

UMD English Graduate Student Handbook

1: Introduction

The Department of English

The [Department of English at the University of Maryland](#) offers a PhD program in English Language and Literature, an MA program with concentrations in Literature or Writing Studies and Rhetoric, and MFA programs in Poetry and Fiction. The Department also offers a PhD in Comparative Literature. Graduate students can additionally earn certifications in Critical Theory and Digital Studies. With a large and distinguished graduate faculty, the Department provides its graduate students with an extraordinary depth and range of expertise, as well as highly individualized professional and pedagogical mentorship. Each area group, in collaboration with the [Center for Literary and Comparative Studies](#) (CLCS) and the [Graduate English Organization](#) (GEO), contributes to the Department's vibrant intellectual life.

PhD in English

Our nationally ranked PhD program provides specialized training in literary, cultural, and language studies. While students pursue individualized programs of study within the parameters of our degree, they share the qualities of excellent critical thinking and writing and intellectual curiosity. The PhD curriculum offers opportunities for advanced study in a variety of fields, including literary and cultural history; aesthetic, critical, and cultural theory; digital and media studies; humanistic engagement with the sciences; and language, rhetoric, and composition. The courses available to doctoral students particularize such broad issues and, together with extensive attention to pedagogical training, strive to equip students to identify and formulate compelling research questions and prepare them for long-term careers in academia.

Admission to the PhD program is highly competitive, but all admitted students receive a 5-year funding package. Students moving successfully toward the PhD degree are expected to complete the degree in 5-6 years. To maintain their status, students are expected to make satisfactory progress (see *Satisfactory Progress* in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook, p. 11); those who do not may be eligible to change their degree objective from the PhD to the MA.

Introduction to the Handbook

The English PhD Student Handbook serves as a guide for new students and as a reference manual for more advanced students as they progress through the program. The Handbook covers academic, administrative, funding, and mentoring information, and includes resources to aid in exploring the intellectual life of the English Department, the University of Maryland, and the broader DMV area.

Appendix 3: Troubleshooting is designed to assist students who have encountered difficulties in completing their degree requirements, assembling committees, communicating with mentors, resolving scheduling conflicts, understanding their funding package, and more.

How to use the handbook

The Handbook is divided into nine sections: the *Introduction*, *Funding and Fellowships*, *Degree Requirements*, *Mentoring*, *Teaching and Scheduling*, *Candidacy*, *Later Stages*, and *Intellectual Life*. The three appendices include a *Directory*, *Recommended Timetables*, and *Troubleshooting and FAQ*. Page numbers for each of these sections, as well as their subsections, can be found in the *Table of Contents*. If you need help understanding anything in the Handbook, please reach out to the Graduate Studies Office (GSO, Tawes 2116) for assistance.

Spaces and Facilities

Tawes Hall

The Department of English is located in [Tawes Hall](#), at 7751 Alumni Drive, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20742. Classrooms are located on all floors, while graduate student offices are located on the second floor and faculty offices are on the second and third. The Academic Writing Program (AWP, 1116) and Professional Writing Program (PWP, 1220) are located on the first floor, while the Main English Office (MEO, 2119), [Business Office](#) (2219E and 2219F), CLCS (2120), and GSO are located on the second floor. Rooms on the ground floor are numbered 0100 through 0400; rooms on the second floor are numbered from 1100 through 1400; rooms on the second floor are numbered from 2100 through 2400; rooms on the third floor are numbered from 3100 through 3400; and rooms on the fourth floor are numbered from 4100. Signs are posted on each floor to assist with navigation, but if you can't find the room you're looking for, don't hesitate to ask in the MEO. Floorplans for all campus buildings can be accessed with your UID through [the Facilities Management website](#).

Common and shared spaces

Tawes Hall is home to several degree programs and a large number of students, faculty, and administrative staff. Common spaces include classrooms, lecture halls, conference rooms, bathrooms, the mailroom (2106), and the kitchen (2117). Shared spaces include the grad lounge (2221) and graduate student offices. Students are expected to treat all common and shared spaces with consideration and respect. Dishes used for events should be washed and returned to their cabinets after use, food in communal refrigerators should be labeled and disposed of properly, and students are expected to be mindful of their volume and conduct in shared workspaces such as offices and the graduate lounge.

