

English Language and Literature

Department Website: <http://english.uchicago.edu>
Program of Study

The undergraduate program in English Language and Literature provides students with the opportunity to intensively study works of literature originally written in English. Courses address fundamental questions about topics such as the status of literature within culture, the literary history of a period, the achievements of a major author, the defining characteristics of a genre, the politics of interpretation, the formal beauties of individual works, and the methods of literary scholarship and research.

The study of English may be pursued as preparation for graduate work in literature or other disciplines, or as a complement to general education. Students in the English Department learn how to ask probing questions of a large body of material; how to formulate, analyze, and judge questions and their answers; and how to present both questions and answers in clear, cogent prose. To the end of cultivating and testing these skills, which are central to virtually any career, each course offered by the department stresses writing.

Although the main focus of the English Department is to develop reading, writing, and research skills, the value of bringing a range of disciplinary perspectives to bear on the works studied is also recognized. Besides offering a wide variety of courses in English, the department encourages students to integrate the intellectual concerns of other fields into their study of literature. This is done by permitting up to three courses outside the English Department to be counted as part of the major if a student can demonstrate the relevance of these courses to his or her program of study. Those interested in creative writing should see Creative Writing below.

Program Requirements

The Department of English requires a total of 13 courses: 11 courses taken within the Department of English and two language courses or their equivalent, as well as a Cluster Statement to be submitted by the end of the third week of Spring Quarter of a student's third year. The program presupposes the completion of the general education requirement in the humanities (or its equivalent), in which basic training is provided in the methods, problems, and disciplines of humanistic study. Because literary study is enriched by some knowledge of other cultural expressions, the major in English requires students to extend their knowledge of a language beyond the level required of all College students.

Language Requirement

Two quarters of study at the second-year level in a language other than English (or credit for the equivalent as determined by petition).

Alternatively, students may take two courses in an advanced computer language. Students must submit an Intent Form (<http://english.uchicago.edu/undergrad/resources>) to inform the department of their plan to use the Computer Science combination in place of the traditional language option.

As of Autumn 2013, the following course combinations may be taken to satisfy the language requirement:

CMSC 12100-12200 Computer Science with Applications I-II,

CMSC 15100-15200 Introduction to Computer Science I-II, or

CMSC 16100-16200 Honors Introduction to Computer Science I-II.

Course Distribution Requirements

The major in English requires at least 11 departmental courses. Students may substitute up to three courses from departments outside English with the permission of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Departmental courses should be distributed among the following:

Gateway Requirement

Early on, students are required to take at least one of our three introductions to a genre (fiction, poetry, or drama), all of which introduce students to techniques for formal analysis and close reading. Alternatively, one course from the "Approaches to Theater" sequence (ENGL 10950 Approaches to Theater I: Ancient to Renaissance or ENGL 10951 Approaches to Theater II: Late 17th Century to the Present) may be taken to fulfill this requirement.

One English "Introduction to" a genre or "Approaches to Theater" course

Genre Requirement

Because an understanding of literature demands sensitivity to various conventions and genres, students are required to take at least one course in each of the genres of fiction, poetry, and drama (one of these courses may be the gateway course above).

One English course in fiction

One English course in poetry

One English course in drama

Period Requirement

Reading and understanding works written in different historical periods require skills and historical information that contemporary works do not require. Students are accordingly asked to study a variety of historical periods in order to develop their abilities as readers, to discover areas of literature that they might not otherwise explore, and to develop their knowledge of literary history. To meet the period requirement in English, students should take at least one course in each of the following:

One English course in literature written before 1650

One English course in literature written between 1650 and 1830

One English course in literature written between 1830 and 1940

One English course in literary or critical theory. Courses fulfilling this requirement are designated in our course listings.

NOTE: Many courses satisfy several requirements. For example, a gateway course could also satisfy a genre requirement, or a course on Chaucer could satisfy the genre requirement for poetry and the pre-1650 requirement. For details about the requirements met by specific courses, students should consult the Student Affairs Assistant.

