



Southern Connecticut  
State University

The English Department  
Graduate Program

# English Graduate Handbook



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# English Graduate Handbook

## Table of Contents

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| <a href="#">A. Welcome</a> . . . . .  | 4     |
| <a href="#">B. English Master's Student Checklist for Success</a> . . . . .       | 5     |
| <a href="#">C. Explanation of Master's Degree Tracks</a> . . . . .                | 6     |
| Master of Arts (MA) in English  |       |
| Master of Science (MS) in English   |       |
| Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Creative Writing                                     |       |
| Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)  |       |
| <a href="#">D. Program Values and Expectations</a> . . . . .                      | 7     |
| Workload  |       |
| Faculty Mentorship  |       |
| Student Ethics and Academic Honesty Policy  |       |
| <a href="#">E. Coursework and Program of Study</a> . . . . .                      | 8-10  |
| Planned Program and Degree Evaluation   |       |
| Changes to Degree Program   |       |
| Registering for Classes   |       |
| Class Attendance and Participation  |       |
| Course Sequencing and Curriculum  |       |
| Foreign Language Requirement  |       |
| Internships and Independent Studies   |       |
| Transfer Credits  |       |
| <a href="#">F. Academic Status</a> . . . . .                                      | 11-12 |
| Full-Time vs. Part-Time Status  |       |
| Leaves of Absence   |       |
| Extension of Thesis or Special Project  |       |
| Readmission   |       |
| Expiration of Program and Coursework  |       |
| Address, Email, and Phone Number Changes  |       |
| <a href="#">G. Advising</a> . . . . .   | 13    |
| When to Contact Your Advisor  |       |
| Thesis Advisors   |       |
| <a href="#">H. Research, Teaching, and Funding Opportunities</a> . . . . .        | 14    |
| Literature and Social Justice Graduate Symposium                                  |       |
| English Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) in Composition                     |       |
| Research Fellowships and Graduate School Graduate Assistantships (GSGA)           |       |
| Other University Graduate Assistantships (GAs)                                    |       |
| Graduate Student Travel Funding   |       |
| <a href="#">I. English Graduate Capstone (Master's Exam and Thesis)</a> . . . . . | 15-17 |
| Registering for the Capstone  |       |
| Credit Requirements   |       |
| Capstone Overview and Dates   |       |
| <a href="#">J. Completing Your Master's Degree</a> . . . . .                      | 18    |
| Applying to Graduate  |       |
| Capstone Completion   |       |
| Commencement  |       |
| <a href="#">K. Graduate Student Rights</a> . . . . .                              | 19    |
| Students Needing Accommodation  |       |
| Parking   |       |
| SCSU Students' Rights and Responsibilities  |       |
| <a href="#">Appendix – English Department Graduate Faculty List</a> . . . . .     | 20-21 |

## A. Welcome

Welcome to the graduate program in English at Southern Connecticut State University. We hope you will find your program intellectually stimulating and flexible, geared toward a variety of scholarly and professional goals. This handbook provides matriculated English graduate students in the MA, MS, MFA, and MAT programs guidelines and advice to facilitate your progress toward the degree.

When and as program changes occur, you will be notified by email. It is incumbent that you regularly check your official Southern email address and to come in each year for advising. As the English Graduate Coordinator, I will be the advisor for all Master's students. If you are in the MFA program, your advisor is the MFA Coordinator. If you are in the MAT program, your advisor is the Secondary English Education Coordinator.

Since I know your work-lives are extremely busy, I am happy to meet with graduate students in person, or by phone or video conference (Facetime, WhatsApp, Skype, etc.). Please email me at the address below to arrange an appointment.

I wish you great success in your graduate education, and I look forward to working with you.

Andrew Richmond  
English Graduate Coordinator

## B. English Master's Student Checklist for Success

\_\_\_\_\_ Read this graduate handbook in its entirety, and keep a copy of the PDF on your computer for reference.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check your Southern email address regularly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Attend the New Graduate Student Orientation and English Department Graduate Welcome Meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ Always register for fall or spring classes as soon as possible. If you have financial or logistical reasons for not doing so, contact the Graduate Coordinator right away for assistance to make sure you get the classes you need.

\_\_\_\_\_ Track your semester-by-semester progress through your degree program using Degree Evaluation in Banner at MySCSU. Use the draft “planned program” you created with the Graduate Coordinator upon admission as reference. For a copy of your planned program and all changes / updates to your degree, log into SSC Navigate via MySCSU and see your “History.”

\_\_\_\_\_ Email the Graduate Coordinator about any changes to your status (Full-Time vs. Part-Time) or if you need to take a leave of absence. Don't fall out of touch; we always want to assist you, no matter your academic or personal situation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Know which graduate capstone you intend to complete – Master's Exam or Thesis – including the deadlines below for registering and applying for each, which typically occur the semester *prior* to the capstone. (Note: all MA/MS students are automatically placed on the Master's Exam track and must apply separately to pursue the thesis option.)

\_\_\_\_\_ If you are planning to graduate, know the dates for applying to do so and for capstone completion by consulting the School of Graduate and Professional Studies deadlines at the Southern website.

\_\_\_\_\_ If you were conditionally accepted to your program, be sure to determine whether you are meeting the terms of your acceptance at the end of each semester (and if you are uncertain, talk to the Graduate Coordinator).