Graduate students are assigned a desk and an office once they are given a teaching appointment. Due to limited office availability, you may have to share a desk with one other person. Offices provide a workspace as well as a place to meet with students. While the doors do lock automatically, you should not leave valuables unattended in your office (including laptops). If you would like a key for your desk, you may request one in the Academic Writing Office (1116). If you misplace your keys, there is a replacement fee. Students and student groups may request to reserve classrooms, conference rooms, and other common spaces by contacting the MEO.

Accessibility

There are handicapped-accessible bathrooms on each floor of Tawes, and two elevators. One services the ground and first floor, while the other services the first, second and third floors. Unisex/family restrooms (0302 and 0324) and the lactation room (0322) are located on the ground floor. Not all third-floor faculty offices are wheelchair accessible (the GSO can provide a list of these rooms if needed). For more accessibility information, see [the UMD Accessibility Hub](#).

Facility Maintenance

General Purpose Classrooms are supported by the Division of Information Technology (DIT). Spaces owned by the Department of English are supported by the College of Arts and Humanities (ARHU). Sheets indicating the party responsible for supporting each learning space are posted near the workstation and at the door to each space. You can find classroom support information [here](#). If you have a maintenance question for another space in the building, please contact the MEO Coordinator.

Elsewhere on campus

You can find all the buildings listed below on the [UMD Web Map](#).

Libraries and special collections

There are eight libraries on campus. The main library, [McKeldin](#), is on McKeldin Mall, due east of Tawes. McKeldin houses the main collection, as well as study spaces, printing facilities, the [Terrapin Tech](#) store and TLC Tech Desk, the Adaptive Technology Lab, Footnotes Café, the [Graduate School Writing Center](#) (GSWC), and the [Library Services Desk](#). The other seven libraries are the [Architecture Library](#), the [Art Library](#) (which is the closest library to Tawes), [Hornbake](#) (which houses [Special Collections and University Archives](#) and the [Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities](#) or MITH), the [Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library](#), [Priddy Library](#), [Severn Library](#), and the [STEM Library](#). You may request that books be delivered to most of these locations through your library request account, which is covered in greater detail in the *Online Resources* section below. Be sure to check library hours, as they vary from day to day and facility to facility. You can find more information about collections and facilities [here](#).

The Department of English also has its own subject area librarian who can work with students to find resources, learn about database options, and provide other research support. You can learn more about the subject area librarian on their [webpage](#).

McKeldin Library also participates in a consortium – The Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance ([CIRLA](#)) – that extends lending privileges to graduate students in all participant universities. In order to gain lending privileges at the university libraries consortium, graduate students should apply for a CIRLA card at the Library's Information Desk.

Due to the University's strategic location around various universities and research centers, graduate students enjoy access to a wonderful network of sources for research. The University belongs to the Folger Shakespeare Library Consortium and our graduate students and faculty regularly participate in their courses and programs (<http://www.folger.edu/folger-institute>). The University partners with the [Library of Congress](#), as well as the National Archives and Dumbarton Oaks, to facilitate research opportunities within close proximity to College Park.

Student Union

The [Adele H. Stamp Student Union](#) houses the University Book Center, the Student Organization Resource Center, Special Events and Programs, Event and Guest Services, Leadership & Community Service-Learning, the UPS Store, Off Campus Housing, the Ticket Office, and the Graduate Student Lounge, in addition to the largest food court on campus.

Health and fitness

The [UMD Health Center](#) (UHC) is across the street from Stamp. In addition to primary care and pharmacy services, the UHC also has resources for nutrition, behavioral health, substance use intervention and treatment, women's health, allergies, X-rays, massage and acupuncture, and advocacy services. You can make an appointment once you have enrolled in health insurance. More information on graduate student health insurance can be found [here](#). As of fall 2020, all students enrolled full-time in a master's or doctoral program at the College Park campus must have health insurance coverage.

The UMD [Counseling Center](#) is located in the Shoemaker Building, due south of McKeldin Mall, adjacent to LeFrak Hall and Taliaferro Hall. Counselors are available to students who are seeking a safe and confidential space to express themselves, feel understood, and identify ways to stay emotionally grounded during turbulent times. In addition to scheduled consultation appointments, walk-in consultation is available without an appointment. Services for students with disabilities can also be found [on their website](#).

