

## Master of Arts and Ph.D. in English Programs Handbook

### Welcome

Welcome to the English Department at UNLV. We offer programs recognized internationally for their excellence and for their innovative response to both traditional and newly emerging issues of language, writing, and literature. The department offers programs of study leading to the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The M.A. program involves graduate-level course work in English and American Literature or in language/composition studies. This program is designed to supplement and advance the student's undergraduate work in the field of English and to familiarize the student with professional standards, research methods, and modes of thought in the discipline. Possession of this degree typically leads to professional advancement for the secondary school or community college teacher; to careers in writing, editing, and publishing; or to further study in English at the doctoral level.

The Ph.D. program is a highly specialized program designed to prepare and qualify a student for careers in college or university teaching or in related fields through the development of skills in research, original thought, and academic writing. The doctoral program is primarily devoted to literary study, although a concentration of six credit hours may be earned in composition studies. Upon admission a student chooses, with the approval of his or her advisor, three areas in which to specialize: (1) a chronological period, (2) a literary genre, and (3) a major author from outside the chosen chronological period, an additional chronological period, or a special topic. All course work is then dedicated to acquiring advanced knowledge and a high degree of professional competence in the three chosen areas of specialization. Such knowledge is tested in a qualifying examination, the successful completion of which allows the student to advance to the writing and defense of the doctoral dissertation.

*Gary Totten, Ph.D., Chair*  
*Kelly Mays, Ph.D., Graduate Director*

### Mission Statements

The graduate faculty in English at UNLV are dedicated to the careful mentoring of each student. Individual attention to student progress and research goals is paramount. Throughout the academic year, the department offers activities designed to prepare degree candidates for the job market and for college and university careers. In addition to teaching, graduate assistants are involved with research assistance to individual graduate faculty members, with journal editing and composition program administration, and with non-academic internships. The department's commitment to its students includes the guiding of their research towards publication and the provision of funds for travel to conferences and research facilities both in the United States and abroad.

### Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: [valarie.burke@unlv.edu](mailto:valarie.burke@unlv.edu) or [GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu](mailto:GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu).

## Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

## Program Information

Master of Arts in English

Subplans 1-2: Literature Emphasis Track ([Thesis and Non-Thesis Options](#))

Master of Arts in English

Subplans 3-4: Language/Composition Theory Track ([Thesis and Non-Thesis Options](#))

Master of Arts in English

Subplans 5-6: Advanced Track ([Thesis and Non-Thesis Options](#))

Ph.D. in English

Subplan 1: Post-Master's Literature Track

Ph.D. in English

Subplan 3: Post-Bachelor's Literature Track

## Contact Information

<http://www.unlv.edu/english>

*Department Chair*

Gary Totten, RLL 220, [gary.totten@unlv.edu](mailto:gary.totten@unlv.edu)

*Graduate Coordinator*

Kelly Mays, RLL 249, [kelly.mays@unlv.edu](mailto:kelly.mays@unlv.edu)

*Department Main Office – Assistant to the Chair & Office Manager*

Brianna Silverio, RLL 221, [brianna.silverio@unlv.edu](mailto:brianna.silverio@unlv.edu), 702-895-4662, Fax 702-895-3653

*Graduate Program Office*

RLL 255, [unlvenglishgradprogram@unlv.edu](mailto:unlvenglishgradprogram@unlv.edu), 702-895-4366, Fax 702-895-4801

## Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding admission, coursework and culminating experience for [M.A.](#) and for [Ph.D.](#) are found in the graduate catalog.

## Advisory Committee Guidelines

For all programs, a student will organize a committee of at least three department members, one of whom is the student's advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed. This committee will guide, examine, and mentor the student throughout the graduate experience here in the English Department at UNLV. They will also sign all the forms and documents required after each step in the process by the Department and the Graduate College. See the Graduate College's further policies for committee appointment guidelines.

## Degree Program Benchmarks

Master of Arts in English

All Subplans

1. Complete required coursework as outlined in the Graduate Catalog and demonstrate reading knowledge of or proficiency in one foreign language, either by examination in the Department or by taking a translation course with the Department of World Languages and

- Cultures (WLC 198). Contact the Graduate Coordinator for details regarding this requirement.
2. Organize a committee of at least three department members, one of whom is the student's advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed.
  3. Take a pass/fail comprehensive examination, either:
    - a. a three-hour written exam OR
    - b. a sixty- to ninety-minute oral exam

BOTH based on a reading list prepared with the supervision of the student's advisor and committee members. Further reading list requirements are outlined in the Graduate Catalog and on the English Department's website. If taken during the semester of graduation, the exam must be scheduled no later than three weeks before the end of classes. See the Graduate College deadlines for each semester. If the exam is not passed, the student is allowed ONE additional opportunity to pass the exam.
  4. An optional master's thesis carries six credits. See guidelines set forth by the Graduate College in the Graduate Catalog and in its Thesis and Dissertation Manual. If the student selects the thesis option, he or she must pass an oral defense of the completed thesis by the posted deadline and submit a final, properly formatted, electronic copy to the Graduate College via ProQuest. All theses defended after January 15, 2016, must be submitted to iThenticate for a similarity check prior to submission of the final document to the Graduate College. A copy of the similarity report must be submitted to the student's advisory committee at the time of the final defense, and it will be taken into account when determining the outcome of the defense. If the student passes the oral defense, this report shall be attached to the Culminating Experience Results Form and submitted to the Graduate College.
  5. Submit all required forms to the Graduate College & apply for graduation.

