

**GRADUATE STUDIES HANDBOOK
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
2015-16**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook aims to provide basic information about the program, including its requirements, expectations, and procedures. Students should familiarize themselves with the information here and keep this handbook for future reference as questions arise. Keep in mind, however, that questions or concerns may arise that are not covered here; students should always speak with the Director of Graduate Studies if they encounter a situation not addressed here.

The Graduate Studies Committee is made up of the Director of Graduate Studies and faculty members from the Department of English. The Graduate Studies Committee, chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies, reviews the academic procedures and policies, recommends changes to the faculty, updates the Graduate Student Handbook, plans and directs graduate workshops, reviews and selects candidates for admittance, and awards teaching assistantships. The Director of Graduate Studies oversees the activities of the Graduate Studies Committee and organizes the graduate program as a whole.

There are a number of rules, regulations, and deadlines with which students must become familiar. All regulations in this handbook must be followed to maintain good standing in the program. There may be extenuating circumstances that justify modification of these regulations. If a student feels that special consideration should be given to his or her situation, the student should see the Director of Graduate Studies, who will recommend the appropriate procedure. In most cases, a student will petition the Graduate Studies Committee, whose members will review the petition and inform the student of their decision.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND FACULTY

Graduate Students

Requirements: Every graduate student is expected to meet all the requirements set forth in the current Montana State University catalog and all other requirements specified by the Department of English. These requirements are subject to change; graduate students will be notified of modifications in departmental rules and procedures. Because MA students must meet the requirements of The Graduate School as well as the English Department, they should familiarize themselves with The Graduate School's Web site: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwdg/>.

Contact information: Each graduate student will be assigned a mailbox, located in the main office of the department, 2-176 Wilson Hall. Students should provide Teresa Klusmann, the MA program administrator, with updated contact information, including their preferred e-mail address. Students should regularly check their email.

Academic performance: Graduate students are expected to prepare for and attend their classes, and to participate actively in departmental functions. A student must maintain a minimum 3.0 semester GPA, a minimum 3.0 GPA in the entire program and a cumulative 3.0 GPA overall. Any student whose cumulative or program grade point average is less than 3.0 at the end of any term may be placed on university probation or suspended from the College.

Although it occurs rarely, the department also has an obligation to notify any student who is not performing adequately in her or his academic work. If that happens, the department will inform the student at the earliest possible time and, when circumstances warrant, will work with the student to correct the problem or improve the situation.

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs): GTAs are expected to complete the obligations of their teaching and tutoring assignments. GTAs work closely with the coordinator of composition throughout the term of their assistantships. GTAs are responsible for applying for a teaching assistantship renewal prior to March 1 of the year the renewal takes effect (see "Teaching Assistantships" for the application and renewal procedure).

Faculty

The Department of English has important responsibilities to its graduate students. The department endeavors to provide students with the best possible training through course work, seminars, travel support when possible, research experience, and other activities. It has an obligation to keep current in professional areas and to give

students the best possible guidance in course selection and other professional issues. When the time comes for students to apply for more advanced graduate work or seek employment, the department will assist students in every way it can.

Faculty members serving on graduate student thesis/professional paper committees are responsible for reading and commenting on the student's prospectuses and meeting with the student to discuss the prospectus. The faculty member is also responsible for reading and responding to the final draft of the student's thesis or professional paper, and administering the student's thesis/professional paper defense by the university deadline.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

The Master of Arts degree requires thirty credits. Students will select one of two options, either the professional paper or the thesis.

Professional paper option requirements

- 24 hours of course work
- 6 hours of professional paper credits
- Professional paper oral defense

Thesis option requirements

- 21 hours of course work
- 10 hours of thesis credits
- Thesis oral defense

Choosing Between the Professional Paper and Thesis Options

As the above listed requirements show, the main difference between the thesis and professional paper option is the number of credits devoted to course work and the thesis or professional paper project. While neither the English Department nor The Graduate School has a formal page length requirement for the thesis or professional paper, generally a professional paper ranges between 25-40 pages and a thesis ranges between 60-90 pages. Students declare their option during their second semester of course work at MSU when they complete the “Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form.” Even after completing this form, students may decide to change their option if they wish to do so.