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep an eye out for announcements about assistantships and fellowships (GTA, GSGA, etc.). Some come with substantial funding, and a waiver of university fees if you are a full-time student. If you are interested in a part-time or administrative assistantship on campus, let the Graduate Coordinator or MFA Coordinator know.

\_\_\_\_\_ Stay alert about campus safety, especially during evening classes: (1) Register for the Southern Alert system for updates on weather cancellations, campus emergencies, etc: <https://inside.southernct.edu/southernalert>; and (2) Program the University Police number into your cell phone, (203) 392-5375.

## C. Explanation of Master's Degree Tracks

As a member of the English graduate program, you are part of one of four Master's degree tracks. You should review and understand the degree requirements for your respective program, which you can find in the SCSU Graduate Catalog and the Inside English web pages.

### *Master of Arts in English (30 credits)*

The MA in English is the traditional degree pathway for students who want advanced training in literature, research, and writing, whether for a career in the humanities professions (e.g., publishing, grant-writing, arts management) or a bridge to the Ph.D. It is also an appropriate degree, like the MS, for certified and in-service secondary educators (Grades 7-12). Recent graduates of the program have gone on to competitive, fully funded Ph.D. programs at SUNY-Buffalo, Tufts, and Ohio State.

The Master of Arts is a 30-credit degree, with required introductory courses in Research Methods (ENG 517) and Critical Theories (ENG 508), area and subject requirements in literary periods, and free electives. There is a foreign language requirement. *See the Southern catalog for an overview of degree requirements.*

### *Master of Science in English (30 credits)*

The MS has long been the preferred option for already-certified educators and in-service teachers, as it gives you the same in-depth grounding in literary studies as the M.A. with the opportunity to combine courses in related fields (e.g., Education, Psychology, or Business).

The Master of Science is a 30-credit degree, with required introductory courses in Research Methods (ENG 517) and Critical Theories (ENG 508), area and subject requirements in literary periods, and free electives. Students may take up to six non-English graduate credits. *See the Southern catalog for an overview of degree requirements.*

### *Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (48 credits)*

The MFA in Creative Writing is one of the premier graduate degrees at Southern. It is a full-residency program that prepares students for careers as writers of poetry, fiction, or creative non-fiction, and teachers of creative writing.

Though Master of Fine Arts share literature and theory classes with MA and MS students, the program is a separate degree track with a different admissions process and a curriculum defined by workshops, graduate English electives, and a required thesis. *See the Southern catalog for an overview of degree requirements.*

### *Master of Arts in Teaching (51.5 credits)*

The MAT, with English Concentration, is a new degree program beginning Fall 2019, taking the place of Southern's former MS-Certification in English. It is a joint degree between the School of Education and English Department, providing a graduate certification pathway to teach middle- or highschool English (Grades 7-12). In addition to Education courses, MAT-English students take 16 credits of graduate courses in English alongside our MA, MS, and MFA students. *See the Southern catalog for an overview of degree requirements.*

## D. Program Values and Expectations

As an English graduate student, you are expected to be more self-disciplined and self-directed than an undergraduate student. Faculty members assume that you are ready to challenge yourself intellectually, and they generally see themselves as facilitators and guides rather than instructors, *per se*.

### *Workload*

In coursework, as well as your capstone exam or thesis, you will be asked to grapple intensely with secondary sources—criticism, theory, and history—and show their relevance to literary works you are reading. You will likely need to allot more time outside of class to read, think, and write about texts than you required as an undergraduate. Plan to spend at least twice as much—and up to four times as much—time preparing for class as you do in class per week. Thus, for a seminar that meets for 2 ½ hours per week, plan to spend 5-10 hours reading and writing each week to prepare for class meetings.

### *Faculty Mentorship*

Begin early to cultivate working relationships with your professors; get to know them by attending office hours to discuss your work in their courses, your reading, and your ideas. All of our graduate programs culminate with a capstone experience: comprehensive examination, a thesis, or approved cases, a special project.

If you plan to write a thesis, you will want to think about your professors as potential advisors who might direct your thesis; you will need a list of three potential faculty advisors at time of application (see below). Faculty mentors can also help you secure assistantships, internships, and graduate fellowships. Reach out to professors whose teaching or research interests are akin to yours, and ask how you might team-up early in your Master's program.

### *Student Ethics and Academic Honesty Policy*

The integrity of scholarship is central to the academic and social structure of the University. It is both University and English Department policy that every aspect of academic life must be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Violations of academic honesty are grounds for a failing grade and may result in dismissal from the School of Graduate Studies.

We expect students to behave ethically. In class, this involves paying attention to professors and classmates, doing all assigned work (including reading), and refraining from disruptive behavior (using laptops inappropriately, answering cell phones, texting). Attending class is a requirement, and while different professors grade attendance and participation differently, department policy is that missing more than two class sessions of a weekly seminar may result in failing the course.

All scholarly work produced by students should be free from plagiarism. Submitting another student's work for your own is plagiarism, as is submitting work from any sources that are not properly acknowledged by footnote, bibliography, or reference in the paper itself. Plagiarism also includes submitting previously written papers as if they were new work. All of these forms of plagiarism are grounds for dismissal from the program. Finally, cheating in all forms will not be tolerated and may also result in dismissal from the program. Cheating includes using illicit aids during exams, giving or receiving aid during an exam, and copying from another student's exam or paper.