The [Eppley Recreation Center](#), located on North Campus between Cambridge and Ellicott communities, is a multipurpose facility that offers a wide variety of free play activities, including cardio and weight training, basketball, racquetball and squash, swimming, and badminton, as well as group fitness classes. You will need your student ID to access these facilities.

Parking and transportation

Students may purchase a parking pass for a semester or a year at a time through UMD's [Department of Transportation Services](#) (DOTS). A parking permit does not require a physical pass, and the associated fee is automatically deducted from your student account after the application is complete. Be sure to pay close attention to email communications from DOTS, which inform permit-holders of athletic and special events which may affect parking permissions.

The Washington, DC metro area has an extensive bus and subway system run by the [Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority](#) (WMATA). The Metrobus and the Metrorail extend well into Montgomery and Prince George's counties. Rides start at \$2.00 for Metrorail and increase in price the farther you go and during rush hour. Metrobus costs \$2.00. You can find more information [here](#). The University of Maryland is located on the green line, College Park/UM stop. You can take the Shuttle-UM or walk about 15 minutes to the campus. UMD also operates a free commuter shuttle service for students, faculty and staff of the campus. You must show a valid UMCP ID to ride. The New Rider Guide can be found [here](#).

Online Resources

Testudo

UMD [Testudo](#) is the online portal for the [Office of the Registrar](#), which is responsible for the coordination of course and classroom scheduling and registration, the maintenance of students' permanent academic records, and information management, data analysis, and reporting. On Testudo you can check your registration appointment and registration status, access your unofficial transcript or request an official transcript, and check the GPA calculator. Testudo is used by both graduate and undergraduate students to enroll in classes, and provides a brief description for all courses offered. For more about registration, see *Registration* in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

ELMS/Canvas

ELMS (electronic learning management system) is an online digital environment shared by students and faculty which provides access to content and administrative features for specific courses. You will use ELMS as both a student and a teacher to submit and collect work, access course materials, and communicate with peers and professors. Student and instructor guides can be found [here](#). The English Department maintains [an ELMS course page for all PhD students](#), where you can find resources to help guide you through the program, including necessary forms, samples of past student work and an electronic copy of the Handbook with working hyperlinks. You must be added to this course page by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies (CGS).

Library Request Account

You have several means of requesting items through the University Libraries. You may request any circulating item from any campus library or USMAI library through the catalog, whether it is on the shelf or checked out. You can find a guide to using the catalog [here](#). You may also request materials from thousands of libraries that are not in the [USMAI](#) system through [Interlibrary Loan](#). You can see all the titles you have requested or checked out through your library account (at the top of the [main library page](#) under the yellow dropdown menu), which you can access with your UID. You can find billing and fine information [here](#).

TERPware

[TERPware](#) is UMD's software download website, available to all registered UMD students, faculty, and staff. Most items—including Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Cloud, antivirus software, and VPN client software—are available at no additional cost. You will need your UID and email to access TERPware, and you will need to be enrolled in at least one course before you can download software.

The Graduate School website

The [Graduate School website](#) provides [a catalog of online resources](#) for incoming graduate students, including information about academic deadlines, funding, registration, and more. Under the "New Students" section you'll find a link to the [New Student Checklist](#), which will help guide you through the process of enrollment, creating the directory ID and password you will need to access campus networks, obtaining your student ID, submitting immunizations records, and more.

University email

New students can create their umd.edu email address by going to the [University's IT page](#) and activating it by the provided links. This account is linked to the University's G Suite system, so it's easy to arrange for all of your email to forward to the same Gmail inbox. You can find the steps to do that [here](#). All University employees are required to use their umd.edu email account when contacting students or conducting university business. **Do not use a personal email account on anything UMD related.**

2: Funding and Fellowships

Departmental funding and fellowships

Admission to the PhD program includes a 5-year financial package which combines teaching, research, and fellowship funding. As part of the funding package, students are eligible for the University's health care program, the cost of which can be automatically deducted from the stipend. Students' funding is contingent upon maintaining a 3.6 GPA and making satisfactory progress to degree (see *Satisfactory Progress* in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook). In addition to the funding package, internal fellowship competitions exist to fund summer research and additional dissertation writing time.