Course Credit Restrictions for Both Options

- 400-level credits: Six credits at the 400 level can be applied to the degree; students confer with the professor to add a graduate component to the course, additional readings and/or writings.
- ENGL 592 credit limitations: Six credits of Independent Study (ENGL 592) may be included in the professional paper plan. A total of six credits of Independent Study (ENGL 592) courses may be included in the thesis plan.
- Independent Study (ENGL 592) and Internship (ENGL 598) courses may not comprise more than ten credits of the required credits for a graduate degree.
- Correspondence course credits cannot be counted toward a graduate degree.
- The following courses may not be used toward graduate degree requirements: 476 (Undergraduate Internship), 489 (Undergraduate Research/Creative Activity Instruction), 490 (Undergraduate Research/Creative Activity), 588 (Professional Development).

Transfer Credits

With approval from the Director of Graduate Studies, students can transfer up to six credits of previous graduate work from another institution to apply toward their degree.

Courses From Other MSU Departments

After enrollment and as a part of their research interests, students may apply up to six credits of graduate work from another MSU department toward their degree.

Graduate students wishing to take graduate classes from another department should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and their committee chair to be sure that the course(s) are appropriate to the professional paper or thesis area.

IV. DEGREE TIMETABLE & DEADLINES

Workshops about Program Requirements & Deadlines

The Director of Graduate Studies will hold informational workshops with students to discuss each of the major program deadlines and requirements. While most seminars sponsored by AEGS (Association of English Graduate Studies) are optional, a few departmental workshops are required. Faculty are encouraged to actively contribute to and participate in these workshops.

Overview of Deadlines:

FIRST YEAR

Fall

Students take coursework and become actively involved in the life of the department.

January

Students meet with Director of Graduate Studies to discuss research topic, potential committee members, and the thesis/professional paper option.

March

Students must officially form a graduate committee by the beginning of the month. Students discuss proposed project with each committee member. In consultation with the chair and the committee members, students should craft a list of 25-30 articles and/or books to read over the summer. (Students need not read all 25-30 texts cover to cover, but should be familiar with all texts and their arguments well enough to use them in the thesis.) Students return in fall having completed all necessary reading and ready to begin writing the thesis. (Of course, students may read additional texts as necessary over summer and into fall.)

Mid-April

Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form due to The Graduate School.
Reading list is due to committee members.

Summer

Students read 25-30 texts assigned by committee. Students may read any additional materials as their research unfolds. Students should write a draft of formal prospectus.

SECOND YEAR

Early October

Prospectus due to committee, including bibliography & projected timeline of thesis or professional paper.

Mid-October

Students should meet with committee members by this date to receive substantive feedback on your prospectus. Faculty may suggest new directions, additional texts, honing of argument, etc.

Mid-December

Students should submit draft of thesis or professional paper to committee chair. The chair provides substantive feedback and directions for revision by first week of spring semester.

January 30

Students should submit revised draft of thesis or paper to secondary committee members.

February 1st

Last day to file “Application for Advanced Degree” with The Graduate School. **Check with The Graduate School for the exact date.**

Mid-February

By this date, students should have met with secondary committee members for feedback on writing.

Early March

Students should complete substantive revisions based on feedback from committee members. Students should schedule the defense for late March or early April after receiving the go-ahead from the chair (plan on 90 minutes). Students may be asked by the committee at the defense to complete additional revisions before turning in final thesis to The Graduate School. Students writing a thesis need to defend and turn in a properly formatted final draft to The Graduate School no later than mid-April. **Check with The Graduate School for the exact date.**

Before April 1st

Students need to schedule an appointment with The Graduate School to check the formatting of the thesis.

Early April

Formatted final thesis must be turned into The Graduate School by early April. **Check with The Graduate School for the exact date.** Final copy of professional paper is due during finals week (precise date and time determined by committee chair).

Course Loads

The M.A. program is typically a four-semester course of study. Students usually take two courses a semester for their first year and begin work on their thesis or professional paper credits in the summer session between their first and second year of study. This means that students generally take more courses (three per semester) in their second year, but much of this course work is dedicated to working on the thesis or professional paper.

First semester

For most students, the first semester will be an opportunity to begin focusing on possible areas of interest and meeting members of the faculty.

Second semester

Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form

By the midpoint of the second semester of graduate work, students are required by The Graduate School to submit a “Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form.” This form requires students to form their graduate committees and to outline their courses for their degrees. Many students feel that they are too early in their programs to complete the form, but that is exactly one of its purposes, to prepare students for completing their degree requirements in a timely fashion.

Students are responsible for filling out this form, and graduate committee chairs should double-check the program of study to ensure all program requirements will be met. The form may be revised if a student’s plan changes after the form has been completed. The Graduate School requests that the “Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form” be typed. The form is available at The Graduate School’s website. After filling out the form, students will need to gather signatures from their committee members and chairs. Students should then give the form to Teresa or Mandy; they will obtain the department chair’s signature, make a copy of the form for the student’s file, and submit the original to The Graduate School.

