

***GRADUATE STUDY  
IN ENGLISH***



***AT  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF AKRON***

November 2008

**GRADUATE STUDY  
IN ENGLISH  
AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON  
BULLETIN**

**CONTENTS**

Graduate Study at The University of Akron .....	1
The Graduate Program in English.....	1
Admission Requirements .....	1
Requirements for International Students.....	2
Financial Aid.....	2
Transfer Credit .....	3
Degree Requirements for the Master of Arts .....	3
I. Literature Track .....	3
II. Composition Track .....	4
III. MFA in Creative Writing .....	5
IV. Grade Requirements.....	6
Graduate Certificates.....	7
Advising.....	7
The Graduate Faculty .....	7
Graduate Faculty Members.....	7

## **GRADUATE STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON**

The university offers a wide range of graduate programs at both the master's and doctoral level and provides substantial resources for graduate study. Bierce Library, for example, contains over 2 million books, audio-visual materials, and archival resources, and subscribes to more than 4,500 periodicals. Because of the university's extensive support services, moreover, graduate students can participate in or use such organizations and facilities as Graduate Student Government, the Arts and Sciences Careers Program, and the Office of International Programs.

The material contained in this handbook focuses on the English Department specifically. It is assumed that graduate students will familiarize themselves with The University of Akron Bulletin: Graduate Edition, the Graduate Assistant Program Handbook, and the International Student Handbook. Copies of all of these manuals can be obtained online (at [www.uakron.edu/gradsch](http://www.uakron.edu/gradsch)) or from the Graduate School Office (Polsky Building 467). They provide current, detailed information about fee schedules, admission and registration procedures, and other university policies relevant to graduate students.

### **THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN ENGLISH**

The English Department offers a master's program in English and an MFA in Creative Writing, offered jointly with Cleveland State University, Kent State University, and Youngstown State University. Our programs enroll approximately 50-60 students, many of whom are nontraditional in their academic, social, and cultural backgrounds. Most graduate courses in English meet once or twice weekly in the late afternoon or evening, and on Saturday, for scheduling convenience and efficiency. Since the master's degree is Akron's terminal degree in English, more attention is devoted to it than in some universities where the doctorate is the terminal degree. Faculty are accessible, and graduate assistants participate in the governance of the English Department by electing a representative to attend faculty meetings.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The English Department requires for acceptance into the M.A. program a B.A. in English, a minor in English, or other suitable course preparation.

To qualify for full admission, a student must meet the Graduate School requirement of a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 for four years or 3.0 over the last two years. **The application must be completed online at the following website: <https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=uakron-g>.** Applicants must request that official transcripts of undergraduate and, if applicable, graduate work be sent to the Graduate School. A nonrefundable application fee is also required. Applications should be received at least six weeks prior to registration, which may occur in the fall, spring, or summer terms. To qualify for provisional admission, the Graduate School requires a minimum overall GPA of 2.5 over four years or 2.75 over the last two years. A student whose GPA falls below 2.75 or who lacks the B.A. in English may be granted deferred admission and given post-baccalaureate status, which is a probationary category.

Applicants to the NEOMFA in Creative Writing must be accepted by the Graduate School at The University of Akron or one of the other three participating universities. They must also submit three letters of recommendation, transcripts, and a writing portfolio. The portfolio will be reviewed by an admissions committee of members from all four universities.

Applicants using The University of Akron as a “gateway” school for the MFA must additionally satisfy the requirements for the M.A. program listed above.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

In addition to the requirements for admission stated above, students whose native language is not English must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Take the TOEFL exam (Test of English as a Foreign Language), score at least 580 on it, and have the score sent directly to the English Department by the Educational Testing Service (photocopies of scores are not acceptable).
- 2) Take the TSE exam (Test of Spoken English), score at least 240 on it, and have the score reported to the English Department as explained in No. 1.
- 3) Submit a 250-500 word description of English courses taken at the college level, making certain that the description refers to the authors covered in the courses and to the subject matter of those courses.
- 4) Submit an additional writing sample, if requested.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Graduate assistantships in the Department of English are awarded on a competitive basis. Applications for both fall and spring appointments will be accepted until March 1. M.A. students may renew assistantships for a second year, and M.F.A. students may renew twice, for a total of three years of support.

Along with the application form, applicants for assistantships must submit a clean copy of a writing sample in the form of a typed essay completed in a college course (5-10 pages), two letters of recommendation, and scores from the general section of the Graduate Record Examination. All assistantship application materials should be sent to the Graduate Coordinator in the Department of English.

Graduate assistants must enroll as full time graduate students (9 credit hours per semester). They may not be employed outside the university for more than 8 hours per week. Assistantships pay for tuition and most fees as well as a nine month stipend of \$8,500. Most of our graduate assistants are teaching assistants and are required to attend a one week pre-term orientation, take a teaching practicum, and teach one section of composition per semester.

## **Scholarships**

First year tuition scholarships may also be available. Also, the Bauer Scholarship Fund provides financial aid in the form of a substantial, renewable yearly grant to one or more outstanding graduate students. Contact the Graduate Coordinator.