Understanding your offer letter

Your offer letter outlines your employment obligations and your departmental salary, plus any fellowship funding you receive. You are guaranteed teaching and the associated stipend for the number of courses listed in your offer letter. Exceptions include courses canceled due to low enrollment, in which case the Business Office will reach out with information about alternative sources of funding. Your offer letter is a binding agreement for you and the department. Continuation of departmental funding depends on your meeting the conditions of your contract.

Definitions of common terms used:

Release from teaching: If you are offered a course release from your teaching in your fourth or fifth year, you will receive the stipend and benefits, but you will not have to teach that course.

Standard tuition remission: You will have tuition waived for up to ten credits in the Fall and Spring and up to four credits in the Winter Term. You do not have tuition remission for the Summer Term. Remission should be applied automatically to your student account at the beginning of each semester. If for any reason you are charged tuition, you should contact the Coordinator of Graduate Studies (CGS). Please note that schools with differential tuition, such as the iSchool, may not be covered by your remission. See more information on the UMD Bill Pay website [here](#).

Mandatory fees: These fees, determined by the University, fund various student services and offices, including athletics, DOTS, the student union, recreation services, and the Health Center. They are based on a student's total credit load; nine or more credits is \$641.50 a semester. Once you start studying for your qualifying exam, you will be registered for six credits and fees will decrease to \$331.50. Once you advance to candidacy, the fees will be set at a flat rate of \$331.50 per semester. They will be charged automatically to your student account. See more information on the UMD Bill Pay website [here](#).

Fellowship: These are funds for students that do not have employment conditions attached. There are three main types: fellowships included as part of your admissions package, fellowships for certain projects/goals (such as summer funding), or dissertation fellowships. We offer some of all kinds internally and there are University and external fellowships as well. These awards are taxable. Unlike your bi-weekly stipend from your TAsip, fellowships are disbursed at the beginning of each semester via your preferred method (direct deposit into your student account or written check sent to your permanent address). During a given year part of your stipend may

be paid through fellowship (half at the beginning of each semester) and part may be paid through graduate assistantship appointment (bi-weekly).

DC Area Consortium: UMD College Park is part of a local symposium of colleges (see member institutions [here](#)) that permits students to attend classes at other member institutions at the cost of their home institution. Students can learn more about registering for these courses [here](#).

Candidacy: This term refers to the graduate education tradition of passing your Qualifying Exam (QE, sometimes also called a “comprehensive” exam, or “comps”) and achieving candidacy as a doctoral student. You may have seen the term “doctoral candidate” before; that refers to students who have finished coursework, passed their program’s version of doctoral exams, and are now working on dissertation research and writing. These students are also referred to ABD, or “all but the dissertation.”

Any questions about the offer letter should be directed to the GSO. The Business Office will reach out with relevant hiring paperwork in mid-summer. The Business Office is responsible for the dispersal of funds and processing paperwork, but has no influence on terms of employment.

GAships

GAship (Graduate Assistantship) is an umbrella term which includes administrative, research, and teaching assistantships. They are offered for 12-month, 9 ½-month, and 9-month durations. A Teaching Assistantship (TAship) is a 9 ½-month appointment which coincides with the academic year, during which time you are the instructor of record for ENGL101 or a 200-level course, or serving as a teaching assistant for a large lecture course taught by a member of the faculty. Students are required to submit the teaching preferences web form distributed by the Scheduling Office every spring for teaching in the upcoming year. For more about teaching assignments, see the *Teaching and Scheduling* section of this Handbook.

The standard funding package for English includes a 1-year Research Assistantship (RAship) followed by 4 years of TAships. Students may take on additional GAships to supplement their income with DGS approval. Students interested in additional GAships can find job listings on [EJobs](#), the University’s human resources website. GAship opportunities are also distributed over the English Department listserv. Students with full TAships can work a 20-hour GAship during the summer, but not during the academic year. During the academic year, they can work on a semester overload basis for 10 hours per week, subject to the approval of both an academic advisor and the DGS. Generally, overloads are not approved for a student’s first year of study. Please note: fully funded PhD students are only eligible to apply for half-time positions (10 hours a week or less).

Students are allowed to take fellowships outside of the Department. However, taking a position outside of the department replaces a student’s funding for that academic year, but does not cancel it in the future nor extend the departmental funding. For example, if a student takes a one-year GAship outside the department as a third year and returns to teach with the department in the fourth year, that student will be in their fourth year of funding and not their third.