The department’s request for tuition waivers for a GTA’s second year is based upon the program form. Students need to plan carefully, both the number of credits they will take and the semesters they plan to take them. Students who do not submit their program forms by this date will be considered as not working toward a degree by The Graduate School and will become ineligible for financial aid (including teaching assistantships, work-study, and other University employment).

Choosing the Members of a Graduate Committee

As part of completing the “Graduate Program of Study and Committee Form,” each student will form a graduate committee of three members. This committee advises the student on academic matters and is the examining committee for the student’s written examination, thesis/professional paper, and oral defense. As students think about choosing committee members, they should consider faculty members’ areas of expertise. At least two of the committee members must be faculty in the Department

of English, and the committee chair should be the English faculty member whose area of expertise parallels the topic of the professional paper or thesis. Once the student's graduate committee is formed, the committee chairperson will serve as the student's academic advisor. The Graduate School is enforcing a rule that only tenure-track faculty may serve on graduate committees.

Reading List

Working with the chair and committee, students will develop a reading list of 25-30 books or articles to study over the summer between the first and second year. The reading list may be revised into the bibliography for the prospectus, which is due early in the fall of the second year. Each reading list will vary depending upon the student's topic, but it should include the crucial works of literature, criticism, and theory for the project. Students should confer with the committee chair about the best way to develop the list. Some chairs prefer that the student develop the initial draft with them and then pass it on to other committee members for additional suggestions; other chairs like the committee as a whole to work on the list from the beginning. This reading list is due midway of the second semester of the first year.

Students should also confer with the committee chair about how progress on the professional paper/thesis credits will be assessed. Every time a student elects 575/590 credits, the student will fill out a copy of the credit contract with the committee chair.

Third Semester (or the Semester Prior to Graduation)

Early Thesis/Professional Paper Credits

Students typically begin work on their thesis or professional paper credits in the summer between their first and second years in the program. Early thesis/professional paper credits (ENGL 575/590) are dedicated to a literature review, or survey of the existing scholarship, on their topic (the first two professional paper credits and the first three thesis credits.) Because the oral comprehensive exam is integrated into the professional paper/thesis defense, students should consider their early thesis/professional paper credits as preparation for their oral comprehensive exam. This scholarship survey will prepare students to answer the following questions at their professional paper/thesis defense: "How does your project contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversation on your chosen topic?" and "What is at stake in your project as a whole?"

Thesis or Professional Paper Prospectus

By early October or early February during the semester prior to graduation (typically the student's third semester) and in conjunction with the student's committee chair, a proposed Prospectus of the thesis or professional paper should be completed by the student. The Prospectus should describe the subject and scope of the project; state the project's contribution to the body of knowledge on the subject; and provide a sketch or outline of the project's organization.

Timeline

The student should also develop a Timeline detailing the schedule for completing the major stages of the thesis or professional paper. This Timeline should accompany the Prospectus

Bibliography

In addition, students should also include with their prospectus a bibliography of the works they plan to consult and analyze in their thesis/professional paper. This should be a revised and expanded version of the reading list. The student must supply a copy of the prospectus, the timeline, and the bibliography to each member of the committee and to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Final Semester

First Chapter of Thesis/First Draft of Professional Paper

By the end of the term prior to the semester in which a student expects to graduate, the student must submit a draft of the thesis or professional paper to the committee chair. The chair will provide feedback by the end of the first week of the following semester. The student will continue to revise this chapter to submit to the secondary committee members by the end of the first month of the semester in which the student plans to graduate. This draft will help the committee assess how well the student is progressing toward timely completion of the thesis or professional paper, and it will allow the committee to provide additional guidance in the thesis/professional paper writing process.

Application for Advanced Degree

Early in the semester during which a student expects to graduate, an "Application for Advanced Degree Form" must be filed with The Graduate School. The application

form is available on The Graduate School's website. When students complete their applications, they will submit the form to Teresa or Mandy, who will make a copy of the form for the student's file and submit the original to The Graduate School.

The Graduate School also charges a non-refundable fee for processing an "Application for Advanced Degree Form."

To change graduation dates after filing the application, the student must withdraw their application by filling out the form at The Graduate School's web site and then resubmit a new application for their new semester of graduation.

Thesis/Professional Paper Submission to Graduate Committee

Students must submit their thesis or professional paper to their graduate committee by mid- February for spring semester graduation, 1 June for summer session graduation, or 15 October if the student is graduating in fall semester. While the student will likely continue to revise the thesis or professional paper according to the committee's comments, this version is considered final for the purposes of determining whether the student is ready to proceed to the oral defense. A student's graduate committee will decide at this point whether the student is ready to schedule his or her defense.