## E. Coursework and Program of Study

### *Planned Program and Degree Evaluation*

When you are admitted, you will outline a draft “planned program” of study in consultation with the English Graduate Coordinator, which indicates the courses you need to complete in order to satisfy degree requirements for your program (including any special conditions unique to your situation), and a target completion date based on your intended Part-Time or Full-Time status. The draft “planned program” is *not official*; it is merely provided to you as a reference tool to help you understand how you might map out your degree progress.

For all students accepted after Fall 2017, your *official* program of study should be monitored in Southern’s Degree Evaluation, which you can access by logging in to MySCSU under the “Inside Southern” tab at Southernct.edu. The Degree Evaluation records completion of individual requirements for your degree. For help on understanding your degree evaluation – or if you think a course has been counted under the wrong requirement or elective – contact the Graduate Coordinator.

For any notes or changes to your degree pathway – e.g., switching from MA to MS, exam registration, etc. – see Southern’s advising tool, SSC Navigate (via MySCSU) under the “History” section of your profile.

### *Changes to Degree Program*

If you have questions about your degree program, contact the Graduate Coordinator. Such questions include: whether a course can be counted differently in Degree Evaluation; whether an independent study or graduate teaching assistantship can be credited toward a given course; and any errors you see in Degree Evaluation.

For MA or MS students, if you wish to switch from one program to another (MA to MS, or vice versa), you should discuss your plans with the Graduate Coordinator, who can assist you with the paperwork. There is no new application process, unless you wish to pursue the MFA or MAT. However, please be aware that you will be bound by the requirements of the new program you enter, and some credits you have already earned in your initial program may not count toward the new program (e.g., any non-English graduate credits for the MS will not count toward the MA).

### *Registering for Classes*

Students register for classes online in Banner, which you can access via MySCSU, or by going to: <https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/academics/registration>. The Registrar’s Office announces the date that graduate registration for coming semesters will begin. These dates can be found at: <https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/calendar>.

Always register for English graduate classes as soon as possible. Popular courses may fill quickly, so you need to secure a seat; some English graduate courses have been cut at the last minute for low enrollment because students have delayed registering. While we do *everything* we can as a department to ensure this will not happen, take charge of your registration to ensure you get the courses you need.

If you know for financial or logistical reasons that you will not be able to register until a certain date, please contact the English Graduate Coordinator, so we can provide you with options.

### *Class Attendance and Participation*

The English department expects students to attend classes regularly, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period. Personal vacations, no matter how far in advance they have been planned, are not



excusable absences. Barring illnesses and genuine emergencies, students are expected to attend every class session. Missing more than two sessions may result in failing a graduate course.

At the same time, graduate courses are rarely run as lectures, so perfect, punctual attendance does not satisfy the participation requirement. Students are also expected to 1) complete all assigned reading prior to class meetings, 2) participate in class discussions, and 3) complete all written assignments on time.

#### *Course Sequencing and Curriculum*

The first required course for all incoming MA and MS students is ENG 517 Research Methods, which is to be taken during your first semester as a matriculated student, or the subsequent fall if beginning in the spring. ENG 517 provides the “backbone” to your English graduate study, including the methods, writing, and research skills in criticism and literary history necessary for graduate-level work.

ENG 517 is offered each fall, and one of our Contemporary Critical and Theoretical Approaches courses (ENG 508, 509, or 521) is offered each spring. We strongly recommend that MA and MS students take their theory requirement as soon as possible in their course of study, particularly if you are full-time and hope to finish within 1 ½-2 years. Theory courses are also appropriate for MFA students or as an additional elective in the MAT.

Though subject to various area requirements, the remainder of your coursework gives you substantial freedom with how you choose to complete the degree. We frequently offer special topics courses that can be counted in a variety of areas in your program of study.

Questions about course selection and program planning are best handled on an individual basis in consultation with the English Graduate Coordinator, MFA Coordinator, or Secondary English Education Coordinator.

#### *Foreign Language Requirement*

Graduates of the MA are expected to have a reading knowledge of one foreign language, but this is not an admission requirement. The requirement can be met by passing two years, or the equivalent, of college-level work in a foreign language; students may also demonstrate proficiency by means of a transcript indicating a passing grade in four semesters of college-level foreign language study, by a waiver of equivalency from the Southern Connecticut State University Department of Foreign Languages, or through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP).

#### *Internships and Independent Studies*

The English Graduate program encourages all MA, MS, and MFA students to explore and take advantage of English graduate teaching and writing internships (ENG 597) and independent studies (ENG 600) toward English elective credit. The ENG 597 internship is also a required component of the Graduate Teaching Assistantship.

Students pursuing the MA or MS (30 credits) may take a combined total of 6 credits of internships and/or independent studies toward their degree program. Students pursuing the MFA (48 credits) may take a combined total of 12 credits of internships and/or independent studies (though no more than 9 credits each of ENG 597 or ENG 600). Exceptions may be considered with department chair approval.

#### *Transfer Credits*

If you believe you have transfer credits that may be applied to your program of study, contact the Graduate Coordinator for a meeting. A student may transfer up to 25% of their credits into the planned program, provided that they are:

- clearly in accord with the requirements of the graduate program and the student's planned program;
- from an appropriately accredited institution;
- approved by the English Graduate Coordinator;
- approved by the Registrar and Dean of Graduate Studies;
- consistent with the university's guidelines for acceptance of transfer credit (no more than 25% of the credits in your planned program may come from transfer credits)

## F. Academic Status

### *Full-Time vs. Part-Time Status*

Full-time status in the English graduate program is 9 credits, or three courses. Part-time status is 3-6 credits, or 1-2 courses. Unless it is to take a non-English graduate course – e.g., a foreign language class - you are strongly discouraged from taking more than 9 credits, as the normal courseload for three graduate English classes is quite substantial. Notify the Graduate Coordinator if you are planning to change your status from full- to part-time, or vice versa.

