

# Louisiana Tech University



## Graduate English Handbook

**2010-2011**

**How to Apply: 1-3**

**Requirements for the MA in English: 4-8**

**Graduate E-Certificate in Technical Writing: 9**

**Graduate Faculty: 9-11**

**Plan of Study and Advisory Committee: 12**

**Graduation Checklist: 13**

**Sample Notification Letter: 14**

**Thesis Timetable and Procedure: 15-16**

**Thesis Considerations: 17-18**

**Sample Thesis Proposal: 19-23**

**Content Area Reading Lists: 24-32**



## **Thank you for your interest in Graduate Studies in English at Louisiana Tech University:**

We offer a Master of Arts in English with traditional emphases in British and American literature, a graduate certificate in Technical Communication only, and a flexible option that allows students to apply their Technical Communication coursework to the MA through further graduate study.

Prospective students often have different reasons for pursuing a graduate degree and come to us with a variety of backgrounds and goals. Our program provides training that both prepares them for success at the doctoral level while recognizing that advanced literacy and critical inquiry are portable skills that apply to all careers that value the ability to analyze, discern, and adapt to constant and rapid change.

A number of students write a Master's thesis and go on to pursue the PhD. Others opt for the non-thesis option, instead using the experience to enrich their current teaching, to assist them in their places of employment, or to prepare them for other professional schools or workplaces. Whatever the individual goal, we are devoted to training our students to be skilled teachers and capable scholars in both academic and related settings.

We offer many graduate assistantships, offer tuition waivers for out-of-state US residents, schedule most classes one or two days each week in the late afternoon or evening, and offer a number of courses online, all of which make graduate study at Louisiana Tech as convenient for commuting, part-time, and returning students as it is for our established graduate assistants and other full-time students. While most arrange a plan of study and timetable for graduation best suited to their particular needs, students may finish the requirements for the MA in as few as six ten-week academic quarters.

We attract students from our undergraduate English program, from other universities within Louisiana and neighboring states, from international institutions, and from workplaces across the region. Our faculty are active scholars and devoted teachers, our class sizes are small, and we encourage a sense of community among our teachers and students.

### **If you would like to apply, please take one of the following steps:**

- 1) Apply through the Graduate School using their online application system. Go to the Graduate School's webpage and click on Apply Now.
- 2) Download a paper copy of the application and mail it to the Graduate School.

3) Email the Graduate Coordinator of English, Dr. Robert W. Rudnicki, at rudnicki@latech.edu, leave voicemail at 318-257-2113, or drop by his office (GTM 250) during posted hours to discuss the program in person.

**Submit the following documents with your application:**

- 1) A one-page statement of purpose outlining your goals and areas of interest.
- 2) Approximately 10-15 pages that best demonstrate your writing skills (ideally this will be one or two research-based essays). Applicants are required to submit a writing sample in lieu of GRE scores. The writing sample should be what the applicant believes is his or her best work. If a student is not admitted upon the initial application, he or she may not reapply with a different writing sample.
- 3) Official transcripts of your previous coursework (Note: GRE scores are not required by our program. Letters of recommendation are encouraged, but not required).
- 4) The Application Fee.

Those students seeking Graduate Assistantships must submit their applications no later than August 1 to be considered for funding through the English Department for the upcoming academic year.

**If you receive a letter of acceptance:**

- 1) Schedule an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator of English to prepare a Plan of Study, appoint an Advisory Committee, and obtain a registration form for your first quarter of enrollment.
- 2) If you wish to be considered for a graduate assistantship, submit an Application for Assistantship form as well.
- 3) Familiarize yourself with the Graduate English Handbook, particularly the reading list areas, thesis versus non-thesis options, and exit exam format. Read both the general requirements of the Graduate School and the Graduate Study in English requirements as they appear in the Louisiana Tech University Catalog for your official year of entrance.
- 4) Your acceptance letter will provide you with instructions to obtain a student ID number that you will use to register. Use your new student ID number to get assigned a BOSS (online student registration system) PIN, receive a student ID card, and open a Tech email account. Specific registration and fee payment instructions may be found on the Registrar's website and in the online "Racing Form," which is the schedule of classes and general information updated each quarter.
- 5) Once you know which course or courses you will be taking and have registered, check the web pages (or Blackboard, Moodle, etc.) of the professors who are teaching them.

Many post reading lists and requirements in advance of the course, and often students want to begin preparing early. If the professors' course outlines are not available online, feel free to contact them directly to discuss their requirements.

6) Do not hesitate to direct questions or concerns not addressed by these instructions to the Graduate Coordinator at any stage of this process, who will be your Advisor as you work toward the degree and the person who will clear you for registration each quarter.

## **Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

### **Louisiana Tech University**

#### **Mission**

The mission of the Department of English is to offer a superior education in the areas of literary studies, composition, and technical writing. Recognizing that original research and effective teaching are complementary, the Department of English promotes the advancement of knowledge in those areas through the dissemination of peer-reviewed publications and scholarly presentations. The Department seeks to provide public assistance and programming through civic involvement, when necessary, in keeping with the expertise of its faculty and students.

#### **Program Objectives**

The Graduate Program is designed to prepare students for a variety of professions, including teaching, publishing, editing, journalism, and technical writing. Graduate students often continue on to doctoral programs in English or Comparative Literature; they may also enter law or other professional schools.

The objectives of the Graduate Program are to:

- Provide a comprehensive understanding in the traditional fields of English and American Literature as well as the specialized field of Technical Writing;
- Advance the knowledge in those disciplines through the dissemination of nationally peer-reviewed research and scholarly presentations;
- Offer knowledge and techniques in current research methods and scholarly practice;
- Develop in students a mastery of essential skills in oral and written communication.

