

ENGLISH, MA

The Department of English offers a PhD in English (with specializations in Composition and Rhetoric, English Language and Linguistics, or Literary Studies). Additionally, the English Department offers an MFA in Creative Writing (<https://creativewriting.wisc.edu/masters/>).

This master's program is offered for work leading to the English PhD (for students in the Literary Studies pathway and English Language and Linguistics pathway¹)

Literary Studies Pathway (MA + PhD): Students enrolled in the literary studies PhD specialization become eligible for an MA English degree in the literary studies area when they successfully complete the first-stage doctoral requirements. The literary studies specialization does not offer an MA apart from the doctoral program. The literary studies track offers a rigorous course of study leading to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in any field of English, American, or Anglophone literature and culture, or in any field of literary theory and criticism. The program prepares students for active careers in higher education among other potential fields and combines a sharp focus on conceptual approaches to literary and cultural works with a commitment to broad coverage of the field of Anglophone literature. Graduate seminars taken during the first phases of the doctoral program serve to prepare students to develop research projects for the dissertation. As they progress toward the PhD, students are invited to consider interdisciplinary subspecialties: literary theory and criticism, visual studies, ecocriticism and environmentalism, transnational and global literature, material culture, print culture and book history, digital humanities, disability studies, gender studies, race and ethnic studies, feminist theory, LGBTQ literature and queer theory, postcolonial studies. The program provides opportunities for teaching writing and literature and for administrative experience.

English Language and Linguistics Pathway (MA+ PhD)¹: The English language and linguistics area is intended for students with a solid foundation in the English language, applied linguistics, and related fields. Students enrolled in the English language and linguistics PhD specialization become eligible for an MA English degree when they successfully complete the first-stage doctoral requirements. The English language and linguistics specialization does not offer an MA apart from the doctoral program. Through program of course work and seminars, English language and linguistics doctoral students attain advanced knowledge in the core areas of English syntax and phonology and in the applied areas of second language acquisition, discourse analysis, and language variation and change. On reaching the dissertation stage, students pursue individual research in close cooperation with their faculty advisor. In recent years, students have written dissertations on code-switching, critical pedagogy, interactional competence, and conversation analysis, syntactic problems in second language acquisition, classroom discourse, and psycholinguistics. Graduates of the program have taken faculty positions at universities throughout the country.

¹ The MA pathway, English Language and Linguistics, is effective for students admitted Fall 2025 and after. Students admitted to the terminal MA pathway, Applied English Linguistics, prior to Fall 2025 will adhere to the same curricular requirements with the addition of the final comprehensive exam. The MA pathway in Applied English Linguistics will discontinue with the current cohort and those admitted to the pathway starting Fall 2024.