Boldface letters in parentheses after the course descriptions refer to the program requirements that a course fulfills: (A) gateway, (B) fiction, (C) poetry, (D) drama, (E) pre-1650, (F) 1650–1830, (G) 1830–1940, and (H) literary or critical theory.

Cluster Statement

The purpose of the Cluster Statement is to help students organize and give coherence to their individual program of study. Students will design a cluster of at least five courses that share a conceptual focus. By the end of the third week in Spring Quarter of their third year, students should submit a Cluster Worksheet and one-page statement to their departmental advisor and then the Student Affairs Assistant outlining their interests in the field and designating a “cluster” of at least five courses. Up to two of these courses may be from departments outside English. Students will design a personalized cluster that falls under one of the following four general rubrics: (1) literary and critical theory, (2) form/genre/medium, (3) literature in history, (4) literature and culture(s). Students may include Creative Writing courses within their clusters. See the English Department website (<http://english.uchicago.edu/undergrad/undergrad-requirements/#Cluster>) for more information.

Electives

Electives to make up a total of 11 courses. These may include:

Junior Seminar

Junior Seminars, limited to 15 third-year students who have already fulfilled the department’s gateway requirement and taken at least two further English courses, examine different topics and change from year to year. All seminars focus on the analytical, research, and bibliographic skills necessary for producing a substantial seminar paper (around 15–20 pages). They aim to help students prepare the kind of polished writing that some may want to use when applying to graduate school. They are particularly recommended for those wishing to pursue graduate studies in English or those who wish to write a strong critical BA paper.

Seniors-Only Course

Seniors-only courses provide fourth-year English majors with the opportunity to examine literary topics in a particularly focused way. These courses may not be offered every year.

For updated course information, visit english.uchicago.edu/courses. For required student forms, visit english.uchicago.edu/undergrad/resources.

BA Project

The BA Project is an optional component of the English major, but students who wish to be considered for departmental honors must submit a Critical or Creative BA Project. These projects may take the form of a critical essay or a piece of creative writing. The student is required to work on an approved topic over the course of the fourth year of study and to submit a final version to the Director of Undergraduate Studies that has been critiqued by both a faculty advisor and a preceptor and has gone through revisions based on this feedback and guidance.

NOTE: The Creative BA option in English will not be offered after Spring Quarter 2018. Beginning with the Class of 2019, students interested in completing a Creative BA Project should instead elect the Creative Writing major launching in 2017–18.

Students who wish to use the BA Project in English to meet the same requirement in another major should discuss their proposals with both Directors of Undergraduate Studies no later than the end of their third year. A consent form, to be signed by both departments, is available from the College advising office. It must be completed and returned to the student’s College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student’s year of graduation.

The Critical BA Project

The Critical BA Project may develop from a paper written in an earlier course or from independent research. Students who wish to complete a Critical BA Project must submit a proposal (available on the English Department website (<http://english.uchicago.edu/undergrad/resources>)) by the end of Spring Quarter of their third year. On this form, they identify a faculty member who will serve as their project advisor.

Students work on their BA project over three quarters. Prior to the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students will be assigned a graduate student preceptor who will help them develop pieces of their project and suggest revisions. Over Autumn Quarter, students will attend a series of mandatory colloquia led by the preceptors to prepare them for the upcoming quarter when the bulk of the writing occurs. In Winter and Spring Quarters, students will continue to meet with their preceptors and will also consult with their individual faculty advisor.

In consultation with the faculty advisor and graduate preceptor, students submit a near-final draft of their paper by the end of week two of Spring Quarter. By the beginning of the fifth week, students submit the final version of their project to their preceptor, faculty advisor, and the Student Affairs Assistant.

Students may elect to register for the BA Project Preparation Course (ENGL 29900 Independent BA Paper Preparation) for one quarter credit. Note that the grade for this course is on work toward the BA Project and is normally submitted in Spring Quarter even when the course has been taken in an earlier quarter. See Reading Courses for other information.

