral examination within three semesters (excluding summers) of the end of the semester in which they took their final required course. Final exam lists need to be approved and signed by the committee at least 12 weeks prior to the prospective exam date. This includes summers/summer semesters. The lists should then be submitted to the graduate program coordinator. Reviews of Literature need to be approved and signed by the committee at least 3 weeks prior to the exam date. Failure to meet this deadline will result in rescheduling the exam. No further changes to lists or Reviews of Literature will be allowed after official approval. The three-week deadline is the faculty deadline--the last date for them to confirm receipt of the ROLs and confer approval--not necessarily the student deadline for submitting the documents to the faculty. Please keep that timing in mind and allow your committee adequate time to review the materials and provide feedback.

Delays may be granted by petition to the Graduate Committee in highly unusual circumstances. Failure to take the exam within this time limit without an approved delay will result in the student's falling out of good standing. For details on the consequences of falling out of good standing, see "Falling Out of Good Standing," in General Department Policies and Best Practices (above).

The doctoral oral examination has the following purposes:

1. To establish goals, tone, and direction for the pursuit of the Ph.D. in English for the Department and for individual programs of study;
2. To make clear the kinds of knowledge and skills that, in the opinion of the Department, all well-prepared holders of the degree should have attained;

3. To provide a means for the Department to assess each candidate's control of such knowledge and skills in order to certify that the candidate is prepared to write a significant dissertation and enter the profession; and
4. To enable the Department to recommend to the candidate areas of strength or weakness that should be addressed.

### **Doctoral Exam Requirements**

During the two-hour oral examination (plus an additional 15-30 minutes for a break and committee deliberation), a student will be tested on their comprehension of a literary period or movement, including multiple genres and groups of authors within that period or movement. A student may not take their doctoral exam until the university's Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement is fulfilled (ENGL 800 or equivalent). In addition, the student will be tested on two additional areas of study, which are chosen from a list of 6 topics specific to their concentration.

### **Committee**

In consultation with the director of graduate studies, a student will ask a member of the Department's graduate faculty (preferably their advisor) to be the chairperson of the examining committee. The choice of examination committee chair is very important, for that person's role is to assist the candidate in designing the examination structure, preparing the Review of Literature (see below), negotiating reading lists and clarifying their purposes, and generally following procedures here outlined. The other two English Department members of the committee will be chosen in consultation with the committee chair. Any unresolved problems in negotiation between a candidate and their committee should be brought to the attention of the director of graduate studies, who may choose to involve the Graduate Committee. A student may request a substitution in—or a faculty member may ask to be dismissed from—membership of the examining committee. Such requests must be approved, in writing, by the director of graduate studies.

### **Reading Lists**

All students are required to submit to their committee for approval three reading lists, based on the requirements below. Committee members should confirm in writing that the lists are approved. The doctoral exam will be scheduled a minimum of twelve weeks after approval from the whole committee is received.

No title from any field list may appear on either of the two concentration lists.

While many students confer with the DGS as they begin the process of developing their lists, they are also required to submit a copy of their final exam list to the DGS. Most lists will be left intact, but the DGS might request that overly long lists be condensed, or extremely short lists be expanded.

Despite the goal of fairness and equity, some unavoidable unevenness and disparity will appear in the length of these lists. It remains, however, the responsibility of the examining committee, and especially the student's chair, to aim toward consonance with the most rigorous standards and expectations and to ensure that areas of study are not unduly narrow.

### **Review of Literature**

The purpose of the Review of Literature is to develop and demonstrate an advanced awareness of the critical landscape for each list. The student will write an overview of the defining attributes of the field, identifying two or three broad questions that animate scholarly discussion, while using

specific noteworthy texts from their list (but not all texts on the list) as examples. The review should be a minimum 8 double-spaced pages/area; max of 36 double-spaced pages total.

The review also must accomplish the following:

- consider the historical context of major issues, debates, and trends that factor into the emergence of the field
- offer a historical overview of scholarship in the field that connects the present to the past
- note recent trends and emergent lines of inquiry
- propose questions about (develop critiques of, and/or identify gaps in) the field and how they might be pursued in future study (but not actually proposing or referencing a dissertation project)

For example, for a literary period, the student might include an overview of primary formal and thematic elements; of the relationship between literary and social/historical developments; of prominent movements, (etc.); as well as of recent critical debates and topics.

For a genre list, the Review of Literature might include major theories of its constitution and significance, while outlining the evolution of these theories over time.