#### **Admission to the Program**

For admission to graduate study for the degree of Master of Arts in English, the applicant must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college. English majors as well as students with a minor in English or the equivalent number of credit hours (18) are especially encouraged to apply. A student interested in the M.A. in English with a

concentration in either literature or technical writing, but who does not meet the above requirements, is eligible to apply but will be required to complete additional coursework. For admission to the M.A. in English all applicants must submit to the Graduate Coordinator a one-page statement of purpose indicating objectives and areas of interest, as well as a writing sample of approximately 10-15 pages, which may take the form of either one or two, or papers. The GRE is not required for admission.

## **Unconditional Admission to the Graduate School**

Unconditional admission requires that the applicant must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college. The final decision rests with the Dean of the Graduate School and is based upon the recommendation of the admissions officials of the academic college the student wishes to enter. The following are minimum requirements for unconditional admission consideration:

- Minimum 2.50 (4.0 system) grade point average on all work attempted or 2.75 on the last 60 hours attempted.
- All official admission documents have been submitted to the Graduate School.

Although the Graduate School's application requests GRE scores, the decision to require these scores is a policy recommendation made at the unit level by the program offering the graduate degree, with final approval resting with the Dean of the Graduate School. In place of test scores on a standardized test, some graduate programs instead require a portfolio or a writing sample, as in the case of the Department of English.

## **Conditional Admission to the Graduate School**

Conditional admission may be gained by those applicants not qualified for unconditional admission, while satisfying or validating their undergraduate deficiencies or meeting other conditions of admission. The final decision rests with the Dean of the Graduate School and is based upon the recommendation of the admissions officials of the academic college the student wishes to enter. The following are minimum requirements for conditional admission consideration:

- Minimum 2.25 (4.0 system) grade point average on all work attempted or 2.50 on the last 60 hours attempted.
- Maximum of 9 semester hours may be earned while fulfilling stipulated conditions. If the conditions are not removed after 9 hours of course work, the applicant will be dropped from the Graduate School.

Conditional status may be changed to unconditional status when a student earns a minimum of 9 hours of graduate credit at Louisiana Tech, provided he or she has fulfilled the conditions of admission and has a B average on all work pursued for graduate credit, including no grade lower than C and not more than one course with a grade of C.

## **Appointment of Advisory Committee**

During the first quarter of study, the Graduate Coordinator of English will appoint an Advisory Committee for each student and, in turn, each student must submit a Plan of Study to the committee through the Graduate Coordinator. (The student should download this and all other forms from the Graduate School's web pages). The Director of the School of Literature and Language and the Graduate Coordinator of English will be members of each student's committee. The examining committee for the student's comprehensive examinations normally consists of members of the Advisory Committee or other graduate faculty members who have taught the student.

## **Plan of Study**

The Non-Thesis Plan: The student must complete a total of 33 hours of graduate credit and pass a comprehensive written examination based on the reading list in the area the student has chosen to test in for the degree. At least six (18 hours) of the required 11 courses must be at the 500 level (for graduate students only), one of which must be English 591. The remaining five courses may be taken either at the 500 level or at the 400 level (for advanced undergraduates and graduate students). While students are strongly encouraged to take as many 500-level courses as possible, all English courses numbered 400 or above in the current Catalog, unless not designated as "G" or not taught by a graduate faculty member, are acceptable for graduate credit toward the degree of Master of Arts in English. Final approval of courses rests with the Graduate Coordinator of English and the Director of the School of Literature and Language.

The Thesis Plan: The student must complete a minimum of 33 hours of graduate credit in English, consisting of courses numbered 400 (for graduates and advanced undergraduates) and 500 (for graduate students only). Six of the 33 hours must be earned in Liberal Arts 551, Research and Thesis, and these hours must be taken in consecutive quarters, which typically should be the student's final two quarters of study. In addition to the six thesis hours of Liberal Arts (LBAR) 551, the 33 hours must include at least six other 500-level courses totaling 18 semester hours, one of which must be English 591. The six hours of LBAR 551 are in addition to these 18 hours and may not be applied as two of the required six 500-level courses. Although the comprehensive examination is not given under the Thesis Plan, the student must pass a one-hour oral defense. The minimum requirement to be eligible to write a thesis and graduate under the thesis plan option is a graduate GPA of 3.75 after 27 hours of coursework. In most circumstances, however, only those students who have earned grades of "A" in their classes and who plan to continue their studies as Ph.D. candidates will be encouraged to pursue the thesis option.

Note: Students who are pursuing the MA as a fully online degree may be exempt from English 591. However, these students must complete three Internship hours that they propose as a substitute (approved by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in English) and

take the comprehensive exams or write a thesis in Technical Writing as their area of specialization.

### **Transfer Credits and Non-English Credits**

Students transferring to the graduate program in English must satisfy the general “transfer admissions” requirements as stated in the Louisiana Tech Catalog. No graduate credit will be allowed for courses taken in other graduate programs at Louisiana Tech or at another university unless approved by the Graduate Coordinator of English and the Director of the School of Literature and Language. At the discretion of the Department, a maximum of nine (9) semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred from another accredited college or university that grants graduate degrees in English. However, the coursework must have been completed within the previous six years, and you must provide all documentation such as course syllabi, catalog descriptions, research papers, and transcripts in order to submit the request.

Students may also take as many as 6 hours outside of English course listings for the MA (in areas such as History, Theater, Education, or Liberal Arts) provided that 1) they receive approval from the Graduate Coordinator before registering for the courses; 2) the courses are related to their plan of study and professional goals; and 3) the students confirm that the classes are eligible for graduate credit through the Graduate School (the instructor must be a Louisiana Tech Graduate Faculty member and the course must have a "G" designation in the Louisiana Tech catalog if listed as a 400-level course).