## **Diversity Assistantships**

Contact the Graduate Coordinator for information on Diversity assistantships funded by the Graduate School.

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

Students transferring to The University of Akron from accredited colleges or universities may receive graduate credit for courses in which an A or a B was awarded (a grade of B- is not transferable), provided that the credits were earned within the six-year limit of studies for the M.A. and the M.F.A. in English.

No more than one-third of the credits required for the M.A. in English may be transferred to The University of Akron. A maximum of 9 credits from a previously uncompleted degree can be applied to the NEOMFA. Students will have six years from the date of their earliest transferred credit to complete all coursework for both the M.A. and NEOMFA.

Transfer credits will not be posted on the student's academic record until at least 12 credits have been earned at The University of Akron and a grade point average of 3.0 or better has been attained.

Students must have prior approval from the Graduate Coordinator in order to transfer credits from another institution or another department within the university.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS**

The M.A. program in English offers two major options, allowing students to pursue the study of literature or composition. Graduate students may also opt to emphasize linguistics courses related to either "track" (literature or composition). A certificate in teaching English as a second language is also available.

Requirements for the M.A. in English depend upon the degree track a student chooses and whether or not the student writes a Master's thesis.

### **I. Literature Track**

#### **Thesis Option:**

A minimum of 33 credits is required (27 credits of coursework and 6 credits of thesis). Of the 27 credits of coursework, 18 must be at the 600 level and 12 must be in literature or literary theory (exclusive of individual reading).

Graduation Requirement: Candidates for graduation must see the Department of English Graduate Coordinator to complete the departmental Graduate Student Survey.

**Non-Thesis Option:**

A minimum of 36 credits is required, of which 24 must be at the 600 level and 24 must be in literature or literary theory (exclusive of individual reading).

**Required Courses for Both Options:**

3300:665	Literary Criticism	3 credits
3300:506	Chaucer*	3
3300:615	Shakespearean Drama*	3
3300:570	History of the English Language*	3
	or	
3300:670	Modern Linguistics*	3

(Students in the literature track should take 665 as one of their first courses, if possible).

\*Unless the student has passed a comparable course at the undergraduate level with a grade of B or better. The Graduate Coordinator must formally approve all waivers of requirements.

At least one course in four of the following five categories is required:

<u>British</u>	<u>American</u>
Up to 1660	Up to 1865
1660-1900	1865-present
1900-present	

Graduation Requirement: Candidates for graduation must see the Department of English Graduate Coordinator to complete the departmental Graduate Student Survey.

**Other Available Courses in Literature:**

See the Department of English Course Bulletin, which is updated each semester.

**II. Composition Track**

The Master's degree in Composition is for students (including certified teachers) interested in the teaching of English in secondary schools and in the teaching of writing and literature at two-year and four-year colleges. The degree is also appropriate for those planning to enter a doctoral program in composition and rhetoric. The M.A. in English (in Composition or Literature) does not lead to state certification in teaching. Students who desire certification should consult the Department of Secondary Education for state certification requirements to teach in the public schools.

**Thesis Option:**

A minimum of 33 credits is required, (27 credits of coursework and 6 hours of thesis, 6 of which may be individual reading). Of the 27 credits of coursework, 18 must be in composition studies (including courses in composition, linguistics, and rhetoric). Of the 27 credits of coursework, 15 must be at the 600 level.

Graduation Requirement: Candidates for graduation must see the Department of English Graduate Coordinator to complete the departmental Graduate Student Survey.

**Non-Thesis Option:**

A minimum of 36 credits is required, 6 of which may be individual reading. At least 24 credits are required in composition studies (including courses in composition, linguistics, and rhetoric). Of the 36 credits of coursework, 21 must be at the 600 level.

**Required Courses for Both Options:**

3300:673	Theories of Composition	3 credits
3300:674	Research Methods in Composition	3
3300:650	The New Rhetorics	3

Students must also choose one of the following two courses:

3300:579	Grammatical Structures
	or
3300:670	Modern Linguistics

And one of the following three courses:

3300:579	Management Reports
	or
3300:625	Autobiographical Writing
	or
3300:679	Scholarly Writing

Graduation Requirement: Candidates for graduation must see the Department of English Graduate Coordinator to complete the departmental Graduate Student Survey.

The Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair must formally approve all waivers of requirements.

### **III. Degree Requirements for the Northeast Ohio MFA in Creative Writing (NEOMFA)**

The University of Akron, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, and Youngstown State University offer jointly the MFA in Creative Writing. This degree provides students with opportunities to develop their skills in writing fiction, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction. It is the terminal degree for the field. Through extensive practice in workshops and craft and theory courses, students will develop their creative writing abilities while also studying literature and completing a relevant internship.

Students must complete the following courses among the participating universities:

- Writing Workshops                    15 credits
- Craft and Theory Courses            6 credits
- Literature Courses                    9 credits
- Internship                                3 credits
- Thesis                                    6 credits
- Electives                                 9 credits

A total of 48 credit hours is required for the MFA in Creative Writing.