For a Rhetoric and Composition list, the review would give an overview of major historical developments, research, theories, methods, debates, and trends of scholarship in the field.

Students are encouraged to divide reviews into smaller sections that enhance clarity and organization. Students are not expected to interact with every text on their lists.

The review of literature might be used to prepare students for identifying the most important texts in the field, along with why those texts are important to the field, for the oral exam. It is recommended that students complete reading the bulk of (if not all) texts on their lists before writing the ROL.

The Reviews of Literature will not be produced in an exam context, but in the manner of papers that are researched and developed in consultation with all advisors/committee members, **with final drafts being distributed within a reasonable time for all members to review and approve in advance of the 3-week deadline.** While the Review of Literature generally is not the focus of the oral examination, it is frequently used as a point of departure for questions and discussion during the oral examination.

### Doctoral Exam Outcome

Students taking the Doctoral Exam are allowed to bring their text lists, the approved Reviews of Literature, scratch paper, a writing utensil, and notes/writing for an approximately 5-minute introductory statement to the exam. (This statement does not need to lay out ideas or any aspect of the dissertation project.)

Each portion of the oral examination must be deemed passing before the student can proceed to the Review of the Dissertation Proposal. If a majority of the committee judges that the student has not answered adequately on one of the three areas of the exam, the student must repeat that portion in a separate oral exam of one hour, to be taken as expeditiously as possible. **Failure in two areas constitutes failure of the exam and requires a retake of the whole.** The doctoral examining committee will render a judgment of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory on the entire examination. A student who fails the exam twice may, upon successful petition to the

Graduate Committee, take it a third and final time.

### **Review of the Dissertation Proposal (RDP)**

As soon as possible following successful completion of the doctoral exam, the candidate should establish their three-person core dissertation committee, and then expeditiously proceed to the preparation of a dissertation proposal. **Within the semester following completion of the doctoral exam**, the student will present to their core dissertation committee a written narrative of approximately **10-15 pages**, not including bibliography, of the dissertation proposal. Copies of this proposal must be submitted to the members of the dissertation committee no later than **three weeks prior** to the scheduled examination date.

In the proposal, students will be expected to define: the guiding question or set of questions; a basic thesis (or hypothesis); how the works to be studied or the creative writing produced relate to that (hypo)thesis; the theoretical/methodological model to be followed; the overall formal divisions of the dissertation; and how the study will be situated in the context of prior scholarship (i.e., its importance to the field). The narrative section should be followed by a bibliography demonstrating that the candidate is conversant with the basic theoretical and critical works pertinent to the study. For creative writing students, the proposal may serve as a draft of the critical introduction to the creative dissertation. Students are expected to consult with their projected dissertation committee concerning the preparation of the proposal.

The RDP may last no longer than 90 minutes. The review will focus on the proposal, although it could also entail determining whether or not the candidate's knowledge of the field is adequate to begin the composition process. The examination will be graded pass/fail. If it is failed, the committee will suggest areas of weakness to be addressed by the candidate, who will rewrite the proposal and retake the review **by the end of the following semester**. If the candidate abandons the entire dissertation project for another, a new RDP will be taken. (For such a step to be taken, the change would need to be drastic, such as a move to a new field or topic. A change in thesis or the addition or subtraction of one or even several works to be examined would not necessitate a new proposal and defense.) **If the student fails to complete the Review of the Dissertation Proposal within a year of the completion of the doctoral exams, they will have fallen out of departmental good standing.** For details on the consequences of falling out of good standing, see "Academic Integrity, Good Standing, and Academic Misconduct," in General Department Policies and Best Practices (above).

## **The Doctoral Dissertation**

### **Overview**

The Graduate Catalog states that the doctoral candidate "must present a dissertation showing the planning, conduct and results of original research, and scholarly creativity." While most Ph.D. candidates in the Department of English write dissertations of a traditional, research-oriented nature, a creative writing candidate may elect to do a creative-writing dissertation involving fiction, poetry, drama or nonfiction prose. Such a dissertation must contain a substantial section of scholarly research related to the creative writing dissertation. The precise nature of the scholarly research component should be determined by the candidate in consultation with the dissertation committee and the Graduate Director. Candidates wishing to undertake such a dissertation must complete all Departmental requirements demanded for the research-oriented Ph.D. degree.