### **Completion of Graduate Program**

Students with graduate assistantships typically complete the program within two years, while many others choose to take courses over several years due to other obligations. However, six (6) years is the maximum time allowance for completing the requirements for the degree. Students who fail to meet this deadline may be refused readmission to the program or be reexamined for partial or complete credit on previous graduate coursework satisfactorily completed (grade of “B” or above).

### **Grade Requirements**

Graduate students are expected to make grades of “A” or “B.” The student who makes more than two “C” grades may be dropped from the program. For courses in which both graduate and undergraduate students are enrolled, the instructor will make more stringent requirements for the graduate students than he or she does for undergraduates.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

Students in the non-thesis plan will take a written exam in one of four areas of study (Pre-1660 British Literature, Post-1660 British Literature, American Literature, or Composition & Technical Writing). The graduate student will notify in writing the Graduate Coordinator of English during Advising Week of the quarter that precedes the

one in which he or she is going to take the comprehensive exams, stating the intended area of examination. (A sample letter can be found on page 14). The Graduate Coordinator must approve the area of study and provide the date of the exam. The Graduate Coordinator will then inform the student who the examiner will be in the selected area of study, at which time the student should consult with the examiner to determine the exam's specific emphases.

The examiner will write and grade the exam in the selected area of study. The Graduate Coordinator will also read and grade all the comprehensive exams. The student will receive one of three grades: Pass, Fail, or Pass with Distinction. If there is disagreement between examiner and the Graduate Coordinator, the Director of the School of Literature and Language will arbitrate any dispute in the grading and render a final decision. The graduate written exam will be based upon the Reading List in the designated area of his or her choice. The list may be updated at the beginning of the fall quarter of each academic year. However, a student will be responsible only for the works on the list during the quarter in which he or she enters the program. A student should obtain a copy of this list (found in the Graduate Handbook) from the Graduate Coordinator of English or save the file posted during his or her entrance year and provide that year's list to the examiner before he or she generates exam topics. This is the student's responsibility. Otherwise examiners will use the Graduate Reading List that is current for the given year.

Examinations will test students using two methods: essay and identification. Essay sections will test the breadth of the student's knowledge of an overall period as well as knowledge of specific readings, while the identification sections will demonstrate the student's knowledge of specific factual information of a period as well as an understanding of literary terms and concepts. The exam for the area in which the student chooses to test will be three hours. Approximately two-thirds of the exam will be essay and one-third will be identification, although the specific number of essays question options, identifications, and time a student is allotted for each section may vary and be determined by individual area examiners. If a student does not pass a written exam, he or she may retake the exam once. The student must notify in writing the Graduate Coordinator of English in the first week of the following quarter, asking permission to retake the exam. The student will follow the same schedule and procedure as outlined above. If the student does not pass the exam a second time, he or she cannot retake the exam and may be dropped from the program.

The student who writes a thesis will also receive a grade of Pass, Fail, or Pass with Distinction, based on the quality of the thesis and oral defense as determined by the thesis committee.

## **Calendar for Comprehensive Exams**

### Fall Quarter of the Year Student Enters the Graduate Program

- Student obtains a copy of the reading list

### 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Week (During Advising) of Quarter that precedes student's Intended Graduation

- Student submits a letter to the Graduate Coordinator of English stating his or her intention to take graduate exam
- Student registers for appropriate testing course, currently LBAR 585: Comprehensive Exam

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Quarter of Student's Intended Graduation

- Graduate Coordinator approves areas of study and informs student of the examiner for the specified area and the date of the exam

### 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Week of Quarter of Student's Intended Graduation

- Student takes a written examination on the Reading List Area of his or her choice

### 9<sup>th</sup> Week of Quarter of Student's Intended Graduation

- Student notified of results of comprehensive exam

### Following Quarter (If Necessary)

- If a student fails the exam, he or she must file written notification to retake with the Graduate Coordinator of English.

## **Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and Communication**

The Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and Communication at Louisiana Tech University can be earned either within the M.A. program or can be a separate graduate pursuit, not requiring the 33 hours necessary to obtain the degree of Master of Arts. To earn the certificate a student must complete 15 semester hours of graduate course work, with a minimum of 12 hours in technical writing courses, nine of which must be taken at the 500 level. If a student desires to pursue a graduate degree after completing the certificate, all coursework successfully completed for the certificate may be transferred to the M.A. in English, though the student must apply separately for admission to the Graduate School for the M.A. in English as outlined on pages one and two of this handbook. A student working toward a graduate degree in English or another field and working on the certificate concurrently must apply for the certificate at the same time he or she applies for graduation from the graduate school by providing the Technical Writing Certificate Coordinator with a correct final plan of study and a memo from the student stating that he or she has completed all requirements.

## **Organization of the Graduate Faculty in English**

Director of the School of Language and Literature -- member of all faculty and student committees, oversees all aspects of the School's operation, and has final departmental authority for graduate program and policies.

Graduate Coordinator -- reviews applications for graduate study in English; appoints advisory committees and supervises examining procedures, including preparation of comprehensive examinations, examination schedules, and thesis committees; advises and registers all graduate students; participates in all graduate matters; and makes

recommendations concerning these issues to the School's Director. The Graduate Coordinator of English is a member of all faculty and student committees.

