

Stony Brook Department of English Ph.D. Program Requirements and Schedule:

General Information: All students in the English Ph.D. program are full time and hold four-year Teaching Assistantships with tuition scholarship; they teach one course in each semester. Graduate Council and Turner Fellows follow the same path but enjoy a fifth-year of full funding and tuition waiver without teaching obligations. We strongly encourage our students to complete the Ph.D. during the four-year time period. The time limit for completion of the Ph.D. is seven years for students entering with the M.A degree or seven years after the completion of twenty-four graduate credits. Extensions may be requested for the completion of the dissertation, but we urge students to complete the Ph.D. in a timely fashion.

Provisional Teaching Schedule: Students will assist as Teaching Assistants in large lecture courses in their first year; teach composition for the Writing Program in their second and third years; and teach English 190 (Introduction to Literature) in their fourth year. This schedule is subject to change at any time due to budgetary constraints and circumstances out of the English Department's control. Although every effort will be made to offer the exact same teaching opportunity to each four-year teaching assistant, this will not be possible in every case.

The Foreign Language Requirement:

Students must demonstrate the ability to translate writings of moderate difficulty in one foreign language appropriate to the area of study and hence ability to make use of relevant literary and scholarly writings in this language.¹ Students can satisfy this requirement in three ways:

- By obtaining a grade of B or higher in a 500-level reading/translation course (e.g. FRN 500, GER 500) or other graduate course offered in a foreign language or literature. Language courses offered at other institutions will need the approval of the Graduate Program Director to fulfill this requirement.
- By passing a translation exam (from the foreign language into English). Students may use a dictionary for this exam; passages will be set by examiners from other departments or from English. Contact the Graduate Program Director to arrange an exam.
- By conducting research in, and translation of, a foreign language in the course of writing a seminar paper submitted in any 600-level course (including EGL 600, the proseminar). Students who select this option must complete the appropriate form before submitting the paper, and their plan must be approved by both the instructor of the seminar and the Graduate Program Director.

Please note: this requirement represents the *minimum* level of fluency and engagement with foreign languages required for the Ph.D. in English. Students should consult with faculty members in their intended areas of specialty early to ascertain whether advanced proficiency and/or additional languages will be necessary to conduct research in their field(s).

The following languages are automatically accepted for fulfilling the language requirement: Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Other languages relevant

¹ This policy governs students admitted from Fall 2008 to the present. Students admitted in previous years must follow the previous requirement for two languages.

to a student's graduate program may be approved upon petition to the Graduate Program Director.

Important Reminder: Students will not be permitted to take the General Examination without satisfying the foreign language requirement. The Graduate Program Committee strongly recommends that students satisfy the requirement during their first two years of coursework.

Course Work:

Students who enter with a B.A. or M.A. take eleven courses in total, seven of which must be 600-level doctoral seminars.

Note: No course numbers in the 69X range will count toward the eleven-course requirement.

English 600, the Pro-Seminar: The Discipline of Literary Studies

All students must take English 600 in the first fall semester of entry into the program. English 600 qualifies as one of the required doctoral seminars.

English 698: The Teaching Practicum

All students must take English 698 in the first semester in which they teach in the Writing Program (the beginning of the second year). English 698 does not count as one of the eleven required graduate courses.

Although our doctoral program does not require particular courses other than EGL 600 and 698, students are strongly encouraged to take at least two seminars outside of their field(s) of intended specialization. On a practical level, taking courses in other periods enables students to market themselves as generalists when they apply for academic positions. On an intellectual level, a broad training provides students with a deep history of the period(s) in which they intend to work. Students should consult with their advisors and the Graduate Program Director before they register for courses in order to develop a plan of study that will both build a coherent body of knowledge for their scholarly work and position them to teach a wide variety of courses later in their careers.

Students may take up to five graduate courses in other departments, but they must submit a written request to the Graduate Program Director to do so (and receive the GPD's written approval) in the semester before which these courses are to be taken. It is recommended, however, that students take most of their course work in the English Department, as this is important for the development of close mentoring relationships with the English faculty. Close ties with the English faculty in the student's area of study are crucial—in respect to forming exam and dissertation committees, and in terms of attaining the most effective guidance for job placement.

Incompletes: Faculty may choose to grant graduate students an Incomplete. The Incomplete must be made up—the work must be submitted to the faculty member—on or before the beginning of the next semester. That is university policy. Students who take Incompletes in the fall must finish their work before the first day of class in January, and those who take

Incompletes in the spring must finish their work before the first day of class in September. After that, the Registrar automatically converts the "I" to an "I/F" and calculates it as an "F." If the Incomplete is not made up on this schedule, the grade for the course *will remain* an "I/F." Students who have special circumstances that justify having more time to make up the Incomplete should meet with the Graduate Director, then file a written request for an extension. The Graduate Director will make a decision on each case in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee (GPC). Requests should explain the circumstances, detail the work completed to date on the seminar paper (or other assignment), and set a realistic timetable for finishing it. Although decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, the GPC's goal is to keep Incompletes—and particularly multiple Incompletes—from being carried over from semester to semester.