### *Leaves of Absence*

If you plan not to register for any credits in a given semester or need to take time off from the program, you should discuss your plans with the Graduate Coordinator. The Leave of Absence form carries a fee of \$150/semester and maintains your status as a matriculated student; it is a requirement if you are completing the Master's exam in a semester in which you are no longer registered for courses. However, if you are ill, pregnant, facing military deployment, or caring for a family member, you may petition the Graduate Dean to have the fee waived. Both the Leave of Absence form and the fee waiver request can be found at the School of Graduate and Professional Studies website: <https://www.southernct.edu/grad/current-students/forms>

### *Extension of Thesis or Special Project*

MA, MS, or MFA candidates who do not complete the thesis by the end of ENG 590 will receive an I+ grade and have 12 months to complete the thesis. If the student has completed all required credits for the degree, they will be withdrawn from the university during that 12-month period, without incurring additional fees. (No registration for additional continuation or completion credits is required.) The I+ provides continued access to university services and buildings (e.g., Buley Library).

Upon completion of the thesis, the faculty advisor and/or department chair will award a grade for the final 3 credits of ENG 590 and notify the registrar that the student has completed all degree requirements. The Registrar will retroactively confer the Master's degree for the final semester in which the student was registered for classes and in which they applied to graduate.

Thesis candidates needing to extend their incomplete status beyond 12 months must contact the Graduate Coordinator or MFA Coordinator for a formal petition to the School of Graduate Studies.

### *Readmission*

If you have left the program without declaring a Leave of Absence, you may apply for readmission. Instructions can be found at the Registrar's page via SCSU One Stop: <https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/academics/registration>.

### *Expiration of Program and Coursework*

You have six years (12 semesters) from the time you enter the program to complete all degree requirements (including completing and winning approval for a thesis, if this is your capstone). If you fail to do so, your program will expire and—unless you have been granted an extension—you will be dematriculated. Moreover, unless you ask for and receive an extension to complete your program, individual courses also begin to “expire” six years after they have been completed (so a class you took prior to admission will set the beginning of your 12-semester time to complete the program). While you may petition to get courses “revalidated,” only 50% of your coursework can be made up of revalidated courses. If you are approaching the end of your time for program, please make every effort to finish on time and consult with the Graduate Coordinator if you fear you may be unable to do so.

### *Address, Email, and Phone Number Changes*

It is important that the department be able to reach students. Please be sure to report all address, email, and phone number changes to the Graduate Coordinator or English Secretary as soon as

possible. It is also your responsibility to notify the Registrar's office of such changes.

## G. Advising

If you are in the M.A. or the M.S. program, your primary advisor is the Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Joel Dodson. If you are in the Master of Fine Arts degree program, you should consult with the acting M.F.A. Coordinator, Professor Jeff Mock. If you are completing the M.A.T. or Post-Baccalaureate, your primary academic advisor is the Secondary Education Coordinator, Dr. Melissa Talhelm.

### *When to Contact your Advisor*

- whenever you would like to talk about your program of study and ideally at least once a semester, before registering for classes;
- if you wish to switch from the comprehensive exam track into the thesis track by applying to write a thesis, or make other changes to your planned program of study;
- if you need to take a leave of absence, or if you do not plan to register for any credits during a fall or spring semester;
- if you know you will be unable to complete your planned program of study within the allotted 6 years (technically, 12 semesters) and need to request an extension.

### *Thesis Advisors*

For students writing theses, the thesis advisor oversees the drafting of the thesis proposal and the thesis itself. He or she becomes the "first reader," or evaluator, of the thesis and recommends that it pass, undergo further revision, or fail.

Thesis advisors are assigned by the Graduate Committee when you complete the Application to Write a Thesis. While you may have a thesis advisor in mind, you must supply a list of *three* potential advisors with your application, in case a faculty advisor is unavailable or the committee determines there is a more appropriate faculty member for your project. Use your time during coursework to develop connections with a range of professors you feel match your interests.

For further information about the thesis or the comprehensive examination, see the corresponding sections of this handbook, or refer to the English Department home page.

## H. Research, Teaching, and Funding Opportunities

### *Literature and Social Justice Graduate Symposium*

For over a decade, thanks to the direction of Dr. Vara Neverow, Southern has hosted a regional literature conference each spring. Beginning Spring 2019, this conference was re-named the annual “Literature and Social Justice Graduate Symposium” to foster dialogue with students, faculty, and visiting scholars about the social justice implications of English research, teaching, and writing. *All* students are encouraged to submit papers from their graduate courses for presentation at the symposium, regardless of whether the topic is social-justice related. A CFP (Call for Papers) will go out at the end of the fall semester, with a spring deadline for abstracts and proposals. To learn more, contact Dr. Joel Dodson at [dodsonj2@southernct.edu](mailto:dodsonj2@southernct.edu).