Graduate Faculty Members -- recommended for appointment by the Graduate Faculty in English and approved by the Director of the School of Literature and Language, Graduate Coordinator, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **The Graduate Faculty in English**

Donald P. Kaczvinsky, Professor, Director of the School of Literature and Language  
Ph.D., Penn State University  
Areas: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature, Bibliography, Modernism, Postmodernism

Robert W. Rudnicki, Associate Professor, Graduate Coordinator  
Ph.D., Texas A&M University  
Areas: American Literature, Literature of the South

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Paula W. Brown, Instructor, Writing Center Coordinator  
Ph.D., University of Tennessee  
Areas: Rhetoric and Composition, British Literature

Patrick P. Garrett, Distinguished Professor  
Ed.D., University of North Texas  
Areas: Creative Writing, American Poetry

Edward C. Jacobs, Professor, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts  
Ph.D., Auburn University  
Areas: Renaissance Literature

Robert E. Jungman, Professor  
Ph.D., Florida State University  
Areas: Medieval and Renaissance Literature

Celia M. Lewis, Associate Professor, Composition Coordinator  
Ph.D., Baylor University  
Areas: Medieval Literature, Rhetoric and Composition

John E. Martin, Assistant Professor  
Ph.D., Northwestern University  
Areas: 18<sup>th</sup>-and 19<sup>th</sup>-Century American Literature, American Poetry

Terry M. McConathy, Professor, Dean of the Graduate School, Executive Vice President  
Ph.D., Louisiana State University  
Areas: 18<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature, Technical Writing

M. Susan Roach, Professor, North Louisiana Folklorist, LA Division of the Arts  
Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin  
Areas: American Folklore, Socio-Linguistics

Dorothy D. Robbins, Associate Professor  
Ph.D., University of Nebraska  
Areas: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature, Composition, Technical Writing

Ernest Ruffeth, Assistant Professor  
Ph.D., Purdue University  
Areas: Renaissance Literature, 18<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature

James R. Simmons, Jr., Professor, Director of the Honors Program  
Ph.D., University of South Carolina  
Areas: Victorian Literature, the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Novel

Kimberly M. Vanderlaan, Assistant Professor of English  
Ph.D., University of Delaware  
Areas: 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-Century American Literature

## **Graduate Faculty by Graduate Exam Area of Specialization**

### ***Pre-1660 British Literature***

Edward C. Jacobs, Professor  
Robert E. Jungman, Professor  
Celia M. Lewis, Associate Professor  
Ernest P. Ruffeth, Assistant Professor

### ***Post-1660 British Literature***

Donald P. Kaczvinsky, Professor  
Terry M. McConathy, Professor  
Dorothy D. Robbins, Associate Professor  
James R. Simmons, Jr., Professor

### ***American Literature***

Patrick P. Garrett, Professor  
John E. Martin, Assistant Professor  
M. Susan Roach, Professor  
Robert W. Rudnicki, Associate Professor  
Kimberly M. Vanderlaan, Assistant Professor

### ***Rhetoric & Composition/Technical Writing***

M. Susan Roach, Professor  
Celia M. Lewis, Associate Professor  
Dorothy D. Robbins, Associate Professor  
Bruce Magee, Associate Professor

## **INCOMING GRADUATE STUDENTS IN ENGLISH**

### **DIRECTIONS FOR SUBMITTING THE PLAN OF STUDY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE FORMS**

1. Locate the Plan of Study PDF form and Advisory Committee PDF form on the Graduate School's web pages.
2. Fill out each form in your browser.
3. Print the Plan of Study form as one page, front and back.
4. Sign and date forms in blue ink.
5. Submit to this office in order to register for your first quarter.

NOTE: The Advisory Committee Form only requires your signature. Here are a few things you need to know, however, about the Plan of Study:

1. You are not committing yourself to enroll in all the specific classes you list. A seminar in American listed on your initial Plan of Study may change to a seminar in British on your final Plan of Study, for example. The same is true for the thesis or non-thesis option.
2. You must list exactly 33 hours, either 33 hours of coursework or 27 hours of coursework plus six LBAR 551 thesis hours. Use the university handbook to locate these course numbers and titles.
3. No more than five courses may be listed at the 400 level.
4. 591 must be listed.
5. 500 seminars in British or American may be listed multiple times, as you may, for example, take several British 500s provided they are either taught by different faculty or have different topics.
6. List the professors' names and specific course titles if you know them, but in most cases you will not, as the courses have yet to be listed.
7. When admitted to the program, if you were required to complete additional coursework beyond the 33 hours required for the degree, you must list these courses on the back page in the appropriate box.

## Requirements for Graduating Students – A Checklist

During Advising Week of the quarter that precedes the final quarter of student's graduate program, he or she must:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Write a letter to the Graduate Coordinator of English stating his or her intention to take graduate exams (sample below).
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Register for LBAR 585: Comprehensive Exam if you are graduating under the non-thesis option, LBAR 551: Research and Thesis if under the thesis option. LBAR 585 does not incur a fee and carries no credit; its purpose is to facilitate the examination and graduation process

During the first full week of the final quarter of student's graduate program, he or she must:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Notify the registrar of the intent to graduate.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Notify the Associate Dean of Liberal Arts of the intent to graduate.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Fill out the final Plan of Study with exact courses taken and ask your Advisory Committee to sign. If the student will be taking comprehensive exams, the head of this committee is the Graduate Coordinator of English. If the student is writing a thesis, the thesis director is the head of the committee.

## **Letter Requesting Permission to Take the Comprehensive Examinations**

Graduate Coordinator of English  
School of Literature and Language  
Louisiana Tech University  
Ruston, LA 71272

Dear Dr. Rudnicki:

I request permission to take the following comprehensive examination for the Master of Arts degree in English:

Post-1660 British Literature

Attached is a list of graduate courses I have completed, the corresponding grades, and the faculty members who taught them.