Scheduling the Oral Defense of the Thesis/Professional Paper

Once students gain approval from their graduate committee chair to schedule their defense, they should consult with the members of their graduate committees to select a 90-minute time period when everyone is able to meet.

The English Department must notify The Graduate School of a defense date **two weeks in advance**. Students must provide the Administrative Assistant with the title of their thesis or professional paper, the date, time, and location of the defense. The Graduate School will post this information on their "What's New" Web page.

Scope of the Thesis/Professional Paper Oral Defense

The student's committee conducts the oral exam, which lasts about 90 minutes. Students will prepare opening remarks or a presentation of the thesis or professional paper; confer with the committee chair about how to best use this portion of the defense. This opening section of the defense is open to the public; the question and answer period of the defense is not open to the public. After the oral exam's conclusion, the graduate committee will decide whether the student passed the oral exam and will inform the candidate and the Director of Graduate Studies promptly. The oral exam is graded on a scale of pass, fail, and distinction. In the event that a

graduate student does not pass the oral examination, he or she can retake the oral exam once the following semester.

Formatting & Electronically Submitting the Thesis/Professional Paper to the Graduate School

The finalized thesis must be submitted in electronic form to The Graduate School. Professional papers may be submitted to The Graduate School if the student wishes.

For a thesis/professional paper to be approved for electronic submission, it must be formatted according to The Graduate School's specifications. Each student must schedule an appointment with a staff member to have the formatting of the thesis approved. The initial formatting check can be done as soon as a student has prepared a draft of the thesis front matter and a sample chapter in accordance with the "Style and Composition Guide" available on The Graduate School's website.

As students plan their timetable for submitting the final version of their theses/professional paper, allot a week for formatting the work and gaining approval from The Graduate School to submit it in electronic form.

Professional paper option students who do not wish to submit their work to The Graduate School should consult with the chair of their graduate committee about appropriate formatting choices for the professional paper.

The thesis or professional paper must be submitted in final form to The Graduate School no later than fourteen working days before the end of the term in which graduate work is completed.

Deadlines for submitting final version of thesis are listed on the Graduate School's website.

Passing with Distinction

Graduate students will be awarded a pass with distinction if their thesis or professional paper demonstrates exceptional merit (as decided upon by the majority of the student's collective committee) in three or more of the following categories:

- demonstrates creative and original thought and argument that extends current scholarship in the student's area of inquiry
- explores a breadth of theoretical method or scope of inquiry beyond the normal range of a MA project (especially if moving in the direction of the kind of project that one might undertake as a PhD dissertation)
- develops an impressive detailed, comprehensive, and compelling new interpretation of a significant literary, cultural, or theoretical text
- demonstrates a mastery of the relevant scholarship in the student's area of inquiry

- performs an exceptional defense that demonstrates a student's ability to articulate and defend their project with clarity and conviction
- demonstrates reasonable promise of publication (in whole or in part) by an academic journal in the student's chosen field of study, or
- produces a thesis/professional paper written in an exceptional manner

Outstanding Thesis/Professional Paper Award

To be considered for the outstanding graduate thesis/professional paper award, a student must be nominated by a member of his or her thesis/professional paper committee. The Director of Graduate Studies will solicit nominations from the faculty during spring semester (late enough to let students substantially finish their thesis, but early enough to select an award winner before the department awards ceremony), and a list of nominated students will be made.

The Director of Graduate Studies will then be responsible for notifying these students and requesting that they submit a representative writing sample of their thesis or a draft of their entire professional paper.

The Graduate Studies Committee will read these writing samples and then meet to determine the award. Committee chairs and members will be allowed to vote for students that they are supervising.

V. CURRICULUM

Required courses: English 510 and 530 have been created to serve as the core of each graduate student's program. These additional options give students flexibility to move in the direction of their interests.

Course Descriptions:

ENGL 510: STUDIES IN CRITICAL THEORY AND PRACTICE

(Required; offered spring semester)

Topics in critical theory and practice. Explores how historical and contemporary theories of literature have shaped the ways readers, teachers, and critics have thought about such fundamental questions as canon formation, pedagogical practice, and the goals and purposes of literary studies as a field.

ENGL 520: STUDIES IN PEDAGOGY THEORY AND PRACTICE

(Dates to be determined)

Topics in English/literacy education. Examines different theoretical and pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning secondary English Language Arts/literacy.