### **Committee**

The dissertation committee will consist of at least four members—two “core” English faculty members, a third faculty member (usually from English), and one faculty member from a different department who serves as the Graduate Studies representative. The committee may include (with the Graduate Director’s approval) members from other departments and, with the approval of the University’s Graduate Council, members from outside the University. If a student wants to have a committee member from outside the university, or a person who is not in a full-time tenure-track professorship at KU, the student must contact the graduate program coordinator as early as possible. Applications for special graduate faculty status must be reviewed by the College and the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs. Requests for defense approval will not be approved unless all committee members currently hold either regular or special graduate faculty status.

The candidate’s preferences as to the membership of the dissertation committee will be carefully considered; the final decision, however, rests with the Department and with the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs. All dissertation committees must get approval from the Director of Graduate Studies before scheduling the final oral exam (defense). Furthermore, any changes in the make-up of the dissertation committee from the Review of the Dissertation Proposal committee must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Once the dissertation proposal has passed and the writing of the dissertation begins, membership of the dissertation committee should remain constant. However, under extraordinary circumstances, a student may request a substitution in, or a faculty member may ask to be dismissed from, the membership of the dissertation committee. Such requests must be approved, in writing, by the faculty member leaving the committee and by the DGS.

If a student does not make progress during the dissertation-writing stage and accumulates more than one “Limited Progress” and/or “No Progress” grade on their transcript, they will fall out of good standing in the department. (See “Falling Out of Good Standing,” in General Department Policies and Best Practices.)

### **Final Oral Exam (Dissertation Defense)**

When the dissertation has been tentatively accepted by the dissertation committee (not including the Graduate Studies Representative), the final oral examination will be held on the recommendation of the Department.

Although the dissertation committee is responsible for certification of the candidate, any member of the graduate faculty may be present at the examination and participate in the questioning. The examination normally lasts no more than two hours. It is the obligation of the candidate to advise the graduate program coordinator that they plan to take the oral examination; this must be done at least one month before the date proposed for the examination.

At least three calendar weeks prior to the defense date, the student will submit the final draft of the dissertation to all the committee members (including the GSR) and inform the graduate program coordinator. Failure to meet this deadline will necessitate rescheduling the defense. The final oral examination for the Ph.D. in English is, essentially, a defense of the dissertation. When it is passed, the dissertation itself is graded by the dissertation director, in consultation with the student’s committee; the student’s performance in the final examination (defense) is graded by the entire five-person committee.

### **Best Practices for the Doctoral Dissertation**

Normally, the dissertation will present the results of the writer’s own research, carried out under

the direction of the dissertation committee. This means that the candidate should be in regular contact with all members of the committee during the dissertation research and writing process, providing multiple drafts of chapters, or sections of chapters, according to the arrangements made between the student and each faculty member. Though accepted primarily for its scholarly merit rather than for its rhetorical qualities, the dissertation must be stylistically competent. The Department has accepted the MLA Handbook as the authority in matters of style. The writer may wish to consult also *the Chicago Manual of Style* and Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Dissertations, Theses, and Term Papers* (available online).

Naturally, both the student and the dissertation committee have responsibilities and obligations to each other concerning the submitting and returning of materials. The student should plan on working steadily on the dissertation; if they do so, they should expect from the dissertation committee a reasonably quick reading and assessment of material submitted.

Students preparing their dissertation should be showing chapters to their committee members as they go along, for feedback and revision suggestions. They should also meet periodically with committee members to assess their progress. Prior to scheduling a defense, the student is encouraged to ask committee members whether they feel that the student is ready to defend the dissertation. Ideally, the student should hold the defense only when they have consulted with committee members sufficiently to feel confident that they have revised the dissertation successfully to meet the expectations of all committee members.

Students should expect that they will need to revise each chapter at least once. This means that all chapters (including introduction and conclusion) are shown to committee members once, revised, then shown to committee members again in revised form to assess whether further revisions are needed, prior to the submitting of the final dissertation as a whole. It is not unusual for further revisions to be required and necessary after the second draft of a chapter; students should not therefore simply assume that a second draft is necessarily "final" and passing work.

If a substantial amount of work still needs to be completed or revised at the point that the dissertation defense is scheduled, such a defense date should be regarded as tentative, pending the successful completion, revision, and receipt of feedback on all work. Several weeks prior to the defense, students should consult closely with their dissertation director and committee members about whether the dissertation as a whole is in a final and defensible stage. A project is ready for defense when it is coherent, cohesive, well researched, engages in sophisticated analysis (in its entirety or in the critical introduction of creative dissertations), and makes a significant contribution to the field. In other words, it passes each of the categories laid out in the Dissertation Rubric.