Sincerely,

Enclosure: List of Courses and Instructors

xc: Director, School of Literature and Language

## **DIRECTIONS FOR ENGLISH MA THESIS CANDIDATES**

Please pay close attention to the Graduate School's deadlines and the following Graduate English directions for submitting proposals and thesis drafts, arranging thesis defense dates, and preparing final, revised copies.

Note that the Graduate School's due dates are submission deadlines; the deadlines do not, however, take into consideration the amount of time it takes committee members to mark and evaluate proposals and drafts. You and your individual thesis director should establish a submission schedule that gives all committee members ample time to return your work before these deadlines arrive. ***Your committee consists of your Thesis Director, either one or two additional professors, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Head.***

A reasonable amount of time for committee members to review and return proposals and individual chapters is approximately two weeks. After your proposal has been approved, do not submit an entire thesis draft for final consideration until each chapter or section has been evaluated first by your thesis director, and then by all committee members. This chapter-by-chapter submission process requires that you regularly submit chapters over the course of at least one quarter. ***Submitting each chapter to all committee members as it is completed is required.***

Further, be aware that the first deadline for a winter quarter defense and graduation immediately follows the winter break, and the other due dates follow in rapid succession. Also, remember that it is unreasonable to ask committee members to evaluate work over holidays and quarter breaks. Because the winter quarter is especially segmented by these breaks, those who are aiming for a winter defense and graduation should plan carefully and stay well ahead of these looming deadlines. Candidates who wish to defend and graduate in a summer or fall quarter must be even more far-sighted and vigilant, as committee members are often unavailable during summer months.

The thesis option should be an enjoyable intellectual experience for everyone involved. Thus the best course of action for a successful thesis is to think in these terms:

1. ***Make certain that your thesis director supports each stage of your work before distributing material to the committee for review.*** If at any stage in the process your work is not meeting your advisor's expectations or in turn the expectations of the committee, your advisor will either: a) require that you delay your defense to a subsequent quarter in which the thesis expectations are adequately met, or b) permanently withdraw his or her support from your project.
2. After approval from your thesis director, submit copies of your proposal to all committee members simultaneously. Attach a proposal form (Graduate School Form 10) to the Graduate Coordinator's copy of your narrative that has been signed by you and your thesis director. ***Submit these copies two quarters before the one in which you plan to graduate.*** If you plan to graduate in the spring

quarter, for example, you should submit your proposal during the previous fall quarter. If you plan to graduate in the winter, your proposal should be submitted during the previous spring (or summer, if committee members are available).

3. After approval from your thesis director, submit each chapter of your thesis draft to all committee members as it is completed. ***The majority of the draft's sections must be submitted to your committee for initial review during the quarter that precedes the one in which you plan to graduate.*** Typically this will be three chapters, but again, you must determine your submission schedule based on an individual quarter's calendar dates and the requirements of your project. For example, if you envision a thesis that consists of five sections, each 10-15 pages, then you would want your committee to have reviewed your proposal (what will become your introduction), chapter one, chapter two, and chapter three no later than the quarter that precedes your defense. A prudent thesis schedule for a spring defense might look something like this:

- **Week Five, Fall Quarter:** Submit proposal to all committee members, receive comments. If approved, begin drafting.
- **Week Two, Winter Quarter:** Submit chapter one to all committee members, receive comments, make revisions.
- **Week Five, Winter Quarter:** Submit chapter two to all committee members, receive comments, make revisions.
- **Week Eight, Winter Quarter:** Submit chapter three to all committee members, receive comments, make revisions.
- **Week One, Spring Quarter:** Submit complete thesis draft to all committee members with memo to Graduate Coordinator requesting a defense date, receive comments, make revisions.
- **Week Three, Spring Quarter:** Final week in which a thesis may be defended.
- **Weeks Four-Ten, Spring Quarter:** Begin following the Graduate School's posted deadlines and checklists for thesis submission to the College Graduate Director (Associate Dean of Liberal Arts), the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Library.

If you establish and follow a schedule similar to this example, most of your work will have been read and approved by all committee members before you are faced in your final quarter with the Graduate School's deadlines and requirements concerning theses and graduation. ***Not following this schedule may delay your defense and graduation to a subsequent quarter or require that you change to the non-thesis track and complete additional coursework.***

## **Graduate Thesis Considerations**

1. First, it is important to know that the thesis is a great deal of work for both the student and the faculty member who agrees to direct it, as it is a paper approximately fifty-pages in length that should be the student's scholarly contribution to his or her discipline. Writing a thesis means meeting deadlines and doing research at a level most students have not done previously. It also means writing and rewriting and rewriting again. In short, students need to be confident they are prepared for the undertaking.
2. Students who write a thesis are usually on a Ph.D. track, and though the student may write a thesis if a Master's is the student's terminal degree, it is not a requirement. In addition, if the student's decision to write a thesis is based on the supposition that it is less work to take six hours of thesis writing than it is to take six hours of coursework and a written comprehensive exams, the student needs to reconsider. However, if the student plans to pursue a Ph.D., it is recommended, though not required, that the student write a thesis.
3. The student should consider a concept that would be appropriate for a thesis topic, and, based on knowledge of the faculty and the student's own coursework, determine who might be a likely professor to direct the thesis. What topic the student chooses to write on will be a key part of the process that determines whether a faculty member will agree to direct the thesis. In addition, the student should enjoy working with the faculty member directing the thesis. Compatibility is essential.
4. Above all, remember that if a faculty member agrees to direct the thesis, he or she is helping you without any compensation. Faculty members get no additional pay or release time for directing a thesis, so it is a major undertaking for both the student and the faculty member. A professor working on a research project or who has a heavy teaching load may not feel that he or she has the time to spare, and that is understandable. It is best to work with someone who can set aside some of his or her research for two quarters to direct a thesis.