The Creative BA Project

Prerequisites: Students majoring in English who wish to produce a Creative BA Project must have taken at least two Creative Writing courses in the genre of their project (poetry, fiction, or nonfiction) by the end of their third year. At least one must be an advanced course, in which the student has earned a B+ or higher. **Students in the Class of 2019 and beyond will not have the option of a Creative BA. If interested, they should instead pursue the Creative Writing major.**

Students who wish to complete a Creative BA Project must submit a proposal (available on the English Department website (<http://english.uchicago.edu/undergrad/resources>)) by the end of Spring Quarter of their third year. On this form they declare their intent to write a Creative BA Project in a specific genre and list the two Creative Writing courses in the relevant genre that they have taken as prerequisites.

Students work on their BA project over three quarters. Prior to the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students will be assigned a graduate student preceptor who will help them develop pieces of their project and suggest revisions. Over Autumn Quarter, students will attend a series of mandatory colloquia led by the preceptors to prepare them for the upcoming quarter when the bulk of the writing occurs.

During Winter Quarter, students will continue meeting with their graduate preceptor. In addition, students must enroll in one of the Thesis/Major Projects Workshops (or similar course approved by CRWR) in their genre. Students are not automatically enrolled in a workshop; they must receive the consent of the workshop instructor, who will also serve as their faculty advisor for their Creative BA Project. These workshops are advanced courses limited to eight students and will include not only students majoring in English but also those in Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities (ISHU) and the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH) who are producing creative theses. Students will work closely with their faculty advisor and with their peers in the workshops and will receive course credit as well as a final grade for the workshop. Students should be aware that because of the high number of students wishing to write fiction for their BA Projects, students will not necessarily get their first choice of workshop instructor/faculty advisor.

In consultation with their faculty advisor and graduate preceptor, students submit a near-final draft of their project by the end of week two of Spring Quarter. By the beginning of the fifth week, students submit the final version of their project to their preceptor, faculty advisor, and the Student Affairs Assistant.

Creative BA writers should register for a Thesis/Major Projects Workshop (or similar course approved by CRWR) in the Winter Quarter of their fourth year. Students receive course credit for the work on their project during this workshop and thus are not eligible to enroll in an ENGL 29900 course. This Thesis/Major Projects Workshop in CRWR (or similar course) counts as an English elective but not as one of the courses fulfilling the distribution requirements for the major.

Honors

Completion of a BA Project does not guarantee a recommendation for departmental honors. For honors candidacy, a student must have at least a 3.5 grade point average overall and a 3.6 GPA in the major (grades received for transfer credit courses are not included into this calculation).

To be eligible for honors, a student's BA Project must be judged to be of the highest quality by the graduate student preceptor, faculty advisor, and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Honors recommendations are made to the Master of the Humanities Collegiate Division by the department and it is the Master of the Humanities Collegiate Division who makes the final decision.

Summary of Requirements for the Major

The Department of English requires a total of 13 courses: 11 courses taken within the Department of English and two language courses or their equivalent, as well as a Cluster Statement to be submitted by the end of the third week of Spring Quarter of a student's third year. By Winter Quarter of their third year, students must also meet with the Student Affairs Assistant to review their English Requirements Worksheet.

Two quarters of study at the second-year level in a language other than English

or credit for the equivalent as determined by petition or two quarters of a computer language	
A total of 11 additional English courses is required to meet the distribution requirements of the major (one course may satisfy more than one requirement):	1100
One English introduction to a genre course or "Approaches to Theater" course	
One English course in fiction	
One English course in poetry	
One English course in drama	
One English course in literature written before 1650	
One English course in literature written between 1650 and 1830	
One English course in literature written between 1830 and 1940	
One English course in literary or critical theory	
One to seven English electives (may include ENGL 29900)	
Cluster Statement with five courses *	
BA Project (optional)	000
Total Units	1300

* The Cluster Statement must be submitted by the end of the third week of Spring Quarter of a student's third year. This requirement is worth 000 units. See the section "Cluster Statement" above for details.