ENGL 530: STUDIES IN WRITING THEORY AND PRACTICE (Required; offered fall semester)

Topics in rhetoric and composition. Examines a variety of models that have historically governed composition theory and writing practice.

ENGL 550: FOCUSED RESEARCH SEMINAR

(Maximum 6 credits; date to be determined)

Topics offered at the graduate level not covered in the required courses. Involves directed research resulting in a paper, as well as participation in preparing and presenting discussion material. Topics will vary.

ENGL 575: PROFESSIONAL PAPER

(6 credits required for the professional paper option)

A research or professional paper or project dealing with a topic in the field. The topic must have been mutually agreed upon by the student and his or her major advisor and graduate committee.

ENGL 576: INTERNSHIP

(1-12 credits)

An individualized assignment arranged with an agency, business, school, or other organization to provide guided experience in the field. Prerequisites: graduate standing, consent of instructor, approval of department chair, and prior completion of 15 graduate credits.

ENGL 580: SPECIAL TOPICS

(Maximum 9 credits)

Advanced study of topics in the discipline, in courses not required in any curriculum, including experimental offerings of visiting professors, trial offerings of new courses, or one-time offerings of current topics.

ENGL 590: MASTER'S THESIS

(10 credits required for the thesis option)

A thesis dealing with a topic in the field. The topic must have been mutually agreed upon by the student and his or her major advisor and graduate committee.

ENGL 592: INDEPENDENT STUDY

(Maximum 4 credits with thesis; 6 credits with professional paper)

Directed research and study focused based on student's individual interests.

VI. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

New Students

The Graduate School sends students an information sheet about the registration process with their acceptance letters. The English department's Director of Graduate Studies will advise students about course offerings for the first semester.

New GTA Payroll Logistics & Registration

To assist the department in requesting tuition fee waivers, students need to notify the Administrative Assistant as soon as possible about how many credits they will take the first year. In order for the office to complete the paperwork process, students will need to show one of the following two forms of identification: 1) a driver's license and either a Social Security card or a certified birth certificate; or 2) a passport.

The Graduate School will not process a student's stipend appointment form until they have registered for classes.

Returning Students

Returning students should meet with their advisor, either the Director of Graduate Studies or their committee chair (if they have formed their graduate committee) in order to select appropriate courses. Graduate students register during the pre-registration periods each fall and spring. The dates of the pre-registration period are listed in the Schedule of Classes prepared by the Registrar and available in the English Department and on the MSU Web site. Students are given a "PDF" (Personal Data Form) that includes an identification number that will allow them to pre-register via the Web.

Summer Registration

Due to policy changes in The Graduate School, the English Department can no longer offer tuition waivers for graduate teaching assistants who wish to enroll for summer credits. Students who wish to do work toward their degrees in the summer have two choices available: 1) pay out of pocket for the credits; or 2) perform work in the summer for credits they will officially enroll for in the fall semester.

Also, please note that even though students will not register for credits until the fall, they should complete the paperwork for 575/590 before they begin working on these courses/projects in the summer.

Registering for an Independent Study (ENGL 592)

After students determine the topic they wish to pursue in an independent study, they should ask the department faculty member whose area of expertise matches their topic if they would be willing to oversee their project. Working in consultation with the faculty member, the student will complete “A Request for Independent Study Form” that requires a specific explanation of the independent study’s topic, objectives, readings, and writing assignments. (Hard copies of the form are available in the English department, or download the form from The Graduate School’s Web site.

Multiple signatures are needed for the completed form. After the faculty member who will serve as the instructor signs the form, the student’s graduate committee chair signs the form. The form is then given to the Director of Graduate Studies for review. Then the DGS gives the form to the department chair for the final signature.

Registering for an Internship (ENGL 598)

Proposal forms for ENGL 598 are available in the English office. To qualify for graduate credit, the proposal must include: 1) a description of how the internship fits into the academic program (students cannot earn internship credits for simply serving as a professor’s teaching assistant, nor can they earn internship credits for their work as GTA’s); 2) a list of the academic readings to be conducted as part of the course (one or two books or a series of journal articles); an explanation of the type of writing to be produced (a series of short essays or a long seminar paper). Students will submit copies of the written work produced for the internship to the coordinator of graduate studies.

Registering for Thesis (590) and Professional Paper Credits (575)

Students typically begin registering for thesis/professional paper credits in the summer between their first and second years, and register for the remaining credits during their final two semesters. Students should meet with their graduate committee chairs to determine how many thesis/professional paper credits they should register for and the nature of work to be accomplished for the credits. As students plan how they will register for these credits, keep in mind that The Graduate School requires that students be enrolled for a minimum of three credits during the semester in which they will graduate. Students should also confer with their committee chair about how their progress on the professional paper/thesis credits will be assessed. Every time the student works on 575/590 credits, the student will fill out a copy of the credit contract with the committee chair.