Full Time Enrollment

To maintain full time status (necessary for tuition scholarship) students must enroll for:

- 12** graduate credits if you are **G3** status (Ph.D. students who entered without the M.A. and have completed fewer than 24 graduate credits).
- 9** graduate credits if you are **G4** status (Ph.D. students who entered with the M.A. or have completed 24 graduate credits).
- 9** graduate credits if you are **G5** status (Ph.D. students who have advanced to candidacy).

The following courses may be taken to fulfill full-time status, but they do not count toward the eleven courses required for the Ph.D.:

- EGL 690—Directed Readings (for G4 students studying for exams & working on special fields).
- EGL 695—Methods of Teaching English (for G3 students during their first-year).
- EGL 697— Practicum in Teaching English Literature (for students teaching 190s).
- EGL 699—Dissertation Research on Campus (for students who have advanced to candidacy).
- EGL 700—Dissertation Research off Campus, Domestic.
- EGL 701-- Dissertation Research off Campus, International.

Note: Enroll in these courses under the section number of your advisor. If your advisor is on leave, use the section number of another committee member **in the English department** or the section number of the graduate director (and notify him or her). Students who are on a TA line or graduating **during the summer** should enroll for zero credits of EGL 800 to maintain full-time status.

Minimum Grade Point Average

To remain in good standing students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 in courses numbered 500 or higher taken at Stony Brook. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. When a student's cumulative graduate grade-point average falls below B (3.0) for grades attempted in courses numbered 500 and above taken at Stony Brook, the student shall be placed on probation for the subsequent semester. A student on academic probation who fails to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of the second semester on probation will usually not be permitted to re-enroll. Students who do not maintain a GPA of at least 3.5 may jeopardize their TA assignment (and stipend) in the English department.

General Examination and Special Field Conversation:

I. The General Examination

When is the General Examination taken?

Students must take their General Examination at the beginning of the third year (no later than the student's fifth semester).

When is the faculty committee of examiners formed?

The three-person committee of examiners, comprised of a chairperson and two other faculty members, must be formed no later than the student's fourth semester in the program (preferably earlier).

Who may serve on the General Examination committee?

The three-person faculty committee must have at least two members from the English Department.

Deadlines for taking the General Examination:

One month prior to taking the examination, all three reading lists (there are three parts to the exam, as explained in the next section) must be signed by all three faculty members of the General Examination committee. Copies of the signed reading lists must be turned into the Graduate Office at this time.

Two weeks prior to the exam, the General Examination chairperson must inform the Graduate Office, in writing, of the date, time and place of the exam.

Note: The foreign language requirement **must** be completed before the General Examination.

What is the General Examination?

The General Examination is a three-part, three-hour oral exam with three examiners. Two parts of the examination must focus on two different literary periods of approximately 100 years each, and the third will either address another literary period or engage a problem or area of special interest (e.g. a genre, issues, or a line of theoretical inquiry).

In consultation with their examiners, students will offer reading lists for this examination that outline the area of inquiry for each part of their exam. Because one of the purposes of the exam is to give students the opportunity to make sense of their lists, the period lists may or may not vary from traditional literary historical divisions of the anthologies. Whereas one student may follow traditional texts for a literary period, another may choose to study non-canonical texts within a traditional chronological range, while another may redefine the range (e.g. 1750-1850, or 1850-1945, instead of the eighteenth century, nineteenth century, or twentieth century). Taking this examination brings students a step closer to assuming their professional roles as scholars and teachers. To promote this kind of professional development, to facilitate students' studying and focus, and to enhance conversations that make up examinations:

- 1) For the first part, the student will submit to his or her committee, at least two weeks prior to the exam, a 15-30 page paper related to a particular period or problem area. In most cases, this will be a revised seminar paper, and will include a bibliography. The paper is not intended as additional work, but rather as a way for the student to organize an approach to one of the lists. During the exam, the paper will serve as a spring-board for discussion of the entire period or problem area being examined.
- 2) For the second part, the student will submit to his or her committee, at least two weeks prior to the exam, a syllabus and bibliography of background reading for an advanced undergraduate course in a particular period or problem area. Questions regarding pedagogical and theoretical approach, as well as inquiries into content and criteria of selection, will help to initiate and focus discussion of the entire period or problem area being examined.
- 3) For the third part, the student may simply invite questions without using one of the above devices, or may submit another paper or syllabus (or some piece of writing agreeable to the committee) as a means of generating and directing discussion of the entire list.

The examination committee will consist of a chairperson selected by the student and two other faculty members appointed by the graduate program director in consultation with the chairperson. In consultation with his or her chairperson and committee, the student may choose to take the exam in two parts. All three members of the committee must be present for all parts of the exam.