If the dissertation has not clearly reached a final stage, the student and dissertation director are advised to reschedule the defense.

After much discussion about whether the "honors" designation assigned after the dissertation defense should be for the written product only, for the defense/discussion only, for both together, weighted equally, or eradicated altogether, the department voted to accept the Graduate Committee recommendation that "honors" only apply to the written dissertation. "Honors" will be given to dissertations that are rated "Outstanding" in all or most of the categories on the dissertation rubric.

### **Prior Publication of the Doctoral Dissertation**

Portions of the material written by the doctoral candidate may appear in article form before completion of the dissertation. Prior publication does not ensure the acceptance of the dissertation by the dissertation committee. Final acceptance of the dissertation is subject to the approval of the dissertation committee. Previously published material by other authors included in the dissertation must be properly documented.

### **Miscellaneous Best Practices for PhD Students**

Each student beyond the Master's degree should confer regularly with the Graduate Director regarding their progress toward the doctoral examination and the doctorate.

### **Literature and Creative Writing Concentration**

A rigorous program that combines creative writing and literary studies, the Ph.D. in Literature and Creative Writing prepares graduates for both scholarly and creative publication and teaching. With faculty guidance, students admitted to the Ph.D. program may tailor their programs to their goals and interests. Doctoral students in creative writing are strongly encouraged to take formal literature classes in addition to forms classes. Formal literature classes, by providing training in literary analysis, theory, and/or literary history, will help to prepare students for doctoral exams (and future teaching at the college level).

### **Criteria for Reading Lists**

In addition to the fields lists, Literature and Creative Writing students must select two of the following areas for their reading lists. No title from any field list may appear on either of the other two lists.

- An adjacent or parallel literary period or movement
- An author or group of related authors
- A genre
- Criticism and literary theory
- Composition theory, and
- English language.

Comprehension of a literary period (e.g., British literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; Romanticism; US literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Modernism) entails sufficient intellectual grasp of both the important primary works of and secondary works on the period or movement to indicate a student's ability to teach the period or movement and undertake respectable scholarship on it.

Comprehension of an author or group of related authors (e.g., Donne, the Brontës, the Bloomsbury Group, the Black Mountain Poets) entails knowledge, both primary and secondary, of a figure or figures whose writing has generated a significant body of interrelated biographical, historical, and critical scholarship.

Comprehension of one of several genres (the short story, the lyric poem, the epistolary novel). To demonstrate comprehension of a genre, a student should possess sufficient depth and breadth of knowledge, both primary and secondary, of the genre to explain its formal characteristics and account for its historical development.

Comprehension of criticism and literary theory entails a grasp of fundamental conceptual problems inherent in a major school of literary study (e.g., historicist, psychoanalytic, feminist, poststructuralist, etc.). To demonstrate comprehension of that school of criticism and literary

theory, a student should be able to discuss changes in its conventions and standards of interpretation and evaluation of literature from its beginning to the present. Students will be expected to possess sufficient depth and breadth of theoretical knowledge to bring appropriate texts and issues to bear on questions of literary study.

Comprehension of composition theory entails an intellectual grasp of fundamental concepts, issues, and theories pertaining to the study of writing. To demonstrate comprehension of composition theory, students should be able to discuss traditional and current issues from a variety of perspectives, as well as the field's historical development from classical rhetoric to the present.

### **Scholarly Research Component (SRC)**

The Scholarly Research Component (SRC) of the creative-writing dissertation is a separate section of the dissertation than the creative work. It involves substantial research and is written in the style of academic prose. It should be 15-20 pages and should cite at least 20 sources, some of which should be primary texts, and many of which should be from the peer-reviewed secondary literature. The topic must relate, in some way, to the topic, themes, ideas, or style of the creative portion of the dissertation; this relation should be stated in the Dissertation Proposal, which should include a section describing the student's plans for the SRC. The SRC may be based on a seminar paper or other work the student has completed prior to the dissertation; but the research should be augmented, and the writing revised, per these guidelines. The SRC is a part of the dissertation, and as such will be included in the dissertation defense. The SRC may take two general forms:

