

MA Handbook, Literature & Writing, English Department Kent State University

(Updated Fall 2018)

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Program Description

The M.A. in English offers students a broad education in English Studies while providing concentrated study in one of the following concentrations: Literary Traditions, Theory and Criticism, or Rhetoric and Composition. See the Worksheets included in this handbook for required and elective course work in each of the concentrations.

The graduate program features a faculty of scholars and teachers with diverse interests and whose work crosses the increasingly fluid boundaries that characterize the profession of literature, cultural studies, and rhetoric. Drawing on a variety of cultural theories—deconstruction, feminism, gender theory, historical materialism, postcolonialism, psychoanalysis, to name a few—the program provides sustained focus on the social functions of all categories of texts (both literary and non-literary), including the conditions of their production, distribution, and consequent use.

Registering for Courses

The University Registrar maintains a calendar of important dates, which include timelines for course registration, and you should check the Registrar web site for exact dates. Registration for the fall semester typically begins in February, and registration for spring semester in mid-October.

Students are expected to review program worksheets for required courses by concentration, to review the Registrar's Schedule of Classes for the upcoming academic term, to address any questions to the appropriate Program Coordinator or Graduate Coordinator, and to sign up for classes through the Student section of the University web portal FlashLine. The department asks faculty to supply course description flyers, and these are announced via the department LISTSERV.

Students in the Master's program register for courses at the 60,000 level. Graduate courses may be cross-listed. If a course is cross-listed with a 60,000 and a 70,000 number, Master's students should select the 60,000 version. If a course in the English department is listed as filled, contact the Graduate Secretary to request faculty permission to add. Required courses are generally assigned 3 credit hours, and 8 credit hours in an academic term is considered full-time. Sign up for 3 courses to reach 9 credit hours.

Students who have received a Graduate Assistantship (GA) receive a waiver of tuition and most (but not all) fees, up to 17 credit hours per academic year. Generally, MA Literature and Writing graduate assistants are assigned to teach one course in the Writing Program in the fall term and two courses in the spring term. Students who are assigned to teach one course (fall) are advised to register for 9 credit hours, 3 three-credit-hour courses. Students who are assigned to teach two courses (spring) are advised to register for 8 credit hours, 2 three-credit-hour courses and 2 unsupervised research hours. Each academic term that you are assigned to teach 2 courses and take 2 three-credit-hour courses, you must request permission to register for Research Hours. Contact the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Secretary to request permission for Research Hours.

Research Hours do not count toward your degree. You will be assigned a grade of "S." Students who are not designated a GA and take courses full- or half-time have the option to sign up for additional research hours to maintain full-time status, 8 hours per academic term, or half-time status, 4 hours per term.

Independent Investigations

Each time a student wishes to pursue an independent study, contact the faculty member with the proposal the semester prior to the registration deadline. Students are automatically approved for two Independent Investigations if they select the Thesis option. One Independent Investigation, outside thesis, is also approved automatically. Additional Independent Investigation requests must be approved by the Graduate Faculty. Consult the Graduate Coordinator to request Graduate Faculty consideration.

Advising

The Graduate Coordinator and the appropriate Program Coordinator act as the initial advisers for incoming and MA students.

The Program Coordinator for Literature serves as the initial advisor for students who have selected either of the following concentrations:

- Literary Traditions
- Theory and Criticism

The Program Coordinator for Rhetoric & Composition serves as the initial advisor for students who have selected the following concentration: Rhetoric and Composition.

During their first year in the program, students are assigned an initial faculty academic advisor. Students may, upon request, change academic advisors. Students who select the thesis option should choose as academic advisor the faculty member who will also act as the thesis advisor.

Two-Year Course Schedule (GAs)

Students are eligible to apply for graduate assistantships. Because of the requirement of teaching for the department and to remain eligible for funding, the department has requirements for academic progress to ensure you remain eligible for graduate assistantship (GA). For full information about graduate assistantships, see “Graduate Fellowships and Assistantships” on page 16. Before registering each academic term, review course requirement worksheets and, as necessary, consult with your academic advisor.

Program Year 1

Summer Semester:

- Register for ENG 61094 Introduction to the Teaching of College Writing.

Fall Semester

- Register for 3 classes for fall semester.
- You will be assigned to teach 1 class in the Writing Program.

Spring Semester

- Register for 2 classes and 2 research hours for spring semester. Contact the Graduate Secretary to register for research hours.
- You will be assigned to teach 2 classes in the Writing Program.

Program Year 2

If you have intend to pursue the thesis option, you must complete and sign the form to request an Individual Investigation with a faculty advisor. The form must be completed and signed before you can register, so you should, during spring of Year 1, discuss potential thesis topics and register for register for Individual Investigation, to begin in fall of year 2. Contact the Graduate Secretary to request the Independent Investigation form.