#### **IV. Grade Requirements for Graduate Degrees**

Students are expected to maintain a 3.0 average, which is the minimum average required for graduation. Failure to maintain a 3.0 will cause the student to be placed on probation and may result in dismissal from the program.

## **GRADUATE CERTIFICATES**

### **Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language**

Director, Dr. Kenneth J. Pakenham, Olin 327, Ext. 5216

### **Graduate Certificate in Composition**

Director, Dr. Lance Svehla, Olin 343, Ext. 6807

### **Graduate Certificate in Literature**

Director, Dr. Hillary Nunn, Olin 361, Ext. 7601

For more details, contact the Department of English (ext. 7470) or the program director.

## **ADVISING**

Students are assigned an academic advisor, normally the Graduate Coordinator, and students are expected to consult with the advisor before registration for each semester. The department, in cooperation with the Arts and Sciences Careers Program, also offers career and job-search advising and information.

## **THE GRADUATE FACULTY**

The graduate faculty has a strong commitment to both research and teaching. The members of the graduate faculty have published many books (critical studies, textbooks, short story and poetry collections, and bibliographies) in addition to scholarly articles, and reviews. Faculty routinely present papers at scholarly and professional meetings. The department has involvement in professional journals: *Rubbertop Review*, an annual collection of creative writing, is edited by graduate students, and the department is one of the sponsors of *Seventeenth-Century News*. Graduate faculty members serve as editors and consultants for The University of Akron Press, and for a variety of journals. Faculty members have also won numerous grants. Three times since 1980 the Alumni Association's Outstanding Teacher award has gone to a member of the department.

## **GRADUATE FACULTY MEMBERS**

**Alan Ambrisco**, associate professor (Ph.D., Indiana): Chaucer; old and middle English literature; early English drama; travel literature.

**Janet Bean**, associate professor (Ph.D., North Carolina-Greensboro): composition theory and pedagogy; ethnographic research; writing across the curriculum; English education.

**Mary Biddinger**, assistant professor (Ph.D., The University of Illinois at Chicago): poetry writing; modern and contemporary poetry, multicultural and world literature; gender and women's studies; literature and theory of the city; disability studies.

**Joseph F. Ceccio**, professor (Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign): Shakespeare; gothic literature; legal writing; eros and love in literature.

**Patrick Chura**, associate professor (Ph.D., St. Louis University): the American novel; African-American literature; Hawthorne; new historicist criticism; leftist literature and strike fiction.

**Julie Drew**, associate professor (Ph.D., South Florida): composition theory and practice; cultural studies, especially intersections with rhetoric and composition; literacy theory; film studies/criticism.

**Thomas Dukes**, professor (Ph.D., Purdue): business and professional writing; modern and contemporary British and American literature, especially fiction; gay studies; modern American drama; Queen Elizabeth II and family; Julie Andrews.

**James Egan**, professor (Ph.D., Notre Dame): Renaissance English literature, especially prose; Milton; satire; fantasy and science fiction; gothic literature; vocational literature.

**Antonia Forster**, professor (Ph.D., Melbourne): Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-century poetry, fiction and drama; 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century women writers; 18<sup>th</sup>-century periodicals; Jane Austen; 20<sup>th</sup>-century British detective fiction.

**Janet E. Marting**, professor (Ph.D., Michigan State): composition studies; autobiography and memoir; the essay.

**Jon Miller**, associate professor (Ph.D., University of Iowa): American literature, 1774-1931; literary history; alcohol/temperance history; American political history and literature; Whitman.

**Hillary Nunn**, associate professor (Ph.D., Michigan State): Shakespeare; Renaissance dramatists, esp. Webster and Ford; early modern theater; Renaissance scientific discourse; early modern poetry.

**Kenneth Pakenham**, associate professor (Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh): learning and teaching of English as a second language (ESL); ESL reading; contemporary linguistic variation in English; historical linguistic change in English.

**Arthur L. Palacas**, professor (Ph.D., Indiana): literary linguistics; Black English and composition; linguistics and composition.

**Robert F. Pope, Jr.**, professor (M.F.A., Iowa): American short story; contemporary letters; fiction writing; Willa Cather; James Joyce.

**Diana C. Reep**, professor (Ph.D., Wisconsin-Milwaukee): business and technical writing; film and literature; film genre and history; American literature to 1917; Civil War literature; King Arthur legend.

**Michael Schuldiner**, professor (Ph.D., Kent State; M. Phil., Cambridge): Holocaust literature and history; early American literature; narrative theory (metalepsis).

**Lance Svehla**, associate professor (Ph.D., New Hampshire): composition and rhetorical theory, history and pedagogy; postmodern theory/cultural studies; literary studies, especially politics of literacy; modern drama, especially American.

**William Thelin**, associate professor (Ph.D., Indiana University of Pennsylvania): composition studies.

**Eric Wasserman**, assistant professor (M.F.A, Emerson): fiction writing; literature on Jewish themes; film as literary narrative; religion and its influence on the novel.

The University of Akron is an Equal Education and Employment Institution