Leave of Absence

If a student finds that she or he need to take time away from the program, the student should confer with her or his graduate committee chair and the Director of Graduate Studies. The leave of absence policy varies depending upon student's progress in the program. Once students complete the courses outlined on their Program of Study Form (with the exception of thesis or professional paper credits) or take their written exams, they must be "continuously enrolled" to maintain graduate status. However, The Graduate School allows students to be absent from the university for three semesters, consecutive or individual, and still maintain their "continuously enrolled" graduate status. For more information on MSU's continuous enrollment policy, please refers to The Graduate School's website.

Following a semester leave, students must file an "Intent to Register Form" with The Graduate School for reentry to the university and program. Students may pick up a copy of the form from the Registrar's office or download the form from the Registrar's website.

VII. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Responsibilities

A Graduate Teaching Assistantship has two components: teaching College Writing and tutoring in the Writing Center. Students teach one section of College Writing and tutor four hours per week in the Writing Center during each semester and in return receive a stipend and a tuition waiver. New Graduate Teaching Assistants also attend a mandatory weekly practicum during fall semester of their first year as a GTA.

Training & Practicum

New students with a GTA position are required to attend an extensive teacher training session the week prior to the beginning of classes their first year. In addition, during the fall semester of their first year, they will be part of a weekly practicum devoted to teaching issues. Students are expected to work half-time on their teaching and tutoring and to spend the other half of their time on their own studies. In practice, both halves of this workweek may sometimes necessitate longer hours, and the balance between responsibility to teaching and to study and research is often difficult to maintain. Students who encounter difficulties with time management or other issues related to their studies should contact the Director of Graduate Studies, graduate course instructors, or advanced graduate teaching assistants, all of whom have been graduate students and may be able to help work through the situation. The coordinator of composition will visit new student classes in the fall and will visit again upon request; these visits are intended to assist the GTA in becoming a better teacher.

Renewal

Teaching assistantships may be renewed a second year. Decisions regarding renewal are made by the Graduate Studies Committee, in consultation with the coordinator of composition, during spring semester. At that time, students eligible for renewal will be contacted by the Director of Graduate Studies about their desire for a teaching assistantship for the following year. As a part of the process of renewing teaching assistantships, the Graduate Studies Committee will review class evaluations and letter(s) of support from the coordinator of composition, the Director of the Writing Center, and/or other appropriate faculty members. Renewal will depend upon a) satisfactory performance of teaching duties; b) satisfactory performance as a tutor; c) maintenance of an acceptable standard of work in graduate classes; and d) progress toward satisfying degree requirements.

Limitations on Campus Employment for GTA's

To encourage success as a student and a teaching assistant, The Graduate School has the following employment policy: "Graduate students may not be employed for more than 19 hours per week cumulatively for all forms of employment on campus."

English Department teaching assistants thus may not take on other forms of campus employment during their appointment.

Residency & Tuition Waivers

The costs to the department for tuition waivers vary depending upon a student's residency status. During the first year of enrollment, all students with a GTA will receive full tuition waivers no matter their residency status. Because the cost of non-resident tuition waivers are significantly higher than resident costs, the department requires out-of-state students who are granted teaching assistantships to pursue Montana resident status, a process that can take up to twelve months. If a student decides to not become a Montana resident, the student will be responsible for paying the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition waivers during the second-year of the assistantship.

For more information on the MSU's residency policy, please visit the Registrar's website.

Course Evaluations and Grades

Course evaluations must be kept by the student for recall/committee use, and for future employment reference.

All records of student grades must be kept for five years. Before a student leaves the university, the student must give the department grade records showing how the instructor arrived at the student's final grade (NOT the grade roster submitted to the Registrar's office).

Current Students Interested in Applying for a GTA

If a current student is interested in applying for an assistantship, the student should write a brief letter of application to the MA committee, following the admission application deadlines (1 November for spring admission; January 31 for fall admission). Though not required, a letter of recommendation will help the Graduate Studies Committee as they review applications.

VIII. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The primary form of financial support available through the Department of English is teaching assistantships, which are awarded on a competitive basis. We recognize, however, that not all students are awarded teaching assistantships, nor do all students desire to teach. For those students, the department makes an effort to place interested graduate students into tutoring positions in the Writing Center. There are often other opportunities, such as grading papers for other departments, which become available intermittently; the Director of Graduate Studies will inform students about such opportunities. Graduate students should be aware that University regulations prohibit them from being employed by the university more than 19 hours per week.