### **So you do want to write a thesis – what now?**

The student has decided that he or she wants to write a graduate thesis, has a tentative topic, and has consulted the faculty member with whom he or she wants to work. The faculty member has agreed. The next steps:

1. Select a committee. In addition to the student's thesis director, the Director of the School of Literature and Language, the Graduate Coordinator of English, and usually at least one other member of the English Department's graduate faculty are members of the committee. The student and the student's director can decide who that fourth person is to be, though the Director of the School of Literature and Language and the Graduate Coordinator of English approve the final organization of all thesis committees.

2. The student's committee will discuss whether the idea for the thesis is feasible and can be completed as proposed.

3. If the student's topic is approved, the student and the student's director should establish an outline with deadlines that comply with the university deadlines, as indicated on the University's Graduate School webpage. The university's deadlines are absolute, and so the completion dates set by the student and the student's advisor should allow for completion of the thesis and the defense well before the deadline for submission to the Graduate School.

4. The student writes the proposal (a sample can be found below) and it is submitted to the committee. If there are no significant problems when completed, it will be approved by the committee, and then the proposal will be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean. The proposal must be submitted for his approval during the first of the two consecutive quarters in which the student takes thesis hours.

5. The student writes the thesis. The most common method is to have the student present each chapter as it is completed. The director will proofread and edit the chapter, give it back for corrections, then on its return the director will read it again. Once the chapter is ready to be passed on it will be distributed to the committee members. If there are any significant problems, the committee members should inform the graduate student and thesis director as soon as possible so acceptable revisions can be made. If at any point in this process the student is not submitting work in a timely manner as outlined in the handbook (15-16), or not fulfilling the requirements of the thesis as described in the proposal or in individual drafts of chapters, or if the thesis is not satisfactory in execution as a whole, the Director of the School of Literature and Language may cancel the thesis and the student will be required to change to the non-thesis track, which may delay fulfilling the requirements of the degree.

6. The director and student arrange a defense date for the thesis. At this time it will also be sent to the Graduate school for a format check according to their deadlines. The thesis defense will take place, and if successfully defended, the completed thesis will be submitted to the graduate school.

## **Sample Thesis Proposal**

### **Thesis Proposal for LBAR 551**

**Proposed by Barbara Glenn, Graduate Student in English**

**To Be Directed by Dr. Rick Simmons**

#### **I. Tentative Title**

Friends and Collaborators: Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, and the Rise of the Sensation Novel in Victorian England

#### **II. Objectives**

In this thesis, I plan to show the literary impact Wilkie Collins had on Charles Dickens' life and works and how these two writers caused the Sensation Novel to be on the forefront of Victorian literary accomplishments. Scholars commonly acknowledge that these two Victorians were bound by a close friendship and by a number of collaborations; however, the notion that Wilkie Collins actually influenced the writings of the great master Dickens is often quickly dismissed, and the focus is generally on Collins' literary indebtedness to Dickens.

Dickens was a tremendous source of inspiration and counsel for Wilkie Collins, and without Dickens undoubtedly Collins would not have reached his full potential as a writer. When the two writers first met in 1851, their friendship evolved out of a mutual interest in drama. Dickens, who had already published eight novels and was established as one of the greatest Victorian novelists, continually encouraged Collins to write and eventually requested that Collins join the staff of Dickens' journal *Household Words* in 1856 (Phillips 109-11). In addition to offering suggestions for improvements for Collins' works and serving as his editor, however, Dickens held tremendous admiration for his

understudy. In a letter to Collins after the publication of *No Name*, Dickens expressed his esteem for Collins when he wrote, “I find it *wonderfully fine*. [...] I was certain from the *Basil* days that you were the Writer who would come ahead of all the Field” (qtd. in Phillips 129).

I intend to examine, therefore, that the literary influence of these two writers was not unilateral; when studying Dickens’ later works such as *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and comparing them with previous works such as *The Pickwick Papers*, one notices a significant change in Dickens’ style. Whereas his earlier works are meritorious mostly for his strength of character portrayals, the latter novels place more emphasis on plot development. This thesis will argue that this shift in Dickens’ style was a direct result of his friendship and collaboration with Collins, who was known as “the master of plot and situation” (Eliot 308).

### **III. Related Research**

As the almost insurmountable volume of Dickens scholarship proves, most scholars consider him the greatest of all Victorian writers. Interest in Wilkie Collins’ works is comparably minute; however, these two novelists are often studied side by side in the context of the development of the Victorian novel. Walter Clarke Phillips, in his book *Dickens, Reade, and Collins: Sensation Novelists*, discusses the direct impact of the rise in serialized journals to the advent of the Sensation Novel in Victorian England. As the volume of readership increases, writers adapt their themes to the preferences and tastes of their clientele; Phillips in his book argues that Charles Dickens, Walter Reade, and Wilkie Collins led the movement toward “strong emotions, unusual incident, dramatic method” (13).

In *Wilkie Collins: The Critical Heritage*, Norman Page discusses the multifaceted relationship between Collins and Dickens. Page refutes the mainstream opinion that Collins had little or no influence on the superior Dickens and argues that Dickens “came under Collins’s spell to a remarkable degree” (10), citing correspondence between the two writers as primary evidence.

In addition, T. S. Eliot treats the unique relationship between Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins in his article “Wilkie Collins and Dickens” and asserts that each writer borrowed from the other to make his own style more refined. Dickens improves in plot development after having studied the works of Collins, who in turn became more competent at character portrayal. Eliot focuses his study on Collins’ *The Woman in White* and its main characters to show Collins’ improvement.