Fall Semester

- Register for 3 classes for fall semester, and one of the 3 classes should be Independent Investigation if you have selected the thesis option.
- You will be assigned to teach 1 class in the Writing Program.

Spring Semester

- Register for 2 classes and 2 research hours for spring semester. Contact the Graduate Secretary to register for research hours. One of the 2 classes should be Independent Investigation if you have selected the thesis option
- You will be assigned to teach 2 classes in the Writing Program.

Schedule Worksheet, Rhetoric and Composition Focus

Introductory Courses (6 hours)

Semester Passed

61000 Intro. to Research & Pedagogy in Crit. Reading _____

61094* Intro. to Research in the Teaching of College Writing _____

**61094 required only for students on appointment*

Area Requirements (9 Hours)

Literary Traditions (6 Hours) _____

Literary Criticism & Theory (3 Hours) _____

Core Courses (6 Credit Hours)

65044 Research Design (Year one) _____

65012 Reading and Interpreting Research on Writing
(Year One) _____

Elective Courses (12 Credit Hours, taken in year two)

65022: Rhetorical Theory: Greek & Roman _____

65023: Rhetorical Theory: 18th-20th C. _____

65027: Role of Composition _____

65035 Linguistics for Rhetoricians _____

65028: Semeiotics _____

65035: Linguistics for Rhetoricians _____

65051: Literacy: Functions., Practices, & History _____

65052: Writing Activity As Social Practice _____

65053: Writing Technologies _____

Open Elective (3 Credit Hours, graduate level)

Additional 3 hour Elective if 61094 was not required _____

33 TOTAL HOURS _____

(Approved by GSC & revised 2/06/11)

Schedule Worksheet, Literary Traditions Focus

Required Core Course (3 hours)

61000 Intro to Research & Pedagogy

Semester Passed

Required only for students on appointment (3 hours)

61094 Intro. to Research in the Teaching of College Writing

Distribution & Major Requirements (15 hours)

(Note: one of the courses below must be before 1800, or an additional course must be taken.)

Literary Theory and Criticism (min. 3 hours)

US Literature (min. 3 hours)

British/Irish Literature (min. 3 hours)

Ethnic/Gender Studies (min. 3 hours)

Electives (Note: Any combination of the following to complete 33 hours.)

Course Credit Hours (9 to 12)

Individual Investigation 1, or 3 Course Credit Hours

Individual Investigation 2*, or 3 Course Credit Hours

Thesis Option (6 hours)

HOURS TOTAL: 33

(Revised and Approved, Fall 2017)

* Students must request and receive Graduate Literature Program approval for a second Individual Investigation.

Schedule Worksheet, Criticism & Theory Focus

Required Core Course (3 hours)

61000 Intro. to Research & Pedagogy

Semester Passed

Required only for students on appointment (3 hours)

61094 Intro. to Research in the Teaching of College Writing

Distribution Requirements (3 hours)

Literary Traditions

Major Requirements (12 hours)

4 Literary Criticism and Theory Courses

Electives (Note: Any combination of the following to complete 33 hours.)

Course Credit Hours (9 to 12)

Individual Investigation 1, or 3 Course Credit Hours

Individual Investigation 2*, or 3 Course Credit Hours

Thesis Option (6 hours)

HOURS TOTAL: 33

(Revised and Approved, Fall 2017)

* Students must request and receive Graduate Literature Program approval for a second Individual Investigation.

Schedule Worksheet, Concentration for Teachers

Required Core Courses (6 hours)

Semester Passed

61000 Intro. to Research & Pedagogy

61094 Intro. to Research in the Teaching of College Writing

Distribution Requirements (9 hours, 3 courses, each from separate area)

Literary Traditions

Rhetoric and Composition

Literary Criticism and Theory

Creative Writing

Electives

(Note: Any combination of the following to complete 33 hours.)

Course Credit Hours (12 to 18 hours) _____

Project Option (6 hours)

HOURS TOTAL: 33

Academic Standing Policy

Once a year, typically during spring semester, the Graduate Coordinator reviews the progress of all graduate students in course work, and the Graduate Studies Committee assigns a review rating for academic performance: No action, Warning, Probation, Dismissal. The policy permits review and appeal.

Academic standing requirements for graduate students in the Department of English are more stringent than, and supersede, University requirements. Graduate students who fail to maintain acceptable academic standing are at risk of academic probation and/or dismissal.

For MA students in coursework, the Department's minimum requirements for acceptable academic standing are as follows:

- MA students on appointment: minimum 3.50 GPA
- MA students not on appointment: minimum 3.25 GPA

The university policy on academic standing is part of the University Catalog, in the section entitled Academic Policies (<http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/>).

Master's Thesis: Guidelines for Defense

Candidates for master's degrees at Kent State University may choose to write and defend a thesis. The word thesis is used here refers to a formal research investigation on an approved topic. A thesis requires an oral defense and a written paper evaluated by an academic committee convened for that purpose. Culminating projects that substitute for the thesis (non-thesis options) are not regulated by these policies.