### *English Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) in Composition*

The GTA in English Composition is a competitive English Department assistantship that offers graduate students the opportunity to observe and teach in the college classroom. We typically award 2-3 per year. Applicants must either be matriculated graduate students in English who have completed 6 credits or more in graduate English courses with at least a 3.5 average in those classes, or newly admitted students whose GPA in undergraduate English courses is strong enough to warrant consideration. Those who receive the award earn a stipend of approximately \$4,800 for the fall semester, when they intern in an English composition classroom and are mentored by the Director of Composition or a departmental designee. They may also be given the opportunity to teach one composition course the following spring, depending on course availability; in this case, they would earn the same salary as an adjunct faculty member teaching one course. For further information on how to apply, see the English Department Inside Southern web page. Applications are due each April for the following year.

### *Research Fellowships and Graduate Assistantships (School of Graduate Studies)*

The university offers two competitive sources of Graduate funding: the Graduate Research Fellowship, and the GSGA. Students holding Graduate Research Fellowships conduct original research (for instance, thesis projects). Students holding the GSGA assist faculty members either in the classroom, helping to design and teach classes for undergraduates, or in their scholarly work, assisting professors with their research. Students who accept a fellowship or an assistantship must be enrolled full-time during the year they hold the award and cannot hold other University-supported positions. Each award carries a stipend of approximately \$12,500 for the academic year. For further information, see the School of Graduate and Professional Studies:

### *Other University Graduate Assistantships (GA)*

The English Department regularly receives calls for paid university assistants – in offices, classrooms, or doing research – around campus. If you would like to be considered for such a position – which are often paid \$20 / hr, 19-20 hrs / week, and come with a waiver of university fees if enrolled full-time – please contact the English Graduate Coordinator and monitor your email for position openings.

### *Graduate Student Travel Funding (GSAC)*

You can receive anywhere from \$100-800 for funding to travel to an academic conference from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee. See the GSAC Conference Funding page at the Southern website for more information on rates of funding for one vs. two-day conference and for attending vs. presenting. Requests must be submitted four weeks prior to conference date.

## I. English Graduate Capstone (Master's Exam and Thesis)

Master's capstones are designed to conclude your program of study by giving you a chance to put the skills you've been building in your program to work. For M.A. and M.S. students, this includes either the Master's Comprehensive Exam or Master's Thesis; for MFA students, this includes the creative thesis that is part of your degree program.

### *Registering for the Capstone*

All M.A. and M.S. students are automatically placed on the exam-track, pending the Application to Write a Thesis. However, both the Master's Exam and Master's Thesis require formal notification to the department of your intention to register for the capstone prior to the semester in which you hope to complete it. Please see the overview of each capstone below for registration dates.

### *Credit Requirements*

All students completing the M.A. or M.S. must complete 30 credits. If you are on the exam track, you will take 30 credits of courses, plus the exam. If you are on the thesis track, you will complete 24 credits of courses, plus 6 credits of ENG 590.

### *Capstone Overview and Dates*

#### • **Master's Exam**

The Graduate Written Comprehensive Exam is the standard capstone project for the Master's Degree in English (M.A. or M.S.). All matriculated students are automatically placed on the exam track, unless they apply separately to write a thesis. Students taking the exam take 30 credits of coursework, typically completing their coursework during the exam semester. (The exam itself does not count for course credit.)

#### Eligibility

To take the comprehensive exam, you must be a matriculated student who has completed or is in the process of completing 27 credits with a 3.0 average. MA candidates need to have completed the language requirement. All MA and MS exam candidates must complete the exam by their final semester of degree credits (30 credits). They must apply with the university to graduate in that semester.

Students wishing to postpone their exam to a semester following the expiration of their 30-credit degree program must contact the Graduate Coordinator by the exam registration deadline of the semester *prior* to their last semester of degree credits.

#### Overview of the Exam

The comprehensive exam consists of 72-hour timed written exam, administered via Blackboard in November or April, and pre-exam portion, the Literature Review, submitted one month prior to the timed portion. All registrants have 7 ½ months to prepare for the exam.

The exam is based on a list of 8-9 primary texts covering representative periods, authors, and genres of English literary studies, including one collection of lyric poetry and one work of literary theory. A different exam list is issued each academic year, each thematically based to help you draw connections and demonstrate what you've learned across works and periods.

For complete information on the contents of the exam, its structure, evaluation, and a sample question, see the Master's Exam Packet at the English Department webpage.

### Registration Deadlines and Dates

Although all students are automatically placed on the exam track, you must register, or declare your intention, to take the exam by Week 4 of the semester prior to that in which you plan to complete the degree.

For the dates of upcoming exams and to register, see Master's Exam and Thesis at the English Department Inside Southern page: <https://inside.southernct.edu/english/masters-exam-thesis>.

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### • **Master's Thesis**

M.A. or M.S. students who wish to write a thesis complete 24 semester hours of coursework and register for 6 thesis credit hours (ENG 590). Students may apply to write a thesis after they have finished a minimum of 15 credits. The production of the thesis typically takes from nine months to a year and consists of an application and initial proposal to write a thesis, approved by the department Graduate Committee; an official prospectus, which must be approved by the thesis advisor and second reader and submitted to the Graduate School; and multiple drafts of the thesis itself, which the student revises after consulting with the advisor and second reader.

### Guide to Writing a Thesis

For instructions on writing the masters thesis, including information on the application and proposal process, deadlines, and links to Graduate School forms, see the Guide to Writing a Thesis in English (PDF): <https://inside.southernct.edu/english/masters-exam-thesis>.