You can find a more detailed explanation of the different kinds of GAships [here](#).

Overloads

Students working more than 20 hours per week on a full-time GAsip are considered to be working an overload. (Students are never permitted to work more than 30 hours per week within the university system.) Overloads require the permission of the student's advisor as well as the DGS. An overload will only be approved when it is anticipated that it will not interfere with the student's plan of study. Overloads are not granted to students who currently have Incompletes or are otherwise behind in meeting program benchmarks. Overloads are granted on a semester basis. When requesting a continuation of an existing overload, the DGS will assess progress based on degree work completed. Questions about applying for an overload should be addressed to the GSO.

Travel and conference funding

The Department provides financial support for graduate students presenting their research at academic and professional conferences, including no more than one graduate student conference. For PhD students, the Department offers funding of up to \$400 in a given academic year for 5 years. Unused funds may roll over into another academic year. While these funds are intended primarily for presenting research, they may also be used for travel to a job interview or for necessary research expenses (such as photography, transcription, language study, etc.). If a student would like to use these funds for purposes other than conference travel, they will need to obtain the prior approval of the DGS.

In addition to these funds, the department will provide up to \$1,600 in matching funds for external travel awards over the student's time in the Department, such as the ARHU Travel Award, the Graduate School's Goldhaber Travel Award, and the International Conference Student Support Award (ICSSA). Matching funds means the University will share the cost, up to a certain amount, with the English Department. Students who have run out of matching funds are still eligible to apply for the ARHU Travel Award so long as they indicate the Department is unable to match funding. More information can be found [here](#).

Summer funding and fellowships

All students interested in applying for competitive departmental and university-wide summer funding must submit the Consolidated Fellowship Application each year for consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). This allows the GSC to match applicants to the fellowship competition(s) appropriately, and to distribute resources among graduate students as widely as possible. You can find more information about the fellowships and application process [here](#). Whether awarded by the Department, the Graduate School, or an external beneficiary, summer fellowships allow students to devote themselves to their studies full time. Therefore, students may not concurrently hold either a half- or full-time TAsip or GAsip. Additionally, students cannot hold more than one summer fellowship simultaneously.

If a portion of summer funding is included in your offer letter, those funds will be distributed at the beginning of the summer semester. If you have not received your summer funding, contact the Business Office. If your offer letter provides for fewer than four funded summers, please contact the Business Office the semester before you choose to access those funds.

Dissertation fellowships

Students who have advanced to candidacy and submitted their prospectus are eligible for several competitive dissertation fellowships. More information on these fellowships can be found [here](#), and

more detailed information about candidacy, the prospectus, and the dissertation can be found in the *Candidacy* section of this Handbook.

Billing and the Business Office

The yearly funding totals listed in your offer letter reflect a research or teaching assistantship stipend plus any fellowships you have been awarded. These two components pay differently. You'll receive your R/TAship stipend via a biweekly paycheck from approximately August 24 through June 14 each year. To estimate your biweekly paycheck before taxes withheld and any insurance premiums deducted, divide the annual stipend by 22. You can also check your payroll information [here](#) by clicking on "View/Print Bi-Weekly Earnings Statement." For Fall 2023, the first payday is Friday, August 18th.

Step 1 (first year, no M.A.): \$26,958	Half TA: \$13,479
Step 2 (M.A. or one year of experience): \$27,486	Half TA: \$13,743
Step 3 (advanced to candidacy): \$28,014	Half TA: \$14,007

Fellowships are disbursed in lump sums at the beginning of the semester (for Fall, usually by the end of August/mid Sept, for Spring, usually by the end of January). To calculate each fellowship payment, divide the award amount by two. You'll receive one half in the beginning of the Fall semester and the other in the beginning of the Spring semester. All fellowships are deposited to your UMD Student Account; once they do, you will request the Office of Student Financial Aid to deposit them to your bank account. After you set up this initial direct deposit, it will happen automatically in the future. (Please note: International students studying on a visa will receive fellowships via payroll check at the beginning of the semester.) If you were awarded summer fellowship funding, you'll receive the funds in your student account by the end of May.

Direct deposit

For your TAship stipend, we recommend you complete a hard copy Direct Deposit Authorization Form with original signature and submit it to the Business Office. Direct Deposit allows the Business Office to deposit your biweekly paycheck directly into your bank account, rather than mailing paper checks.