Thesis Registration

To begin work on a thesis, the student should select a thesis director (spring semester, year 1) and complete the "Approval of Thesis Topic" form from the list of Kent State Graduate Program Forms (<https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/forms-library>).

The form is signed by the advisor and committee members and accompanied by a paragraph-long description and a reading list. The paragraph description should include a clear statement of the problem to be investigated and the procedure or methodology to be used in the research.

After thesis topic is approved by advisor and committee, submit form Graduate Secretary, who will route form for all signatures, including Graduate Coordinator, Department Chair, and Dean in Graduate Affairs.

Upon approval, a Thesis I section is created for the students. After three credit hours are completed, the student in the following semester registers again for three hours of Thesis I. Students who continue to work on a thesis beyond a second semester must continue to register for Thesis II.

The Thesis Committee

When the student has identified an advisor and developed a thesis topic acceptable to the advisor, a thesis committee responsible for overseeing the progress of the candidate's thesis is appointed. The Advisor and the student, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator if necessary, determines the suitable membership of the committee and invites the faculty members to join. This group will consist of at least three members:

1. The advisor who chairs the committee, from the Department of English.
2. At least two additional members, also from the Department of English.
3. Another committee member selected from another department or school.

The advisor must be a member of the Graduate Faculty who has been approved to direct theses (A-2 Status). A second and third member of the committee must also have A-2 status. Only one member of the committee may have A-1 Graduate Faculty status. The student and advisor may agree to select a co-advisor, who counts as one of the required members from the department. The Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee will, as necessary, review the composition of the proposed committee for appropriate balance, and the topic for strength and suitability.

Note: If a student wishes to select a faculty member who does not currently have Graduate Faculty Status (from department or outside), the advisor and Graduate Coordinator will arrange for faculty member to apply for temporary Graduate Faculty Status. Please allow at least four weeks for application to be prepared, reviewed by appropriate committee, and routed for signatures.

Consult the forms library at Kent State Graduate Program Forms (<https://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-forms>) for the “Recommendation for Appointment to the Graduate Faculty (DOCX)” form.

Preparing for and Scheduling Final Examination

The advisor and student must be present for the oral defense, so the defense should be scheduled with in mind both the advisor and student availability as well as the registrar calendar for thesis defenses. If the advisor cannot be present, the Graduate Coordinator will postpone the oral defense. In the case of long-term absence, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee and the original advisor, should make arrangements for a substitute. Observe the following guidelines.

When the advisor believes the thesis is ready for preliminary approval, the student distributes it to the committee. The advisor will designate the time and place of the oral defense and notify all members of the thesis committee. The oral defense should be scheduled to allow a minimum of ten days for all members of the thesis committee to review the thesis.

The advisor will direct the preparation of the abstract (not more than 350 words). The candidate should give the abstract to the Graduate Secretary at least one full week before the defense. The abstract will be attached to the public announcement of the defense, which the Graduate Secretary prepares, posts, and sends to the Associate Dean of Graduate Affairs, defense committee, and moderator.

No later than one week before the scheduled defense, the student must also send the Graduate Secretary the following forms, to be signed by the committee at the conclusion of the defense:

- Report of Final Defense
- 2 copies of the Signature Page, on approved bond paper (contact Graduate Secretary)
- 2 copies of the Preparation Approval Form, on approved bond paper (contact Graduate Secretary)

For copies of the forms, see <https://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-forms>.

Submit the signature page in appropriate format for printing with the thesis. The signature pages must be formatted to the exact specifications of the most recent style guide. The Graduate Secretary prints two copies on bond paper, which are available for signing and the conclusion of the successful defense. **A thesis with improperly formatted signature pages will be rejected by Graduate Affairs, which could delay graduation.**

Final Examination (Oral Defense)

In the absence of the advisor, the Graduate Coordinator will postpone the oral defense. In the case of long-term absence or enduring illness of the advisor, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee and the original advisor, should make arrangements for a substitute.

The thesis advisor will act as the moderator at the oral defense. That advisor's duties are to preside and see to it that all participants act in a civilized, polite, and proper manner. The advisor should be familiar with the procedures of the oral defense and has the authority to suspend proceedings should a situation arise that would not be conducive to a fair examination. If, in the opinion of the advisor or upon a motion duly passed by a majority of the committee, it is deemed desirable to discontinue the oral defense, the advisor may recess the oral defense until a time mutually agreeable to the advisor, the student, and the thesis committee.

The student will open the oral defense with a brief presentation of findings, after which the members of the thesis committee will question the candidate in an order determined by the advisor. Questions dealing with the substance, meaning and usefulness of the research in the thesis are of greatest priority. Inquiries or comments dealing with punctuation, grammatical minutiae, spelling, etc., are out of order. Such comments should be written out and privately submitted to the student and the advisor.