#### Ph.D. in English

##### Subplans 1 & 3: Post-Master's and Post-Bachelor's Literature Tracks

1. Complete required coursework as outlined in the Graduate Catalog, including demonstrating reading knowledge of two foreign languages or proficiency in one by examination in the Department or taking translation classes with the Department of Foreign Languages (FOL 198). Contact the Graduate Coordinator for details regarding this requirement.
2. Organize a committee of at least three departmental members, one of whom is the student's advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed.
3. Take a pass/fail qualifying examination, consisting of the following:
  - a. Three, four-hour written exams in three major areas of study (usually a genre, a significant literary period, and a specialty derived from, for instance, literary theory).
  - b. A ninety-minute oral defense of the student's written exam.

BOTH based on the three reading lists prepared with the supervision of the student's advisor and committee members. Further reading list requirements are outlined in the Graduate Catalog and on the English Department's website. If either part of the exam (written and oral) is not passed, the student is allowed ONE additional opportunity to pass the exam.
4. Write a dissertation worth twelve credits toward the degree. See guidelines set forth by the Graduate College in the Graduate Catalog and in its Thesis and Dissertation Manual.
5. After completing a dissertation that has been accepted by the student's committee, he/she must successfully orally defend his/her dissertation. All doctoral dissertations defended after January 15, 2016, must be submitted to iThenticate for a similarity check prior to submission of the final document to the Graduate College. A copy of the similarity report must be submitted to the student's advisory committee at the time of the final defense, and it will be taken into account when determining the outcome of the defense. If the student passes the oral defense, this report shall be attached to the Culminating Experience Results Form and submitted to the Graduate College.
6. Submit a final, properly formatted, electronic copy to the Graduate College via ProQuest.
7. Submit all required forms to the Graduate College & apply for graduation.

## Program Timeline

Master of Arts in English

### Subplans 1-4: Literature Emphasis Track and Language/Composition Theory Track

Of the 30 total credits required (see Graduate Catalog for the kind and number of credit hours that must be taken to complete the degree): Four full-time (from 6 credits with GA to 9 credits without) semesters or two full academic years is the average duration of the program of study for the MA.

Master of Arts in English

### Subplans 5-6: Advanced Track

Accomplished UNLV undergraduates may apply for an Advanced Program Track after completion of 75 credit hours. Students admitted to the program must complete 6 credits of graduate-level work in their senior year with a B or better and must satisfy all of the requirements for the BA in English in order to advance to graduate status. Upon advancing to graduate status, the advanced track requires 24 additional credits, which may be completed over the next two to four semesters.

Ph.D. in English

### Subplan 1: Post-Master's Literature Track

Of the 48 total credits required (see Graduate Catalog for the required credit hours that must be taken to complete the degree): Eight full-time (from 6 credits with GA to 9 credits without) semesters or four full academic years is the minimum duration of the program of study for the Ph.D. Graduate College regulations stipulate a maximum of 6 years without an extension; the actual duration has typically been between 5 and 7 years.

### Subplan 3: Post-Bachelor's Literature Track

The post-bachelor's PhD track (MA-PhD) requires 75 credits. During their third semester in the MA-PhD program, students will work with faculty to develop a portfolio for review. This portfolio should be comprised of the following elements:

1. The portfolio should be 30 - 50 pages in length, containing two or three complete pieces of writing revised from classes taken during the first two semesters of the MA-PhD program. The portfolio must demonstrate scholarly research.
2. The work will also be accompanied by a reflective statement of no more than 1000 words. The statement might include a discussion of how the work in the portfolio connects to larger research interests and/or a potential dissertation project.

The portfolio will be submitted to the Graduate Committee no later than week ten of the third semester. The Graduate Committee will grade the portfolio as follows:

1. Pass: Student will receive MA degree and move on to PhD work.
2. Low Pass: Student will receive MA degree, but not be invited to continue on for the PhD.
3. Fail: Student will be allowed to submit a revised portfolio for reconsideration to obtain the MA degree, but will not be invited to continue on for PhD. Students failing a second time will not receive a degree.

Following the portfolio review process, students will meet with the Graduate Coordinator to receive feedback on their portfolio, including recommendations of professors with whom the student could work during the dissertation project if they are invited to continue on to the PhD.

The Graduate College requires that, in order to remain enrolled in the program, students must be registered for 6 graduate credits per 3 rolling semesters and also be registered for 3 credits in the semester of their graduation. Graduation deadlines are available at <https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/graduation-deadlines>. Over the course of their timeline, students will submit forms and documents in order to progress through the program. These include:

- Appointment of Advisory Committee Approval Form
- Degree Audit Report + Degree Audit Companion Form
- Comprehensive Examination Results Form

- Prospectus Approval Form
- Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy Form
- iThenticate Similarity Report
- Culminating Experience Results Form

### Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

### Annual Review Procedures

Each spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review survey. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student's Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

### Probation

If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the [Probation and Separation](#) section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

### Discipline Resources

The Department sponsors a number of prestigious journals, including *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States* (Oxford University Press), the *Ben Jonson Journal* (Edinburgh University Press), *Interim*, a long-established and well-known literary journal, and the *Far West Popular Culture Review* (as well as its accompanying annual meeting in Las Vegas). Students participate in editing all these journals. In addition, the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute, one of the West's leading literary institutes, publishes the award-winning journal *Witness*, and *The Believer*, a magazine of interviews, essays, and reviews. Students play an indispensable role in the publishing and production of both publications.

### University Resources

#### Academic Success Center

The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

#### Alumni Association

With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

#### Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Registrar's Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

#### Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and

support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment.* This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

#### Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

#### Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

#### Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

#### UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

#### Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

#### Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

#### Office of Veteran Services

The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

**The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office**

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

**Writing Center**

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

**University Policies and Procedures**

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

*Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.*

**Handbook Information**

Last revised	Revised by	Changes summary
05/07/2017	Anne Stevens (Graduate Coordinator)	Added information about new subplans.