### Applying to Write a Thesis (from the Guide to Writing a Thesis)

The application to write a thesis is a statement of intent to pursue the Master's Thesis track and an initial description of the student's projected topic. It is not a formal proposal. Applications are reviewed by the English Department Graduate Committee and evaluated on the following criteria:

- evidence of a reasonable and focused research topic, related to the student's completed coursework;
- a working knowledge of the primary texts / authors at stake in the proposed project;
- designation of an appropriate list of potential faculty advisors for the project

Applicants should apply no later than one month before the end of the semester prior to that in which they hope to begin the thesis. Applications should include the following:

- (a) A typed cover page listing the student's name, number of credits completed for the degree, GPA, and a list of three potential English faculty thesis advisors for the project (only one will be designated if the thesis application is approved, though the other(s) may serve as a second reader)
- (b) PDF or print-out of the student's graduate transcript (unofficial transcripts are fine)
- (c) A statement of purpose (approx. 300 words) explaining why the applicant wishes to write a thesis. This statement should address the applicant's educational and professional goals; why the thesis serves those goals better than the exam; and the coursework completed that has prepared him or her to pursue the project. For a sample statement, see Appendix III below.



(d) An initial description of the thesis project (approx. 500 words). Your description may be provisional but should identify the primary texts / authors at stake in the thesis you would like to write, show an awareness of some of the secondary criticism on your intended topic, and explain why you think this project merits further research and exploration. For a sample description, see the Guide to Writing a Thesis in English online.

(e) An academic writing sample from one of your graduate courses, with Works Cited page

Submit scanned or hard copies of thesis applications to the Graduate Coordinator: Dr. Joel M. Dodson, Engleman D265C, [dodsonj2@southernct.edu](mailto:dodsonj2@southernct.edu)

Applications to pursue the thesis option are due by April 15 for the upcoming fall semester and by November 10 for the spring semester.

## J. Completing Your Master's Degree

### *Applying to Graduate*

You will not automatically receive your master's degree once you have completed the requirements for the degree; you must apply for it by filling out the online form available here:

<https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/academics/apply-to-graduate>

All students (MA, MS, or MFA) regardless of their capstone completion should register to graduate in their last semester of credits (48 for the MFA, 30 for the MA).

The deadline to apply for Spring Graduation is *very* early, usually mid-September. However, if you miss this deadline, you can contact the Registrar's office to complete a late application (this happens often and, unless you are within weeks of graduation, should not present a problem).

Degrees are issued three times a year, in January, May, and August. The deadlines for the applications are established by the Records Office.

### *Capstone Completion - Exam*

If you are a MA or MS student taking the exam, the department will notify the university of successful exam completion, allowing you to graduate.

### *Capstone Completion - Thesis*

If you are completing the thesis – as a Master's or MFA student – you will need to follow the deadlines *carefully* for the submission and approval of your thesis to ensure its receipt prior to graduation. These deadlines can be found in the Guide to Writing a Thesis in English and are as follows:

- A complete draft of the thesis is due to the committee by the Monday of the twelfth week of the semester in which the student intends to graduate. Upon receipt, the faculty advisor should notify the Graduate Coordinator or MFA Coordinator to confirm a scheduled date for a Final Committee Review. The "Final Committee Review" is not a formal defense but rather an informal review and discussion of the outcomes of the thesis, which may take one of several forms, based on the decision of the faculty advisor and committee:
  - a final in-person review of the thesis with members of the committee
  - an equivalent video-conference via Teams, Skype, WebEx, etc.
  - an email deadline by which all committee members will submit final comments to the candidate
- The final, correctly formatted draft of the thesis and signed committee approval form is due to the Graduate Coordinator or MFA Coordinator by the Monday of finals week. Once the candidate has been notified that their formatted thesis is satisfactorily received, they must file a copy of the thesis with the university via ProQuest.
- In order to be approved for graduation, the candidate must send electronic confirmation of successful submission to ProQuest to (i) the faculty advisor, (ii) English Chair, and (iii) Graduate Coordinator or MFA Coordinator no later than 48 hours before final grades are due. If the student is still enrolled in ENG 590, the faculty advisor then enters a final grade for the thesis. If the student is no longer enrolled in ENG 590, the English chair notifies the registrar (via Degree Works) that the capstone has been successfully completed and the faculty advisor files a grade change for the incomplete grade.

### *Commencement*

Students who have been cleared for graduation by the Registrar's Office are eligible to participate in the Graduate Commencement ceremony (this occurs only in May, but students whose degrees post in December are welcome to walk the following May, and students who anticipate finishing in August are able to walk in the previous May ceremony). Students planning to participate in commencement exercises must complete a commencement survey form (attached to the letter sent to you by the Graduate School when you apply for your degree) and return it by the stated date. Early in the following calendar year, the Graduate School will send a "Commencement Participation" form to students who have returned the survey. Submission of this form will serve as a formal statement of your intent to participate in the commencement ceremony.

If you do not plan to participate in the commencement ceremony, but expect to complete all degree requirements during the coming year, you only have to submit the Graduate Degree Application form to the Records Office. Please note, you must submit the Graduate School commencement survey form if you plan to take part in graduation exercises. If you simply apply for graduation through the Records Office, you will receive a degree but cannot participate in the ceremonies.

## K. Graduate Student Rights

### *Students Needing Accommodation*

Students' requests for special accommodations based on a disability must be approved by the Disability Resource Office (DRO). It is located in Engleman Hall C 105A; the phone number is (203) 392-6828 and the email address is [DRC@southernct.edu](mailto:DRC@southernct.edu). The DRO will assess your situation and determine the accommodations and support services necessary to ensure your full participation in your graduate studies. Instructors are not able to respond to requests for accommodations unless they have been developed with the participation of the DRO. It is students' responsibility to share accommodation plans with their instructors.