#### **IV. Research Need**

Even though numerous scholars have commented on the relationship between Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins, the majority failed to recognize the influence Collins exercised on Dickens. The notion that Collins’ novels can be characterized as displaying “masterly plotting with vapid and inadequate characterization” (Page 10) was echoed by many scholars, asserting that Collins was in dire need of Dickens’ aid in improving his character portrayals. Most critics, therefore, appear perfectly content casting Dickens into the role of mentor and counselor and Collins as the inadequate pupil.

In this thesis, I would like to argue that Collins has been greatly underestimated and that Dickens in fact took on the role of pupil as he adapted from Collins the ability of plot development. It is not solely Dickens, then, who perfected the Sensation Novel; credit must also be given to the skill and talent of Wilkie Collins.

## V. Methodology

This thesis will consist of five chapters. Chapter one will serve as an introduction in which I will briefly discuss the lives of Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins before they met. I will also trace their friendship beginning in 1851, when Dickens engaged Collins as an actor in one of his plays, to their collaborations on numerous pieces for Dickens' weekly journal *Household Words* and Collins' involvement in the editorial staff of the journal. I will conclude by citing some of the research suggesting that Dickens exerted tremendous influence over Collins while Collins' impact on Dickens is negligible.

Chapter two will provide a detailed analysis of the Sensation Novel and its rise to popularity in Victorian England. I will discuss the establishment of an official Detective Force in England in the 1840s and its direct impact on the popularity of the Sensation Novel. As Wilkie Collins was the first writer to apply the mystery formula to a full-length novel, he is considered the father of the Sensation Novel. In this chapter, I will cite *The Woman in White* as an example of Collins' talent in plot development and his impact on the rise of the Sensation Novel.

Chapter three will focus on the works of Wilkie Collins, especially *The Moonstone*, *The Woman in White*, and *No Name*. I will use these three novels to show Collins' improvement in character portrayal, linking it to the mentorship of Charles Dickens.

Chapter four will focus on the influence of Wilkie Collins on Dickens' writing. I will cite his last two novels, *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, to display a modification of Dickens' style as he gave more attention to plot development

and thus created his own mystery novels. The assertions in this chapter will primarily be supported by correspondence between Dickens and Collins, revealing that Dickens sought advice from his pupil.

Chapter five will serve as the conclusion in which I will summarize my findings and in which I will emphasize once again that Collins' influence on Dickens has been underrated and that even though Collins is by no means an equal to Dickens, he should receive credit for inspiring and improving Dickens' own style.

## **VI. References**

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## Appendix G: Graduate Reading List by Areas of Specialization

### American Literature

Anne Bradstreet, "Prologue," "The Author to Her Book," "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "Some Verses Upon the Burning of Our House"

Edward Taylor: "Prologue"; "Meditation 8: I kenning through Astronomy Divine," "Huswifery," "Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold"

Jonathan Edwards: "Personal Narrative," "A Divine and Supernatural Light," "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"

Benjamin Franklin: *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*

Charles Brockden Brown: *Edgar Huntly*

Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Nature*; "The American Scholar"; "The Poet"; "Self-Reliance"

Edgar Allan Poe: "The Raven," "Annabel Lee," "Ulalume," "Ligeia," "The Black Cat," "Fall of the House of Usher," "William Wilson"

Nathaniel Hawthorne: *House of the Seven Gables*

Henry David Thoreau: *Walden*

Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Harriet Beecher Stowe: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Herman Melville: *Moby-Dick*

Walt Whitman: "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking"; "When Lilacs Last In the Dooryard Bloom'd"; "Song of Myself"

Emily Dickinson: 39: "I never lost as much but twice"; 207: "I taste a liquor never brewed"; 340: "I felt a Funeral in my Brain"; 372: "After great pain, a formal feeling comes"; 407: "One need not be a chamber to be haunted"; 754: "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun"; 479: "Because I could not stop for Death"; 620: "Much madness is divinest sense"; 656: "I started early--took my dog"; 764: "My Life had stood--a Loaded Gun"; 782: "Renunciation is a piercing virtue"; 1433: "What mystery pervades a well"

Mark Twain: *Huckleberry Finn*

Henry James: *Portrait of a Lady*

W. E. B. Dubois: *The Souls of Black Folk*

Edith Wharton: *The Age of Innocence*

Willa Cather: *My Antonia*

T. S. Eliot: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"; *The Waste Land*; "Burnt Norton"

Robert Frost: "Home Burial"; "Mending Wall"; "Birches"; "Design"; "After Apple-Picking"

Wallace Stevens: "The Blue Guitar"; "Sunday Morning"; "The Idea of Order at Key West"; "Of Modern Poetry"; "Peter Quince at the Clavier"

F. Scott Fitzgerald: "Winter Dreams"; "The Ice Palace"; "Babylon Revisited"

Ernest Hemingway: *A Farewell to Arms*

William Faulkner: *Absalom, Absalom!*

Zora Neal Hurston: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Ralph Ellison: *Invisible Man*

Richard Wright: *Native Son*

Robert Penn Warren: *All the King's Men*

Flannery O'Connor: "Everything That Rises Must Converge"; "Revelation"; "Good Country People"; "The Life You Save May Be Your Own"; "The River"

Robert Lowell: "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket"; "Mr. Edwards and the Spider"; "For the Union Dead"; "Skunk Hour"

Allen Ginsberg: "America"; "Sunflower Sutra"; "A Supermarket in California"; "Howl"

N. Scott Momaday: *The Way to Rainy Mountain*

Toni Morrison: *Song of Solomon*

Maxine Hong Kingston: *Woman Warrior*

Introductions to historical periods in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*; literary terms and concepts.