When, in the judgment of the advisor, members of the thesis committee have had an adequate opportunity to question the student, the advisor may open the examination to non-committee members of the graduate faculty, then, as the advisor deems appropriate, to others present.

When the questioning has run its course, the advisor will excuse everyone except members of the thesis committee and, if in attendance, the Graduate Coordinator and School Director. Parliamentary procedure will be followed to determine the success or failure of the student, with the advisor serving as chair.

The student should be evaluated upon both:

- (a) the overall quality and significance of the thesis, and
- (b) the oral defense of the findings.

A student passes the oral defense and becomes a "candidate" for the degree upon passing with no more than one dissenting vote.

The advisor and members of the thesis committee sign the "Report of Thesis Final Examination," and each registers a vote of "pass" or "fail." Thesis committee members may not abstain in this vote. The Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair or School Director also sign the report, and the document is forwarded to the College Graduate Affairs Office for the signature of the Dean.

Following any revisions required by the committee, the advisor and the Department Chair must approve the final version of the thesis document by signing the signature page of the Thesis and the Thesis Preparation Approval Form when the student submits the thesis.

Formatting and Submission Guidelines

- Students are required to file the thesis electronically.

- Each thesis must be formatted according to guidelines in the current Style Guide and Instruction for Typing Thesis and Dissertations:
<https://www.kent.edu/cas/style-guide-dissertations-theses>
- At the completion of the Final Oral Defense and upon approval, all committee members and the moderator will sign the Signature Page, Report of Final Examination, and Preparation Approval form. Reports also must be signed by the department Chair and the Associate Dean of Graduate Affairs.
- The candidate must file the dissertation electronically. The Graduate Secretary will file the two signature pages, the Report of Final Examination, and the Preparation Approval form with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

Copyright and Embargo

Candidates nearing completion of the thesis are advised to consult their advisor about registering for copyright and options for digital embargo. The embargo form is available from the Graduate Secretary.

Graduate Fellowships and Assistantships

To attract and retain highly qualified applicants to our programs, the Department of English has been able to offer fellowships and assistantships that provide students with tuition remission (“waiver”), a nine-month stipend, and a health insurance premium subsidy. In return for funding, the graduate appointee, designated a Teaching Fellow (TF) in a PhD program or a Graduate Assistant (GA) in a master’s program, is asked to serve in one of several capacities, most often as an instructor in the Writing Program or for the ESL Center. Students also serve as tutors and administrative assistants in the Writing Commons, Digital Media Lab, or as Fellows to the Wick Poetry Center. The department has periodically been able to extend funding to fellows or assistants to the NEOMFA Coordinator or as research assistants to English Department faculty in the Institute for Bibliography and Editing or for other externally funded projects.

Teaching Fellowships are offered to incoming PhD students for up to four academic years, renewable upon satisfactory performance. Graduate Assistantships, also renewable for satisfactory performance, are awarded to incoming Masters students for up to three years (NEOMFA Program) or up to two years (all other programs). Annually, the department issues a call for unfunded students who wish to apply for a TF or GA, and one or more positions may be offered as one-year (MA or MFA), two-year (MFA or PhD), or three-year (PhD-only) appointments, with tuition waiver and health insurance premium subsidy.

The number and program distribution of assistantships that are offered varies by academic year, but the department generally awards assistantships in the following categories:

- Teaching Fellowships (TFs) are offered to high-ranking PhD applicants to the Literature and Rhet/Comp programs, and they are accompanied by a higher stipend. Students awarded teaching fellowships generally teach one section of College Writing in fall semester and two section of College Writing in the spring semester.
- Graduate Assistantships (GAs) are offered to high-ranking MA applicants to three programs (Literature, Rhet/Comp, and Creative Writing), and students awarded teaching assistantships generally teach one section of College Writing in fall semester and two sections of College Writing in the spring semester.
- Graduate Assistantships (GAs) are offered to high-ranking MA applicants to the TESL Program, and students awarded assistantships have similar teaching responsibilities, except that the ESL Center courses are offered on a 7-week basis, and duties are divided into two half-terms during each academic semester.
- Teaching Fellowships or Graduate Assistantships (TFs or GAs) in other units—Writing Program Assistant, Wick Poetry Center Fellow, NEO-MFA Coordinator Assistant, Digital Media Lab assistant, research assistant to Institute for Bibliography—are typically awarded competitively to returning students. Duties vary by unit, but responsibilities typically involve assigned tasks, promotion of unit activities, coordination with director, assessment, and weekly meetings. In return for

performing duties, TFs or GAs are typically excused from one teaching assignment in an academic term.

The department also has several competitive awards that provide a one-semester release from teaching responsibilities or that extend the term of a prior appointment.