For your Fellowship Disbursements, please visit the Office of Student Financial Aid website and sign up for [Student Refunds](#).

Bills, fees, fines, and paystubs

All students who register for courses incur a financial obligation to the University. Returning students may not be permitted to register for a subsequent semester until all financial obligations are settled, including current semester fees, parking violations, library fines, medical charges, and other miscellaneous charges. In addition, if you become financially ineligible after completing registration, your registration is held subject to cancellation unless your account is settled by a prescribed date. Students who owe a prior balance and participate in early registration are sent an email notification of their e-bill before the start of classes. Payment is due in full by the early scheduled due date. If you register for classes after the notices are sent, you must settle your bill in full immediately or your registration is subject to cancellation. If your registration is canceled, you must re-register and select from classes currently available.

[Student Financial Services and Cashiering](#) (SFSC) generates student e-bills on the 25th day of every month (viewable online the 26th). E-bills are due on the 20th day of the following month. For instance, an e-bill generated on August 25th is due the next month on September 20th. Failure to make payment by the specified due date will result in a late fee or finance charge and may jeopardize your continued enrollment. Payment in full must be received before the close of business on the due date to avoid a late fee. In the event your account is not settled by the due date, we are required to assess your account with a late payment fee of \$10 or 5% of the unpaid balance, whichever is higher. Each month thereafter, a finance charge of 1.5% is assessed to the outstanding balance until your account is paid in full.

The Business Office

The Business Office is responsible for processing financial transactions within the department and for facilitating transactions outside the department, such as providing required information to the University so that fellowship and funds from other offices can be processed. They are also responsible for hiring paperwork, sending out GAship contracts and coordinating benefits for department employees. They work with other English Department offices to aid and assist them in budgeting and financial planning. If students have issues with fellowships and funding not being disbursed in a timely manner, questions about their employment contracts or benefits, or reimbursements for approved expenses (travel, food for events, etc) please contact them at english_business@umd.edu.

Taxes

You will complete a W4 with the rest of your new employee paperwork to instruct UMD how you would like taxes withheld. For any questions related to your taxes, please consult [TerpTax](#), which provides free tax preparation services to students at the University. Please also reach out to the Business Office for any questions regarding your pay.

Please note: both TAsip stipends and fellowship funds count taxable income. Your TAsip biweekly paychecks will have taxes withheld; however, taxes cannot be withheld from fellowship payments. Because fellowship money is still taxable income, you will likely owe tax on those earnings.

If you wish, you may take advantage of TerpTax. The Graduate School has partnered with TerpTax and the Robert H. Smith School of Business to provide a free, comprehensive tax preparation service for UMD graduate students. Housed in the Robert H. Smith School of Business since 2015, TerpTax is a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) chapter—a program created by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to provide free tax return preparation to the community. International graduate students are also welcome to use Glacier Tax Prep to assist with preparing tax returns. You can find their website [here](#).

3. Degree Requirements

Continuous registration

All graduate students must register for courses and pay associated tuition and fees each semester, not including summer and winter sessions, until the degree is awarded. Standard tuition remission is included in all PhD offer letters for up to 5 years, 6 if teaching is available and students remain in good standing.

Pre-candidacy doctoral students who will be away from the University for a semester or a year may request a waiver of continuous registration and its associated tuition for the semester or year. Waivers will be granted only if a student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree and can complete the degree requirements within the required time limits. Permission for non-registration is obtained from the DGS, and the waiver must be filed with the Graduate School. A request for a waiver of registration should be filed 30 days before the beginning of the semester or year for which the waiver is sought. Tuition waiver requests will be granted only when a student affirms in writing that he or she will not be using any University resources, including the time of faculty members, during the waiver period.

Doctoral candidates are not eligible for Waivers of Continuous Registration. Each doctoral candidate must maintain continuous registration in 899 (Doctoral Dissertation Research) until the degree is awarded. Waivers of Registration may be granted only under the University's policy for Leave of Absence for Graduate Students for Childbearing, Adoption, Illness or Dependent Care (see below).

A waiver of mandatory fees may be granted to any graduate student, including doctoral candidates, if they will be away from the University for a semester or a year. An application for waiver of mandatory fees must be submitted to the Graduate School 30 days before the beginning of the semester for which the waiver is sought. The waiver may be granted for a semester or a year.