The Graduate School also awards a limited number of fellowships to eligible graduate students on the basis of information included in their application forms. Students should also check with the Financial Aid Office to determine whether they are eligible for any other forms of financial aid.

IX. COMMUNITY SUPPORT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Associated English Graduate Students of MSU

Founded in spring 2007, the Associated English Graduate Students of MSU (AEGS) was formed in an effort to promote continued learning outside of the classroom, to enable professional development, and to facilitate the perpetuation of institutional memory. AEGS aims to create an atmosphere of egalitarian opportunity, inclusiveness, mutual appreciation, and encouragement of academic studies.

This organization will also further the mentorship of newer students by both faculty and experienced students, provide leadership opportunities, and create a venue of awards for the recognition of peer excellence. Over the course of its existence, AEGS has proven to be a highly successful and useful organization for students. AEGS seminars provide vital information about everything from how to successfully complete the thesis/professional writing process (including both information about deadlines and requirements and helpful suggestions about how to improve student work at every stage in the process) to applying for PhD programs and jobs. It aims to provide comprehensive support in matters both academic and professional. We strongly encourage students to participate in the AEGS program. If students have ideas about how to improve the experience in the MA program, please see the AEGS leadership or the Director of Graduate Studies. In the past, AEGS members have worked together to produce everything from graduate socials where students and faculty get to know each other better outside of the classroom to a mini-conference where students could present their work to other students and faculty.

All MSU English graduate students and faculty members are welcome and encouraged to be a part of this experience. There are no membership dues or fees.

For more information, please visit the AEGS Web site: aegs.wordpress.com.

Workshops Co-Sponsored by AEGS & the MA Committee

In response to AEGS's requests, the MA committee will coordinate workshops addressing issues of interest to students. Topics typically include the thesis writing process, advice from previous students, student paper presentations, career options, applying to Ph.D. programs, conference presentations, and publications.

Financial Support for Travel to Professional Conferences

Students who have papers accepted for presentation at professional conferences should contact the Director of Graduate Studies to see if any funds are available to help defray traveling expenses. If the academic budget for the year does include funding for student travel, the student will be asked to write a letter to the

department chair stating the name and dates of the conference, the title of the paper, and projected travel costs. Most years, some funds are also made available by the College of Letters and Science at the very beginning of the academic year. If students are interested in applying these funds, please see the Director of Graduate Studies as early in the year as possible, so that the Director can help with the process of applying for these funds and obtaining letters of support. If the student wishes, the Director of Graduate Studies will set up a practice session where the student can present his or her paper and receive feedback from students and faculty. In fact, we highly encourage students to do this because the faculty can often provide students with advice both about how to improve the paper and what attending and presenting at a conference is like.

X. AWARDS

Each spring semester, the Graduate Studies Committee awards an Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award, and the winner becomes the department's nominee for the CLS Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. The Graduate Studies Committee solicits material from those eligible for the award, including course evaluations and a teaching philosophy statement. When merited, the committee also offers an Outstanding Thesis/Professional Paper Award; the committee selects the Outstanding Thesis/Professional Paper based on faculty nominations.

XI. ADVISING

From the time students begin the program until they form their graduate committee, students are advised by the Director of Graduate Studies. After students begin to work with their graduate committee, their committee chairs become their primary advisors, though all graduate students will continue to work with the Director of Graduate Studies throughout their degree to assure that all deadlines are met and paperwork is completed.

Having an assigned advisor, particularly before a student forms a graduate committee, does not preclude seeking advice and support from other members of the department. The entire faculty wants every student to succeed and having several people to go to with questions is a good idea. Students should remember, however, to keep the Director of Graduate Studies informed about any decisions that may affect their progress to the degree.

XII. PROBLEMS AND APPEALS

Plagiarism

In graduate school, students join a community of scholars whose purpose is the expression and exchange of ideas with one another; therefore, accurate and honest representation of the ideas or phrasings of others is absolutely crucial. Honesty through full documentation of sources used in papers is essential. If a student has any doubts about appropriate documentation and citation procedures, she or he should consult the course instructor. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the graduate program.

Other Problems

If problems related to courses arise, a student's first step toward resolving them is to discuss the matter with the course instructor. If the matter cannot be resolved at the student-teacher level, the student should discuss the matter with the Director of Graduate Studies. If, after discussing the matter with the student and the teacher, the DGS cannot resolve the matter in a way acceptable to both parties, the student

should take his or her appeal to the department chair. In some cases, the DGS and/or the department chair may refer the issue to the Graduate Studies Committee who has the final decision-making power for issues related to graduate study.