- **Pringle Fellowship:** Named for Kenneth R. Pringle, who began teaching at KSU in 1931 and retired in 1972, two Pringle awards permit a dissertation student a release from teaching responsibility for one semester to focus on the dissertation. Students who apply for the Pringle Fellowship are also forwarded to the university for consideration to the University Fellowship.
- **Witte Fellowship:** Named for Steve Witte, a noted scholar of writing research and rhetoric and the Knight Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at Kent State University, Prof. Witte helped found the LRSP program at Kent State. Two annual Witte awards permit a dissertation student in Rhet/Comp a release from teaching responsibility for one semester to focus on the dissertation.
- **5th-Year Teaching Fellowship:** The department awards a 5th-Year Teaching Fellowship to a student with exceptional teaching and a promising publication record. The award provides a fifth year of funding so that a PhD student can share results at conferences and submit for publication while also teaching two courses per semester in the department.

Applications and Funded Appointments

Incoming students who complete applications by the priority deadline (usually January 15) for admission during the upcoming fall term are automatically considered for funded appointments, typically teaching with the Writing Program. Both incoming and continuing students are ranked by program faculty (Literature, Rhet/Comp, TESL, and NEOMFA), with highly-ranked incoming students receiving offer letters upon admission, waitlisted students (unfunded) being notified about approximate status and likelihood of funding, and currently unfunded students either receiving funding offers or being waitlisted. Program faculty rank admitted or continuing students for funding according to program criteria.

- The Graduate Literature Program Subcommittee (GLPS), the elected representative body for Literature Program graduate faculty, ranks applicants, incoming and continuing, for the following degree programs, PhD in English and M.A. in Literature and Writing, Literary Theory or Literary Traditions Concentration. Students who accept funded offers to the PhD program are designated Teaching Fellows and granted up to four years of funding. Students who accept funding offers to the MA in Literature and Writing program are designated Graduate Assistants and granted up to two years of funding. Funding offers renew each year up to initially offered term of funding, based on satisfactory performance.
- The Rhetoric and Composition faculty, a committee of the entire faculty, ranks applicants for the following degree programs: PhD in Rhetoric & Composition and M.A. in Literature and Writing, Rhetoric and Composition Concentration.

Students who accept funded offers to the PhD program are designated Teaching Fellows and granted four years of funding. Students who accept funding offers to the MA in Literature and Writing program are designated Graduate Assistants and granted two years of funding. Funding offers renew each year up to initially offered term of funding, based on satisfactory performance.

- The TESL faculty, a committee at least two members of faculty, ranks applicants, incoming and continuing, for the following degree programs: MA in TESL. Students who accept funded offers to the MA program are designated Graduate Assistants and granted two years of funding. Funding offers renew each year up to initially offered term of funding, based on satisfactory performance.
- The Creative Writing faculty, a committee of the entire faculty, ranks applicants, incoming and continuing, for the following degree program: MFA in Creative Writing. The Kent State Creative Writing Faculty consult with program faculty from consortium schools in the NEOMFA program to rank students, but funding offers from Kent State are made to students who apply to and select Kent State as the NEOMFA Gateway university. Students who accept funded offers to the MFA program are designated Graduate Assistants and granted three years of funding. Funding offers renew each year up to initially offered term of funding, based on satisfactory performance.

Conditional Admission

Students who are admitted conditionally, whether with academic conditions or language proficiency conditions, are not eligible for a Teaching Fellowship or Graduate Assistantship. After conditions are satisfied, a student may apply for funding as a returning or continuing student.

Training for Incoming Appointees

In programs other than TESL, incoming and funded or newly-appointed continuing students are generally required to complete the department's summer training course, ENG-61094, Teaching College Writing, before serving as an instructor in the College Writing Program.

A tuition/fee waiver and additional stipend is provided for the summer III term in which the course is offered. Students who can demonstrate previous training in teaching college writing and related experience may apply to be excused from ENG-61094 Teaching College Writing. Students who are excused from training need to acquire the requisite credit hours if the course is required in degree program—if they are excused from summer III term of Teaching College Writing. Contact the Graduate Coordinator about application process to be excused from summer training and about substitution for and funding of additional credit hours that replace ENG-61094 Teaching College Writing, if it is a required course in your program.

Students who apply for other types of appointments, in second or later year in program, are trained in new duties as part of the appointment. The teaching appointment for students in the TESL program is not in the College Writing Program but through the ESL Center. Training is coordinated through the ESL Center, and TESL students are not required to enroll in summer term for ENG-61094 Teaching College Writing.

Non-Priority Admission and Funding

Students who apply for spring or summer admission are read by the appropriate program committee or the Program Coordinator, but applicants are not considered for funding. Consult web site for deadlines on programs that permit year-round admission. The practice for non-priority admission varies by program.

