ENGLISH, PH.D.

The Ph.D. in English requires 42-48 credit hours and is offered to superior applicants who are preparing for careers in teaching and research in colleges and universities. The program permits specialization in literary studies or rhetoric and composition in small classes and a format conducive to individualized instruction. Full-time doctoral students may be appointed as teaching assistants in the department. The most talented students are recommended for fellowships.

For information regarding deadlines and requirements for admission, please see the Guide to Graduate Admissions (https://grs.uncg.edu/prospective/guide/).

In addition to the application materials required by the Graduate School, applicants must submit a 1-2 page statement of purpose, a writing sample (less than 30 pages), and a current cv or resume.

Ph.D. Track

Students who enter with an M.A. in English are required to earn a minimum of 27 credit hours, fulfill the foreign language requirement, pass the preliminary comprehensive examination, and successfully defend their dissertations. Students entering with other advanced degrees will have their transcripts individually evaluated by the Graduate Program Director to establish the minimum course work required.

M.A. Doctoral Track

Individuals intending to continue on to doctoral studies in English at UNC Greensboro may apply to the M.A. Doctoral Track which offers exceptionally well-qualified applicants the opportunity to gain admission to the master’s and doctoral programs simultaneously. This program is designed for students who would like to obtain their M.A. and then proceed directly to the Ph.D. program. Students accepted into the Doctoral Track must fulfill all requirements for the M.A. and the Ph.D. and will earn both degrees. Students not accepted into the M.A. Doctoral Track may still be accepted into the M.A. only.

Degree Program Requirements

Required: 42-48 credit hours

No more than three courses at the 500 level may be submitted for the degree. All other work must be at the 600 level and above.

Required Core Courses (9-12 credits)

All students have three course requirements in their doctoral program, and all are taken as a part of the 27-credit plan of study. The course requirements are based on the student’s declared primary area of specialization from the following options:

Area of Specialization
  • Old and Middle English Literature
  • Renaissance/Early Modern Literature
  • Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature
  • Nineteenth-Century British Literature
  • Post-1900 British and Anglophone Literature
  • Postcolonial and World Literatures and Theory
  • American Literature Before 1900
  • American Literature After 1900
  • Native American Literature
  • African American Literature
  • History and Theory of Rhetoric
  • History and Theory of Writing Studies
  • Literary Theory

If a student’s specialization is in literature before 1800, the course requirements are:
  • 2 courses in literature after 1800
  • 1 course in rhetoric, writing studies, or literary theory

If a student’s specialization is in literature after 1800, the course requirements are:
  • 2 courses in literature before 1800
  • 1 course in rhetoric, writing studies, or literary theory

If a student’s specialization is in history and theory of rhetoric, the course requirements are:
  • 1 course in literature
  • 1 course in language (ENG 513), literacy (ENG 590 [inactive]), research (ENG 601, ENG 602), or publishing (ENG 620, ENG 621 [inactive]), or an additional literature course.
  • 1 course in literary theory

If a student’s specialization is in history and theory of writing studies, the course requirements are:
  • 1 course in literature
  • 1 course in language (ENG 513), literacy (ENG 590 [inactive]), research (ENG 601, ENG 602), or publishing (ENG 620, ENG 621 [inactive]), or an additional literature course.
  • 1 course in literary theory

If a student’s specialization is in literary theory, the course requirements are:
  • 1 course in literature before 1800
  • 1 course in literature after 1800
  • 1 course in rhetoric or writing studies

In addition, all graduate teaching assistants are required to take ENG 747 Teaching College Writing. This course does not fulfill a doctoral course requirement but may be included in the plan of study.

Electives (15-18 credits)

For the remaining credits of electives, students should choose from the graduate offerings that will help them specialize in their primary and secondary areas in English and in supporting fields. These courses, selected in consultation with the Graduate Program Director and the student’s advisory committee, should form a coherent plan to prepare the student in the areas of specialization.

Dissertation (15-21 credits)

A dissertation demonstrates ability to do original research and to present this investigation in an orderly, exact, and complete manner.
Minor in a Supporting Field
With the approval of the student’s advisory/dissertation committee and the Graduate Program Director, students may use their electives and additional courses toward achieving a minor in certain supporting fields outside of English. A minor consists of at least 12 credits of advanced work in a single cognate subject. All course work applied toward the minor must be approved by the Graduate Program Director.

Required Milestones*

- Residency (Immersion)
- Plan of Study
- Foreign Language Requirement
- Comprehensive Exam (Written & Oral)
- Dissertation Proposal
- Admission to Candidacy
- Dissertation Defense
- Filing the Final Approved Dissertation

* General information about milestones for doctoral programs is available in Section III (https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/#sectioniiisummaryofgraduateschoolregulationsforallcertificatesanddegreestext) of the Graduate Policies (https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/) page in the University Catalog. For information about how milestones are accomplished for a specific program, please refer to the doctoral program’s handbook.