### *Parking Permits*

A common problem for many students at SCSU is access to parking. As a graduate student, you will be issued a parking permit that allows you to park in certain lots and to access other lots after 4:30 pm. This permit should have been issued to you during your orientation. Lots available to graduate students:

- Lot #1, behind the Fitch Street Garage between 7 a.m.-11 p.m.
- Lots #5, #12 and #12B between 4:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.
- Graduate students are prohibited from using SCSU parking facilities behind Davis Hall / Clinic only.

### *SCSU Students' Rights and Responsibilities*

Southern Connecticut State University provides an equal opportunity for higher education for all qualified students. The University affirms the basic right of all members of the University community to free inquiry, responsible discussion, and the uninterrupted pursuit of all activities normally associated with the operation of Southern Connecticut State University.

The integrity of scholarship is the cornerstone of the academic and social structure of the University. It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of graduate academic life, related in whatever fashion to the University, shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Violations of academic honesty are grounds for a failing grade and may result in dismissal from the Graduate School.

Detailed University regulations are printed in a number of University publications that supplement this catalog, e.g., the Student Handbook, the Southern News (the student newspaper), Schedule of Classes, and bulletins distributed by administrative offices. Students who ignore these public announcements or who fail to act in accordance with them may be liable to penalties, such as extra fees, fines, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University.

The Student Bill of Rights and the Student Code of Conduct are printed in the Student Handbook (available in the Office of Student Affairs) to help students understand their rights and responsibilities as members of the University Community. The Student Code of Conduct does not replace or relieve the requirements of civil or criminal laws.

All students are expected to maintain acceptable standards of conduct while on the University campus, on property controlled by the University or University affiliates, and in connection with off--campus University activities.

All members of the University community must carry on their person an official University identification card, and must present it on request by a University official or Campus Police. Those who cannot produce a University identification card on request may be asked to substantiate their reason for being on campus. Any person not a member of the University student body, faculty, or staff who participates in behavior contributing to the disruption or obstruction of the activities and operation of the University may be subject to exclusion from the campus and/or to civil arrest. All University regulations apply to part--time as well as full--time students, faculty, and staff. All others also are expected to abide by all University regulations.

Pursuant to the rules set forth in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the University Senate document "Procedures for Grade Change," and the Student Handbook, the Personnel Committee of the English Department shall be the authorized committee to hear and decide appeals for changes of course grades which are referred to the committee by the Chairperson of the Department or the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