- The following programs admit, but do not fund, students for spring or summer entry: TESL MA or TESL Cert (applications read by TESL Faculty), MA, Literature and Writing, Literary Traditions or Criticism and Theory Concentration (applications read by Program Coordinator or Graduate Coordinator).
- The following programs do not review applicants for spring or summer admission: Rhet/Comp PhD or MA, Literature and Writing, Rhet/Comp Concentration; NEOMFA. Applications are only read when submitted by priority deadline, January 15, for fall admission. Only applications that are received by the priority deadline are considered for funding.
- The Rhet/Comp program generally does not admit unfunded applicants to the PhD Program or to the MA Program. Students who wish to pursue study part-time or to rely on external funding should contact the Graduate Coordinator at time of application.
- The Graduate Coordinator reads applications to the MA in Teaching year-round, and consults with Program Coordinators for Literature or Rhet/Comp on individual applicants, but MAT applicants are not considered for funding.

Applicants to degree programs that are considered for funding only at the priority deadline may apply for internal funding at the next priority admission term, which is announced on the department LISTSERV. Program faculty rank continuing students alongside incoming students for funding according to program criteria, and newly extended funding for continuing students is announced with a designated term of funding and begins the ensuing fall term (or in summer term, if student is assigned to ENG-61094 Teaching College Writing).

Appointment Term, Academic Leave, and Deferring Admission

The appointment term is 2 academic years in an M.A. programs, 3 academic years in the MFA program, and 4 academic years in a PhD programs. When performance is satisfactory or conditionally satisfactory during annual review, the appointment is automatically renewed up to the initially designated number of terms. Academic appointments are on a series of 9-month academic terms. The department is unable to offer summer funding.

A student who takes approved academic leave in any semester after the first retains the appointment up to the permissible duration of academic leave. No funding is extended during the term of academic leave, but the returning student retains the same number of funded terms as initial funding offer specifies, provided student returns after maximum permissible academic leave.

An admitted student may defer admission, but a student who accepts a TF or GA appointment must begin study during the initially offered admission term. The admission offer remains open for up to an academic year, but the student who defers admission must re-apply for funding.

Annual Review and Reappointment

Each TF/GA appointee has performance reviewed annually, typically in spring for a year-long appointment, in fall if a student has a semester-long appointment. Newly enrolled students have teaching performance reviewed during the first semester of teaching and study. The method of review varies by the type of appointment, but all TF/GA reviews at the individual unit are arranged by the program coordinator or the unit supervisor.

- **Writing Program:** Instructor review is scheduled by the Writing Program Coordinator. Observation and review of continuing or returning instructors is annual, typically in the spring, but new instructors or TF/GAs who have received unsatisfactory performance reviews will be reviewed in the fall. Instructors are assigned a peer observer, and the instructor schedules the observation and supplies the designated materials (syllabus, lesson plan, etc.). Further details about the reviewing process are part of the Writing Program manual. Peer observation reports are then forwarded to the GSC committee for review, in fall and/or spring term.
- **ESL Center:** The ESL Center Director reviews all instructors during the first module of teaching (first 7 weeks), the observation is written up, and a meeting is scheduled with the TF/GA. Observation reports are then forwarded to the GSC committee for review in the spring term.
- **Writing Commons:** The Writing Commons Director reviews performance and communicates orally with a wrap-up near end of semester. The year-end report is then forwarded to the GSC committee for review in the spring term.
- **Wick Poetry:** The Wick Poetry Center Director or staff prepare an annual written evaluation for each GF/TA serving as a fellow. The year-end report is then forwarded to the GSC committee for review in the spring term.
- **Other Appointments:** For other appointments, including NEO MFA program assistantship, Digital Media Lab, or other positions in which one or two students are under the supervision of a faculty member, the program director, coordinator, or faculty supervisor regularly reviews performance and prepares a year-end or semester-end report, as suited to the length of the appointment. The year-end report is then forwarded to the GSC committee for review in the spring term.

The faculty members of GSC reviews performance reports for all students and at committee's discretion chooses one of the following:

- Renew appointment unconditionally for satisfactory performance, up to the term assigned during initial appointment
- Renew appointment conditionally for unsatisfactory performance, requiring additional training and an additional performance review in the subsequent academic term, up to the term assigned during initial appointment
- For second instance of unsatisfactory performance, make recommendation and refer to Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, and Faculty Advisory Committee's *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee.

The GSC reappointment decision is conveyed to the student via email, at or near the close of the academic term.

Students on Appointment: Teaching Performance Expectations

The following items are minimal expectations of any college instructor. For the most part, they involve actions and procedures easily undertaken and can be assessed readily.

Class Punctuality and Office Hours

Instructors are expected to start and end classes punctually and to notify students and department for planned absences beforehand and as soon as practicable for unplanned absences. When concerns unplanned or unscheduled absence from class, notify the Graduate Coordinator and the Department Secretary as soon as practicable.