1. An article, publishable in a peer-reviewed journal or collection, on a specific topic related to an author, movement, theoretical issue, taxonomic issue, etc. that has bearing on the creative portion. The quality of this article should be high enough that the manuscript could be submitted to a peer-reviewed publication, with a plausible chance of acceptance.
2. A survey. This survey may take several different forms:
3. A survey of a particular aspect of the genre of the creative portion of the dissertation (stylistic, national, historical, etc.)
  - a. An introduction to the creative portion of the dissertation that explores the influences on, and the theoretical or philosophical foundations or implications of the creative work
  - b. An exploration of a particular technical problem or craft issue that is salient in the creative portion of the dissertation
  - c. If the creative portion of the dissertation includes the results of research (e.g., historical novel, documentary poetry, research-based creative nonfiction), a descriptive overview of the research undertaken already for the dissertation itself
  - d. A combination of the above, with the prior approval of the student's dissertation director.

### **Rubric for an Honors dissertation in Creative Writing**

These sets of attributes are adapted from the Graduate Learner Outcomes that are a part of our Assessment portfolio. "Honors" should only be given to dissertations that are rated "Outstanding" in all or most of the following categories:

1. Significant and innovative plot/structure/idea/focus. The writer clearly places plot/structure/idea/focus in context.
2. Thorough knowledge of literary traditions. Clear/flexible vision of the creative work produced in relation to those literary traditions.
3. Introduction/Afterword is clear, concise, and insightful. A detailed discussion of the implications of the project and future writing projects exists.

4. The creative dissertation reveals the doctoral candidate's comprehensive understanding of poetics and/or aesthetic approach. The application of the aesthetic approach is innovative and convincing.
5. The creative dissertation represents original and sophisticated creative work.
6. The creative dissertation demonstrates thematic and/or aesthetic unity.

### **Rubric for an Honors dissertation in Literature**

These sets of attributes are adapted from the Graduate Learner Outcomes that are a part of our Assessment portfolio. "Honors" should only be given to dissertations that are rated "Outstanding" in all or most of the following categories:

1. Introduction/Statement of the Problem/Focus/Thesis is significant and innovative; the introduction clearly places the problem/focus/thesis in context.
2. The doctoral candidate demonstrates a full and up-to-date grounding in existing literature; the writer also engages in an extensive critique of the literature, not just a summary of it.
3. The doctoral candidate thoroughly understands methodology/approach/theory. Their application of methodology/approach/theory is innovative and convincing.
4. Summary of materials under examination is clear, concise, and insightful.
5. Detailed discussion of the implications of the research and future directions for research.
6. The dissertation demonstrates original and sophisticated analysis. Novel, important conclusions are drawn, and the results are thoroughly contextualized.

### **Rhetoric and Composition Concentration**

KU offers a PhD in Rhetoric and Composition offering the opportunity for advanced and concentrated research to students who hold an M.A. degree in English or a related field, from KU or elsewhere.

### **Criteria for Reading Lists**

As an interdisciplinary field, study in Rhetoric and Composition might involve work in other departments, programs, or schools as well as English, including, for example, Communication Studies, Linguistics, Education, Psychology, American Studies, Women's Studies, or History. Students should prepare their reading lists to cover three areas:

- The literature of Rhetoric and Composition;
- Two other areas of study selected in consultation with the student's committee
  - Rhetorical history
  - A contemporary body of theory
  - English language and linguistics
  - A literary period
  - Program studies
  - Literacy studies

Comprehension of the literature of Rhetoric and Composition entails knowledge, primary and/or secondary, of the history, research, theories, methods, debates, and trends of scholarship in the field. Students should be able to discuss traditional and current issues by drawing upon their knowledge of the field's emergence and development.

Comprehension of modern composition studies entails knowledge, primary and/or secondary, of the history, research, theories, methods, debates, and trends of scholarship in the field. Students should be able to discuss traditional and current issues by drawing upon their knowledge of the field's emergence and development.

Comprehension of rhetorical history entails knowledge of major themes, concepts, issues,

figures and events in the field, with a demonstrated awareness of their relevance to modern composition studies.

Comprehension of one of several theories that bears demonstrable relevance to composition studies: genre, discourse, cultural, feminist, literary, critical, dialogic, pedagogical, theories of composing, etc. In consultation with appropriate faculty, students will choose a theoretical emphasis and will be expected to discuss the significance of their chosen theories for composition studies.

Comprehension of English language and linguistics entails an overall grasp of the field's theoretical concepts, research, and current issues, as well as a familiarity with significant works within given sub areas (the specific topics of which will be arranged through consultation with appropriate faculty).