Each of the three parts will be judged separately as either pass or fail. Each failed part may be retaken one additional time, no later than one year after the original examination. Students who fail part or all of the General Examination twice may not continue in the program. Students with special circumstances may petition the Graduate Program Committee for a second retake of the exam.

II. Special Field Conversation

When is the Special Field Conversation taken?

In the second semester of the third year (no later than the sixth semester).

When is the Conversation scheduled with the Graduate Office?

Students must submit the proper paperwork with the Graduate Office six weeks prior to the exam date. The Graduate Office will then schedule the exam date, time, and place.

Who may serve on the Conversation committee?

The conversation committee must include three faculty members chosen by the student. At least two of these faculty members must be from the English Department.

Deadlines for taking the Special Field Conversation:

One month prior to the scheduled conversation, the rationale and reading list (as explained below) must be approved by the Special Field Conversation committee members and submitted in final form to the Graduate Office, which then submits proper forms to the Graduate School.

Reminder: All coursework for the English Ph.D. must be completed before the Special Field Conversation.

What is the Special Field Conversation?

The conversation is based on a 10-20 page written rationale and a reading list prepared by the student with the advice and approval of the student's chosen committee, and approved by the Graduate Program Director.

The focus of the conversation will be the topic that the student has chosen for his or her dissertation; thus, the reading list will embrace the various kinds of texts that the student must engage in order to begin writing.

Within one week following the Special Field Conversation, a summary of the Conversation must be written by the student, signed by the Conversation chairperson, and submitted to the Graduate Office.

Ph.D. Candidacy:

Students are advanced to Ph.D. candidacy (G5) only after all of the above requirements in this handbook are met.

Dissertation:**When must the Dissertation Proposal be turned in to the Graduate Office?**

The Dissertation Proposal must be turned in no later than the beginning of the fourth year (the seventh semester). Students must prepare a written statement setting out the scope and method of the dissertation and submit it to their dissertation director and three other faculty members who will serve as readers. After the readers and director have discussed the proposal, and signed the approval form, the director will submit the signed proposal to the Graduate Office for approval. The dissertation proposal must have the signatures of **all** readers (including the outside reader) when it is submitted to the Graduate Office.

How is a Dissertation Committee comprised?

The Dissertation Committee must be comprised of three English department faculty members and one outside reader from another department or another university. If a student chooses (in consultation with her committee and director), she may add additional outside readers.

When must the final complete draft of the Dissertation be submitted to the faculty committee?

At least eight weeks before the intended dissertation defense date.

When is the Defense date formally scheduled through the graduate office?

Four weeks in advance of the intended Defense date, the dissertation director will schedule the Defense with the Graduate Office and the Graduate School (if all of the readers agree that the dissertation is ready to be defended). (This is distinct from the actual acceptance of the dissertation, which can take place only at the defense itself.) **At this time, a 350-word abstract of the dissertation and a form announcing the time and place of the defense must be given to the Graduate Program Director, who will submit it electronically to the Graduate School.**

What is the Dissertation Defense?

Students will present the results of their dissertation research at a colloquium convened for that purpose by the Department of English. The colloquium will be open to all interested SUNY Stony Brook faculty and graduate students. **All** members of the Dissertation Examining Committee must be present at the defense; outside readers may participate via videoconference.

How is the Dissertation presented to the Graduate School?

The Graduate School has a guidebook that explains the format required for the dissertation. The format is very detailed and complex, and the requirements are quite stringent. Please be sure to obtain this guidebook in advance of completing and delivering the final form of the dissertation to your readers, the Graduate Office, and the Graduate School.

When must a student complete the Ph.D.?

When a student enters the Ph.D. with an M.A. in hand, she has seven years to complete the dissertation and defense.

When a student enters the Ph.D. with 24 graduate credits earned, she has 7 years to complete the dissertation and defense.

When a student enters the Ph.D. without an M.A. and/or with fewer than 24 graduate credits, she has seven years **AFTER** she earns 24 graduate credits here (however long that takes).

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English Graduate Faculty Affiliates:

(Faculty members from other departments who may serve as “inside” members of English Ph.D. exam committees.)

Mary Jo Bona (European Languages)--Italian American studies, ethnic American women writers, theories of race and ethnicity.

Krin Gabbard (Comparative Studies)--film, psychoanalysis, jazz.

Lorenzo Simpson (Philosophy)--critical race theory, Frankfurt school, cosmopolitanism.

Tracey Walters (Africana Studies)--African-American, African diasporic writers.

Certificates in Women's Studies, Cultural Studies, and Composition Studies:

Students wishing to obtain certificates in these programs are urged to do so. These certificate programs offer additional training in the specified areas. Please contact these departments directly regarding the certificate programs and requirements, as they are distinct from the English Ph.D.