The general principles for office hours, which apply to graduate students, are the following:

- When teaching one course (3 credit hours) in an in-person and scheduled mode, expected office hours are 3 per week. A minimum of half of those office hours must be scheduled in an on-campus office. The remaining office hours may be virtual or “by appointment.”
- When teaching two courses (6 credit hours) in an in-person and scheduled mode, expected office hours are 5 per week. A minimum of half of those office hours must be scheduled in an on-campus office. The remaining office hours may be virtual or “by appointment.”
- All further details are elaborations on above basic principles, to allow for asynchronous online classes, ESL module schedules, etc.
 - When teaching an asynchronous all-online course, in-person office hours are not required. Scheduled virtual office hours (phone consultation, Skype, FaceTime, Collaborate, etc.) must offer an equivalent substitute for in-person office hours per week.
 - When teaching one course in an ESL module, TESL instructors should follow guidelines above for one in-person course during that ESL module, 3 office hours per week. Minimum 1.5 hours in person, scheduled. Remaining 1.5 office hours may be satisfied with “by appointment” or virtual office hours.

- When teaching two courses in an ESL module, TESL instructors should follow guidelines above for two in-person courses during that ESL module. Minimum 2.5 hours in person, scheduled. Remaining 2.5 office hours may be satisfied with “by appointment” or virtual office hours

So long as the general principles are met—the scheduled number of office hours and at least half of them in the mode that matches the class delivery mode—any further refinements are at the discretion of the instructor.

Syllabus

For every course taught, a syllabus is forwarded to Writing Program or Undergraduate Program, which must include the following. The Provost’s office forwards an advisory before each academic semester, which includes recommended wording on several items below.

1. Course number with prefix, title, and section number.
2. Semester and year of this course offering.
3. Instructor name and contact information—phone number, email address, and office hours, with days of the week, hours, and mode of contact.
4. Statement of course objectives and expectations.
5. Statement for courses that fulfill the university requirements—Kent Core, diversity, writing-intensive.
6. Required and optional textbooks and materials.
7. Course prerequisites, including a statement that students in the course who do not have the proper prerequisites risk being deregistered from the class.
8. Statement on enrollment/official registration.
9. General class calendar indicating the lecture topics, including important dates and deadlines for assignments, tests and/or projects.
10. The course withdrawal deadline. See <http://www.registrars.kent.edu/home/CLASSES/sessdatesrch.cfm>
11. Clear statement of grading policy and grade distribution/percentages for all class requirements.
12. Statement concerning cheating and plagiarism.
13. Statement regarding accessibility and registering for accommodations for a documented disability.

Policies about Assignments

- Reasonable notification of assignments, examinations, and changes in syllabus.
- Provision of reasonable make-up procedures for legitimately missed exams or other graded work.
- Evaluation of work with adequate and constructive comments written on students’ papers or orally, as is appropriate to the character of the test or assignment.

- Evaluation of work within a reasonable timeframe that allows the student to benefit from the instructor's comments prior to the next assignment.

Basic Pedagogy

Although the intellectual and judgmental skills essential for acceptable teaching are more open to interpretation than class management techniques, the following items are presented as constructive suggestions for the improvement of teaching.

- Content, assignments, and approach should be keyed to the level, aims, and nature of the course.
- Methods of communication and teaching techniques should be appropriate to the level of students and the subject matter and delivery method for the course.
- Each class session should reflect thorough preparation, including knowledge of and currency in the subject matter. For instructors in College Writing I and II, ENG-61094 Teaching College Writing provides the requisite training. The TESL program provides training for ESL Center courses.
- Testing and grading practices should relate directly to course content and assignments.

Students on Appointment: Non-Teaching Performance Expectations

Appointments that may not require teaching duties include Writing Commons, Writing Program Assistant, ESL Center Assistant, Digital Media Lab, and Wick Poetry Fellow. Duties vary by unit, but responsibilities typically involve assigned tasks by the unit director, promotion of unit activities, coordination with director, assessment, and weekly meetings. Renewal of a non-teaching appointment is usually at the discretion of the unit director, and students in non-teaching appointments are assigned annual performance reviews.

Unsatisfactory Performance and Termination

The department recognizes a distinction between unsatisfactory performance, which can be addressed by training and counseling, and actions so destructive that they merit immediate suspension and termination.

Criteria for Unsatisfactory Performance

The Graduate Coordinator, on the basis of performance reviews and in consultation with the Faculty Advisory Committee's *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee determine what the appropriate departmental response shall be, such as mentoring or additional training, for instances of the following:

1. Lack of academic progress in the graduate appointee's studies,
2. Unsatisfactory performance of assigned teaching duties, as determined during performance review.

3. In a non-teaching assistantship, the failure to perform duties, such as because of absence or neglect of responsibilities, or similar actions that undermine the ability of the unit to serve its clientele--as determined during performance review.