## Pre 1660-British Literature

Geoffrey Chaucer: From *The Canterbury Tales*-- "General Prologue," "Wife of Bath's Tale," "Nun's Priest's Tale"

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Medieval Drama: *Second Shepherds' Play* and *Everyman*

Malory, *Selections from the Morte Darthur*

*Sir Thomas Wyatt*: "Whoso List to Hunt," "They Flee From Me"

William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, *Henry IV*, Part 1; *As You Like It*; *Merchant of Venice*; *The Tempest*; *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*

Sonnets: #3, 18, 29, 55, 60, 73, 116, 129, 130, 144, 146

Christopher Marlow: *Dr. Faustus*, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"

Sir Philip Sidney: *Defense of Poesy*, Sonnets 1, 31, 74

Sir Thomas More: Selections from *Utopia*

Edmund Spenser: Book 1 of *The Fairie Queene*, "Epithalamion," Sonnets 75 & 79

Sir Francis Bacon: "The Idols" from the *Novum Organum*; Essays, "Of Studies" and "Of Marriage and the Single Life"

John Milton: *Lycidas*; Sonnets "How Soon Hath Time" and "When I Consider How My Light is Spent," *Paradise Lost*

Ben Jonson: *Volpone*, "Song: To Celia," and "To the Memory of My Beloved, The Author, William Shakespeare"

Robert Herrick: "To the Virgins: To Make Much of Time" and "To Corinna, Going A'Maying"

Richard Lovelace "To Althea: From Prison" and "To Lucast: Going to the Wars"

John Donne: Meditation 17, "The Flea," "The Canonization," "Song: Go and Catch a Falling Star," "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," Holy Sonnets 5, 7, 10, and 14

George Herbert: "The Altar," "The Collar," and "The Pulley"

Richard Crashaw: "The Flaming Heart"

Henry Vaughan: "The World" and "They Are All Gone Into the World of Light"

Andrew Marvell: "To His Coy Mistress" and "An Horatian Ode"

### **Post 1660-British Literature**

John Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel* or *Mac Flecknoe*

Daniel Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe*

Jonathan Swift: "A Modest Proposal," "A Description of Morning," and "A Description of a City Shower" or "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift, D.S.P.D.," *Gulliver's Travels*

Henry Fielding: *Joseph Andrews*

Alexander Pope: *The Rape of the Lock*

John Gay: *The Beggar's Opera*

Samuel Johnson: "The Vanity of Human Wishes"; The Rambler No. 4 "On Fiction," No. 60 "On Biography," or Preface to *The Plays of William Shakespeare*

William Blake: Songs of Innocence and Experience—"Introduction," "The Tyger" "The Lamb" "Chimney Sweeper" "Garden of Love," "The Human Abstract Divine," "The Clod and the Pebble"

William Wordsworth: *Lyrical Ballads*—"Preface," "Expostulation and Reply" and "The Tables Turned," "Tintern Abbey," "I wandered lonely as a cloud," Lucy poems, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison," "Frost at Midnight," "Kubla Khan," "Dejection: An Ode"

George Gordon, Lord Byron: "She walks in beauty," *Manfred* or *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 1 or 3, or Don Juan, Canto 1

Percy Shelley: "Ozymandias," "Mont Blanc," "Ode to the West Wind," *The Cenci* or *Prometheus Unbound*

John Keats: "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "To Autumn," *The Eve of St. Agnes*, *Lamia*, Selected

Letters.

Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*

Sir Walter Scott: *Ivanhoe*

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein*

The Brontës: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* or Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

Charles Dickens: *Bleak House* or *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson: "In Memoriam," "The Lady of Shallot," "Ulysses"

Robert Browning: "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning: "The Cry of the Children," "Sonnet 43" from *Sonnets from the Portuguese*

Christina Rossetti: "Goblin Market"

John Stuart Mill: *The Subjection of Women*

Henry Mayhew: *London Labour and the London Poor*

Joseph Conrad: *The Heart of Darkness*

Yeats: "Sailing to Byzantium," "Easter 1916," "The Second Coming" and "Leda and the Swan"

T. S. Eliot: *The Waste Land*, "Tradition and the Individual Talent"

James Joyce: "Eveline," "The Dead," *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

D. H. Lawrence: "The Horse Dealer's Daughter"

Virginia Woolf: *Mrs. Dalloway* or *To the Lighthouse*, *A Room of One's Own*

W. H. Auden: "Musée des Beaux Arts," "September 1, 1939," "In Praise of Limestone" "In Memory of W. B. Yeats"

Samuel Beckett: *Waiting for Godot*

Salman Rushdie: *Midnight's Children*

Angela Carter: From *The Bloody Chamber* --"The Bloody Chamber," "The Tiger's

Bride,” “Puss-in-Boots,” “The Company of Wolves”

Graham Swift: *Waterland* or *Last Orders*

## **Composition/Rhetoric and Technical Communication**

### **Composition/Rhetoric**

W. Ross Winterowd, *Composition in the Rhetorical Tradition*

Bloom, Daiker and White, *Composition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Crisis and Change*

Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*

Kent, *Post-Process Theory: Beyond the Writing Process Paradigm*

Tate, Rupiper and Shick, *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*

Wolcott and Legg, *An Overview of Writing Assessment*

Corbett, Myers, & Tate, *The Writing Teacher’s Sourcebook*

Bernstein, *Teaching Developmental Writing*

Mina P. Shaughnessy, *Errors and Expectations*

Belanoff and Dickson, *Portfolios*

Elbow, *Everyone Can Write or Writing Without Teachers*

Elbow and Belanoff, *Sharing and Responding*

Hawisher & Selfe, *Passions & Pedagogies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Kathleen Yancey & Brian Huot, *Writing Across the Curriculum and Program Assessment*

Shirley Brice Heath, *Ways With Words*

Mike Rose, *Lives on the Boundary*

Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*

Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*

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