Comprehension of one of the following literary emphases: period (e.g. nineteenth-century British), movement (e.g. Romanticism), genre (e.g. fiction), author (e.g. Chaucer, Donne), author grouping (e.g. the Beats, the Bloomsbury Group), or specialty (e.g. Caribbean literatures, Native American literatures). In consultation with an appropriate faculty member, students will choose a specific emphasis and be able to demonstrate knowledge of both primary and secondary works relevant to that selection.

Comprehension of the historical, social, and political implications of literacy, especially as these relate to a broad understanding of written literacy. Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of methods and developments in recent literacy scholarship and should be able to discuss the significance of such research for composition studies.

Comprehension of one of several institutional programs related to university writing instruction: writing program administration, writing centers, writing across the curriculum, service learning, English as a second language. In consultation with appropriate faculty, students will choose a single program focus and be expected to discuss the significance of its published literature for composition studies.

### **Rubric for an Honors dissertation in Rhetoric and Composition**

These sets of attributes are adapted from the Graduate Learner Outcomes that are a part of our Assessment portfolio. "Honors" should only be given to dissertations that are rated "Outstanding" in all or most of the following categories:

1. Introduction/Statement of the Problem/Focus/Thesis is significant and innovative; the introduction clearly places the problem/focus/thesis in context.
2. The doctoral candidate demonstrates a full and up-to-date grounding in existing literature; the writer also engages in an extensive critique of the literature, not just a summary of it.
3. The doctoral candidate thoroughly understands methodology/approach/theory. Their application of methodology/approach/theory is innovative and convincing.
4. Summary of materials under examination is clear, concise, and insightful.
5. Detailed discussion of the implications of the research and future directions for research.
6. The dissertation demonstrates original and sophisticated analysis. Novel, important conclusions are drawn, and the results are thoroughly contextualized.

## ***University Policies and Degree Requirements***

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate

& Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

## GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

### Admission

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

#### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Admission to Graduate Study

### English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to [graduateadm@ku.edu](mailto:graduateadm@ku.edu) for verification.
- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU Applied English Center (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or

the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

### **Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:**

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' Spoken English Competency page.

### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

## Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). \*See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

**Students not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring).** Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a Permit to Re-Enroll to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current Academic Calendar.** You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript.

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

### **Related Policies:**

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

### **Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)**

The University's Graduate Credit policy defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

### **Transfer Credit**

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework

completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

### **Reduced Credit Hour Degree**

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript.

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions). Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

#### **Related Policies:**

- Graduate Credit\_
- Co-enrollment
- Master's Degree Requirements (on Reduced Hour Master's Degree)

## **Credit/No Credit**

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

**No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement.** This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC online request form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU Academic Calendar. Please keep in mind, short courses may have alternate dates. The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- University Senate Rules and Regulations (USRR), Section 2.3.8

## **Probation & Dismissal**

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

**Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative GPA dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale).** In these cases, on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/the College may set more stringent GPA requirements. Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that

constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to;

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project
  - Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)
  - Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
  - An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation
- Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the Good Academic Standing policy for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress. Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

**A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.**

#### **Related Policies:**

- Academic Probation
- Dismissed Enrollment
- Good Academic Standing policy

## Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' (GPA) Grading policy governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in Article II of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

#### **Related Policies:**

- University Senate Rules & Regulations
- Grading
- Academic Probation

- Dismissed Enrollment

## Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Master's Degree Program Time Constraints\_
- Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs
- Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams (on exam expiration and recertification)
- Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information
- KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template
- Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates
- KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template

## Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while "stopping the clock" on their time to degree. When a student is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department's internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student's need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still

subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees. Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU Academic Calendar for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Leaves of Absence (policy)
- Leave of Absence (GPA website, form linked at bottom of page)

## **Required University Milestones**

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

\*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

### **Oral Exam Committee Composition**

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam

committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

### **Oral Exam Attendance**

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

#### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition
- Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition
- Oral Exam Attendance
- Graduate Faculty Appointments

### **DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

#### **[Enrollment Requirement](#)**

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

#### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs

#### **[Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students](#)**

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

**To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam.** Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

#### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students
- Doctoral Candidacy\_

## **GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS**

The University offers a variety of Approved Graduate Certificate Programs to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

#### **Related Policies and Forms:**

- Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria\_
- Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs\_

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)**

In addition to all program requirements, students planning to graduate must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

**Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists** ([Master's](#) | [Doctoral](#))

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements

for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for formatting and electronic submission of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft. **We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.**

## **GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.