## Appendix – List of English Department Graduate Faculty

- BARAW, CHARLES, Associate Professor of English; B.A., University of Vermont, M.A., Middlebury College, Ph.D., Yale University; American Literature; Office, EN 274D; (203) 392-6733; [barawc1@southernct.edu](mailto:barawc1@southernct.edu)
- BLACKMER, CORINNE, Professor of English and Judaic Studies; B.A., M.A., Ph.D., University of California at Los Angeles; American Literature, Gay and Lesbian Literature, The Hebrew Bible; Office, EN 236D; (203) 392-6715; [blackmerc1@southernct.edu](mailto:blackmerc1@southernct.edu)
- CRAWFORD, ILENE, Professor of English; B.S.S., Cornell College; M.A., SUNY-Binghamton; Ph.D., University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; Rhetoric and Composition Studies; Office, EN 263D; (203) 392-7051; [crawfordi1@southernct.edu](mailto:crawfordi1@southernct.edu)
- DODSON, JOEL M., Associate Professor of English; B.A., Wheaton College, M.A., Ph.D. University of Notre Dame; Renaissance Studies, British Literature; Office, EN 280D; (203) 392-6903; [dodsonj2@southernct.edu](mailto:dodsonj2@southernct.edu)
- ELLIS, SCOTT, Professor of English; B.S., SUNY College at Brockport, M.A., Radford University, Ph.D., Emory University; Early American Literature, American Renaissance, Digital Culture and Pedagogy; Office, EN 234D; (203) 392-6742; [ellis3@southernct.edu](mailto:ellis3@southernct.edu)
- FLUHR, NICOLE, Professor of English; B.A., Wesleyan University; M.A., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Ph.D., The University of Michigan; Victorian Literature, the British Novel, EN 249D; (203) 392-6739; [fluhrn1@southernct.edu](mailto:fluhrn1@southernct.edu)
- FUREY, RACHEL, Assistant Professor of English; B.S., State University of New York, College at Brockport; M.F.A., Southern Illinois University; Ph.D., Texas Tech University; Creative Writing, Fiction, EN 258 D; (203) 392-7099; [fureyr1@southernct.edu](mailto:fureyr1@southernct.edu)
- HENDERSON, NICOLE M., Associate Professor of English; B.A., Western Connecticut State University; M.F.A., Emerson College; Rhetoric and Composition Studies; Office, EN 222D; (203) 392-6196; [hendersonn1@southernct.edu](mailto:hendersonn1@southernct.edu)
- HUTCHINSON, BRANDON, Associate Professor of English; B.A., Hobart and William Smith College; Ph.D., University of Massachusetts at Amherst; African-American Literature; Office, EN 242D; (203) 392-6720; [hutchinsonb1@southernct.edu](mailto:hutchinsonb1@southernct.edu)
- JOHNSON, BRIAN, Associate Professor of English; M.F.A., Brown; Rhetoric and Composition Studies; Office, EN 248D; (203) 392-7049; [johnsonb2@southernct.edu](mailto:johnsonb2@southernct.edu)
- KALBFLEISCH, ELIZABETH, Associate Professor of English; B.A., The Evergreen State College, M.A., Western Washington University, Ph.D., University of Minnesota; Rhetoric and Academic Writing; Office, EN 257D; (203) 392-6732; [kalbfleisce1@southernct.edu](mailto:kalbfleisce1@southernct.edu)
- KERR, AUDREY, Professor of English; B.A., Rutgers, M.A., Ph.D., University of Maryland; African- American Literature; Office, EN 240D; (203) 392-5114; [kerra1@southernct.edu](mailto:kerra1@southernct.edu)
- LAROCCO, STEVEN M., Professor of English; B.A., University of Massachusetts; M.A., Ph.D., Rice University; Milton, 17th-Century Literature; Office, EN 239D; (203) 392-5494; [lroccos1@southernct.edu](mailto:lroccos1@southernct.edu)
- McEACHERN, ROBERT W., Professor of English; B.A., Boston University; M.A., Northeastern University, Ph.D., University of Louisville; Professional Writing, Composition/Rhetoric; Office, EN 261D; (203) 392-5526; [mceachernr1@southernct.edu](mailto:mceachernr1@southernct.edu)
- MOCK, JEFF, Professor of English; B.A., University of Iowa; M.F.A., University of Alabama; Creative Writing/Poetry; Office, EN 241D; (203) 392-5527; [mockj1@southernct.edu](mailto:mockj1@southernct.edu)
- NEVEROW, VARA S., Professor of English; B.A., Nyack College, M.A., Ph.D., New York University; Women's Studies, Feminist Theory, British Literature; Office, EN 231D; (203) 392-6717; [neverowv1@southernct.edu](mailto:neverowv1@southernct.edu)
- OGBAA, KALU, Professor of English; B.A., University of Nigeria; M.A., Ohio State University; Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin; African Literature, African-American Literature; Modern British and American Poetry; Office, EN 225D; (203) 392-6738; [ogbaak1@southernct.edu](mailto:ogbaak1@southernct.edu)
- PARRISH, TIMOTHY L., Professor of English; B.S., M.Ed., Louisiana State University; M.F.A., University of Alabama; Creative Writing/Fiction; Office, EN 235D; (203) 392-6745; [parrisht1@southernct.edu](mailto:parrisht1@southernct.edu)
- PETRIE, PAUL R., Professor of English; B.A., Eastern College; M.A., University of Connecticut; Ph.D., University of Connecticut; American Literature; Office, EN 251D; (203) 392-6757; [petriep1@southernct.edu](mailto:petriep1@southernct.edu)
- RICHMOND, ANDREW M., Assistant Professor of English; B.A., University of Massachusetts, Amherst; M.Phil., University of Cambridge; Ph.D., The Ohio State University; Medieval Studies, British Literature; Office, EN 276D; (203) 392-5024; [richmonda1@southernct.edu](mailto:richmonda1@southernct.edu)
- ROSSO, TONY, JR., Professor of English; B.A., The Ohio State University; M.A., San Francisco State University; Ph.D., University of Maryland; British Romanticism, 18th-Century Literature; Office, EN 246D; (203) 392-6744; [rossog1@southernct.edu](mailto:rossog1@southernct.edu)
- SHEA, MICHAEL, Professor of English; B.A., Loyola College; M.A., Ph.D., Miami University of Ohio; Shakespeare, Contemporary Theatre, Film; Office, EN D265B; (203) 392-6741; [sheam1@southernct.edu](mailto:sheam1@southernct.edu)

SHIPLEY, VIVIAN, Professor of English; B.A., M.A., University of Kentucky; Ph.D., Vanderbilt University; Creative Writing/Poetry; Office, EN 245D; (203) 392-6737; [shipleyv1@southernct.edu](mailto:shipleyv1@southernct.edu)

SINCLAIR, MEREDITH, Associate Professor of English; B.A., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; M.A.T., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Secondary English Education; Office, EN 259D; (203) 392-7048; [sinclairm4@southernct.edu](mailto:sinclairm4@southernct.edu)

SMYTH, ANDREW, Professor of English; B.A., University of Dallas, M.A., St. Bonaventure University, Ph.D., Saint Louis University; Secondary English Education; Office, EN 278D; (203) 392-5113; [smytha2@southernct.edu](mailto:smytha2@southernct.edu)

SONNENSCHNEIN, DANA L., Associate Professor of English; B.A., University of Iowa; M.A., Johns Hopkins University; Ph.D., Boston University; Shakespeare, British Literature; Office, EN 237D; (203) 392-6735; [sonnensched1@southernct.edu](mailto:sonnensched1@southernct.edu)

STRETCH, CYNTHIA, Professor of English; B.A., Indiana University; Ph.D., University of Iowa; American Renaissance, American Literature; Office, EN 243D; (203) 392-5525; [stretchc1@southernct.edu](mailto:stretchc1@southernct.edu)

TALHELM, MELISSA A., Associate Professor of English; B.A., M.A., Ph.D., University of Virginia; English Education; Office, EN D272, (203) 392-6895; [mcclaimm2@southernct.edu](mailto:mcclaimm2@southernct.edu)