Criteria for Immediate Termination of Appointment

The Chair, on the basis of compelling evidence and in consultation with the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the Faculty Advisory Committee, may terminate a graduate appointment for the following reasons:

- Academic dishonesty, examples of which include claiming credit for the work of another without authorization or citation (plagiarism in a graduate course) or falsely representing a student's academic performance, based on criteria unrelated to classroom expectations and syllabus guidelines, examples of which include falsely reported exam scores, paper grades, etc.
- Failure to perform assigned duties, to a degree that shows willful intent to disregard assigned duties, examples of which include not holding class at regularly scheduled time and place, not holding office hours, not supplying a syllabus. In a non-teaching assistantship, examples include series of absences at assigned work time or other refusal to perform duties like attending meetings, etc.
- Threatening students, or endangering students, examples of which include scheduling unauthorized field trips or holding class or other educational activity (e.g., tutoring session) in an unauthorized off-campus location, without the knowledge and prior request and permission of the Program Coordinator or Graduate Coordinator.
- Writing or uttering comments so inappropriate, disparaging, harassing, or abusive that they create a hostile learning environment and/or deter students from attending class meetings or other educational activities, examples of which include those defined by the Policy Register (<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg>) under University Policy Regarding Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment.

Appointment Termination and Appeals Policy and Procedure

A decision about suspending a student from graduate appointee duties or termination belongs to the Department Chair in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. A suspension of duties, on well-founded evidence that it meets above criteria for immediate termination or repeated unsatisfactory performance, may be taken immediately, but the recommendation for appointment termination must be reviewed by the Faculty Advisory Committee's (FAC) *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee before it will take effect. The Department Chair, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Grievance Subcommittee must provide to the TF/GA appointee written statements explaining the justification for termination. The student may contest or appeal the decision to the Graduate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Suspension

The decision to suspend a student from performing duties as a Graduate Assistant or Teaching Fellow is entirely at the discretion of the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. A notice about intent to terminate should be filed within three weeks of a suspension. If a termination recommendation is not submitted to or is not approved by the FAC *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee, the Grievance Subcommittee should make a recommendation about when to end the suspension.

Immediate Termination

The Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Coordinator, may suspend immediately from duties a graduate appointee whose performance is designated to meet the criteria for immediate termination. The decision is referred to the Faculty Advisory Committee's (FAC) *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee for review. If the Grievance Subcommittee affirms the recommendation of the Department Chair and the Graduate Studies Coordinator, the suspension will remain in force and the appointment will be terminated at end of the semester. If the Grievance Subcommittee does not affirm the recommendation of the Department Chair and the Graduate Studies Coordinator, the decision about whether to terminate the student's appointment remains with the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator.

Unsatisfactory Performance Termination

A graduate appointee whose performance is designated unsatisfactory in one semester will be offered mentoring services by the relevant Program Coordinator, which may consist of review of teaching materials or recommended training. When additional training or materials review is complete, the completion must be reported back to the Graduate Coordinator.

The appointee shall be reviewed again the following academic term, and a repeated instances of unsatisfactory performance shall be referred to the Faculty Advisory Committee's (FAC) *ad hoc* Grievance Subcommittee, which reviews in consultation with the Department Chair and the Graduate Studies Coordinator, to decide whether to terminate the student appointment. At the discretion of the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Coordinator, the student's appointment-related duties after second unsatisfactory performance review may be suspended immediately, at the conclusion of review by the Grievance Subcommittee, or by the end of current semester or before next semester appointment begins.

Appealing Termination

A student whose appointment is terminated immediately or whose performance is terminated for receiving unsatisfactory performance reviews, and whose termination has been reviewed by the Faculty Advisory Committee's (FAC) *ad hoc* Grievance

Subcommittee, whether decision is affirmed or not, may contest or appeal the termination decision to the Graduate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Other Termination-Related Policies

A graduate student whose appointment is terminated, whether immediately or for repeated unsatisfactory performance, shall continue to be funded through the end of the semester, with health insurance intact, during which the termination was effected.

A graduate student whose appointment is terminated, whether immediately or for unsatisfactory performance, shall be ineligible to hold another appointment in the department, including employment as a temporary instructor.

Contacts and Policy and Form Links

The Dean's Office and University have been revising forms and requiring form-filled rather than hand-written or typewritten copies. Please follow the latest guidance from Dean's Office and Graduate Coordinator's office about proper form completion and form filing.

The Graduate Coordinator and Program Coordinators may serve multi-year terms of office, but membership may change at start of academic year. These will be published on the department website and notification sent to the Graduate Student LISTSERV.

Policy and Form Links

The College of Arts and Sciences has a Forms and Resources page, which maintains a list of the most commonly used and currently approved forms. It also provides a link to a form library for less commonly used forms.

<https://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-forms>

Program Contacts

English Department Graduate Studies Coordinator

Office: 113-B Satterfield Hall

Phone: (330) 672-1779

English Department Graduate Secretary

Office: 113-C Satterfield Hall

Phone: (330) 672-1708

Program Coordinator for Literature and for Rhetoric and Composition

On English Department home page (<https://www.kent.edu/english>), consult Faculty and Staff page. Program Coordinators are generally elected to two-year terms.