Courses Outside the Department Taken for Program Credit

A maximum of three courses outside the Department of English may count toward the total number of courses required by the major. Two of these may count toward the student's "cluster." The student, after discussion with the Student Affairs Assistant, may submit a petition for course approval to the Director of Undergraduate Studies before taking courses outside the department for credit toward the major. Such courses may be selected from related areas in the University (history, philosophy, religious studies, social sciences, etc.), or they may be taken from a study abroad program.

English courses that originate in Creative Writing (CRWR) may be counted toward the elective requirement without a petition.

Transfer credits for courses taken at another institution are subject to approval by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and are limited to a maximum of three courses. Transferred courses do not contribute to the student's University of Chicago grade point average for the purpose of computing an overall GPA, dean's list, or honors. NOTE: The Office of the Dean of Students in the College must approve the transfer of all courses taken at institutions other than those in which students are enrolled as part of a University sponsored study abroad program. For details, visit the Transfer Credit page.

Reading Courses

ENGL 29700	Reading Course	100
ENGL 29900	Independent BA Paper Preparation	100

Enrollment in ENGL 29700 Reading Course or ENGL 29900 Independent BA Paper Preparation requires approval from the Director of Undergraduate Studies. They may be eligible to fulfill requirements for the major if they are taken for a quality grade (not P/F) and include a final paper assignment. No student may use more than two readings courses in the major. Critical BA writers who wish to register for ENGL 29900 Independent BA Paper Preparation must arrange for appropriate faculty supervision and obtain the permission of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. ENGL 29900 Independent BA Paper Preparation counts as an English elective but not as one of the courses fulfilling distribution requirements for the major.

Creative BA writers should register for a Thesis/Major Projects Workshop (or similar course approved by CRWR) in the Winter Quarter of their fourth year. Students receive course credit for the work on their project during this workshop and thus are not eligible to enroll in an ENGL 29900 course. This Thesis/Major Projects Workshop in CRWR (or similar course) counts as an English elective but not as one of the courses fulfilling the distribution requirements for the major.

NOTE: Reading courses are special research opportunities that must be justified by the quality of the proposed plan of study; they also depend upon the availability of faculty supervision. No student can expect a reading course to be arranged automatically.

Grading

Students majoring in English must receive quality grades (not P/F) in all 13 courses taken to meet the requirements of the program. Non-majors may take English courses for P/F grading with consent of instructor.

Advising

Students are encouraged to declare a major in English as early as possible, **ideally before the end of their second year**. Students who declare the major after their second year must notify the Student Affairs Assistant to ensure that departmental advising assignments are arranged. After declaring the major, students should arrange a meeting with the

Student Affairs Assistant, who will help students fill out the English Requirements Worksheet. Students should also subscribe to the departmental email list for majors (ugrad-english@lists.uchicago.edu) (ugrad-english@lists.uchicago.edu) to ensure that they do not miss important communications from the undergraduate office.

Third-year students will be assigned a departmental faculty advisor. Students should meet with their faculty advisor at least twice a year to discuss their academic interests, progress in the major, and long-term career goals. The Student Affairs Assistant and Director of Undergraduate Studies are also available to assist students. Students should meet with the Student Affairs Assistant early in their final quarter to be sure they have fulfilled all requirements.

The London Program

This program, offered in Autumn Quarter, provides students with an opportunity to study British literature and history in the cultural and political capital of England in the Autumn Quarter. In the ten-week program, students take four courses, three of which are each compressed into approximately three weeks and taught in succession by Chicago faculty. The fourth, project-oriented, course is conducted at a less intensive pace. The program includes a number of field trips (e.g., Cornwall, Bath, Canterbury, Cambridge). The London program is designed for third- and fourth-year students with a strong interest and some course work in British literature and history. Applications are available on the University of Chicago's Study Abroad home page (study-abroad.uchicago.edu) and typically are due in mid-Winter Quarter.

Creative Writing

Undergraduate students may also declare a major in Creative Writing. Students who are not majoring in English or Creative Writing may declare the minor in English and Creative Writing. Students interested in pursuing these options should contact the Program Coordinator for Creative Writing for further information. Please note that there is no minor solely in English. The minor in English and Creative Writing for non-English majors is the only minor available through the Department of English Language and Literature.



Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.