XIII. UNIVERSITY EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

Montana State University-Bozeman does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual preference, marital status, age, religion, creed or political belief, mental or physical handicap or disability, or status as a Vietnam era or disabled veteran in admission, access to, or conduct of its educational programs and activities nor in its employment policies and practices.

Montana State University-Bozeman is committed to providing a working environment for all employees and an educational environment for all students that supports and rewards career and academic goals on the basis of ability and work or academic performance. Harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability is a form of discrimination and is prohibited.

The University is committed to a program of affirmative action in the recruitment, hiring, training, and promotion of all persons in all classes of employment to help overcome the effects of past discrimination and prevent underutilization of qualified women and minorities, persons with disabilities, Vietnam era and disabled veterans. In addition, Montana State University-Bozeman assumes particular responsibility for providing opportunities for education and training for the state's Native American peoples in the various disciplines and professions that are characteristic of this land-grant university. The University's Affirmative Action Plan is available in the Human Resources/Affirmative Action Office.

Employees or students who commit or supervisors who knowingly condone or fail to report incidents of discrimination are subject to disciplinary actions when instances of discrimination are identified and confirmed. Knowingly filing false complaints of discrimination or knowingly providing false testimony will likewise result in disciplinary or corrective action when instances of such conduct are identified and confirmed. Retaliation against persons who file complaints or serve as witnesses is also a violation of laws prohibiting discrimination and will lead to appropriate disciplinary action against offenders.

Montana State University affords any student, employee, applicant for employment or admissions, or person who believes he or she was discriminated against by the University, the right to file a grievance on grounds of discrimination. As a condition of their employment or enrollment, employees and students are expected to cooperate in investigations of complaints of discrimination. Failure to cooperate will result in disciplinary action.

Complaints of discrimination, including harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or disability should be reported to the Human Resources/Affirmative Action Office.

A full listing of the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy is available on MSU's Web site, in the Schedule of Classes, and in the Graduate and Undergraduate Course Catalog. Graduate students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policy in its entirety.

XIV. FACULTY MENTORS

The department encourages graduate students to seek out faculty mentors. Mentors can be invaluable, giving advice and perspective on all aspects of graduate education. These professional connections also benefit faculty members, who are often energized by their work with graduate students. In the belief that the best mentoring relationships are self-selected, the department does not assign specific students to specific faculty members; instead, students should consult the list of faculty and research specialties below and talk with the Director of Graduate Studies to become familiar with department members and their research specialties.

For more information about faculty, including contact information and office hours, please visit the department's Web site, english.montana.edu.

XV. FACULTY

Bennett, Robert, Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara
Post-World War II American culture, American popular music, New Western studies, the Beat Generation, critical theories of space

Branch, Kirk, Professor
Ph.D. University of Washington
Composition, rhetorical theory, literacy theory, pedagogy

Downs, Doug, Associate Professor and Coordinator of Composition
Ph.D., University of Utah
Writing studies, research pedagogy, reading, multimodal literacies

Gaines, Philip, Associate Professor and Department Chair
Ph.D., University of Washington
Linguistics, discourse analysis, composition

Karell, Linda K., Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of Rochester
Western American literature, authorship studies

Kollin, Susan, Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
Ph.D., University of Minnesota
20th and 21st-century American literature, western American literature and film, environmental humanities, transnational American Studies, feminist theory

Lansverk, Marvin D. L., Professor
Ph.D., University of Washington
Eighteenth-Century British literature

Miley, Michelle, Assistant Professor and Director of the Writing Center
Ph.D., University of Houston
Writing Center Theory, Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Discipline,
sociocultural theory, teacher research

Minton, Gretchen, Professor
Ph.D., University of British Columbia
English Renaissance, Shakespeare, drama, Christian late antiquity

Petrone, Robert, Associate Professor
Ph.D., Michigan State University
English education, sociocultural literary and learning, (youth) cultural studies

Ryan, Kathleen, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Feminist rhetorics and rhetoric, composition theory and pedagogy

Thomas, Amy M., Associate Professor
Ph.D., Duke University
Nineteenth-Century American literature, history of the book

Uphaus, Maxwell, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Columbia University
Victorian and Modern British literature

Wynhoff Olsen, Allison, Assistant Professor
Ph.D., The Ohio State University
Classroom discourse analysis, argumentative writing, adolescents' school experiences, the
"humanizing" of English language arts pedagogy.