Leave of Absence for Childbearing, Adoption, Illness or Dependent Care

In recognition of the effects that childbirth, adoption, illness, and caring for incapacitated dependents (such as children, ill or injured partners, or aging parents) may have on the time and energy that graduate students have to devote to their educational programs, the University allows students in such circumstances to apply for a leave of absence (LOA) of up to two semesters during which time they do not intend to make academic progress toward the completion of their degree. The time taken on an approved LOA is not included in the time limitations for degree completion and advancement to candidacy.

Application for a LOA may be made on a one- or two-semester basis. A LOA ordinarily will not be granted for more than one academic year. A LOA must be requested and approved prior to the beginning of the academic term for which it is being requested. A letter of request should be addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School and should provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances leading to the request and a justification of the time requested (one semester or one year). The request must be approved by a faculty advisor and the DGS prior to submission to the Graduate Dean. Medical Leaves of Absence must be approved by the Graduate School's Graduate Academic Counselor, who also approves of students returning from medical Leaves of Absence.

Students on approved LOAs are not registered at the University and, therefore, do not have the rights and privileges of registered students. Students must be registered during a semester in which they fulfill a University or departmental degree requirement, such as taking Qualifying Exams or submitting a dissertation. In addition, students must also be registered in order to be eligible for any form of University financial aid (e.g., a Teaching or Research Assistantship).

The GSO may permit deferment of TAsip funding due to an approved LOA for a maximum of one year. TAsip funding cannot be approved for any LOA during your first semester. The DGS may consider requests to defer funding for a subsequent semester, so long as it is filed no later than halfway into that semester (these are referred to as “retroactive” leaves of absence, in that they will retroactively take effect for the semester you are currently in). The same standards shall apply to the DGS’s approval of retroactive requests for deferments of TAsip funding as apply to the approval of current requests. Please note that if you take a retroactive leave of absence, you are responsible for paying full tuition and fees if you attended any class. Your tuition remission will be revoked and will not cover your tuition costs.

Students returning to the program from leaves must continue their funding package where they left off. (For instance, if you’re in the second year of the program and you take a leave of absence you return as a third year, not a fourth year.) If a graduate student is granted a retroactive LOA, only the number of pay periods not yet completed on the TAsip stipend can be deferred to a later semester. Any departmental fellowship money supplementing the TAsip stipend but not yet disbursed during the semester of a LOA must be deferred to the semester when the student returns.

Students are advised to consult with all sources of funding to determine whether a LOA might involve a long-term financial loss. Because financial aid packages are constructed and sequenced over a period of years, taking a LOA may result in a loss of future funding. Whenever a LOA is being considered, students should meet with their advisors to develop a plan for resumption of study. International students are advised to consult with the staff of the [Office of International Educational Services](#) for additional considerations before deciding to take a leave of absence. More information can be found [here](#).

More information about the Graduate School’s policies related to LOAs can be found [here](#). Please contact the Graduate Studies Office if you plan to take a leave of absence as soon as one becomes necessary so that we can best support you through this process.

Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Policy

The University of Maryland Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Policy provides for a period of up to six weeks during which new parents may postpone completion of academic requirements. The Department of English will allow for an additional six weeks totaling twelve weeks of parental leave. This time is intended to provide graduate students with an opportunity to integrate the challenges of new parenthood with the demands of graduate-level training, scholarship, and research. This is not considered a leave of absence. It allows for maintaining full-time, registered graduate student status. Thus, students remain fully eligible for the rights and privileges of registered students while adjusting to their new familial obligations.

When planning for this accommodation, please be in touch with your advisor and the GSO so that we can best support you during this process.

For more information on the Graduate School’s policy, see [here](#).

The form for Parental Accommodations can be found [here](#).

Coursework

All coursework must be completed with a minimum of a 3.6 GPA. Students are discouraged from taking Incompletes (the grade given when a student fails to complete all assigned work by the end of term), particularly in the first fifteen credit hours of coursework. See also the *Satisfactory Progress* section of this Handbook.

The DGS will help you select courses and act as the general advisor for your first year of classes. You will also have a faculty advising team that will act as a resource for choosing a program of study. You should consult with both the DGS and your advising team regularly. For more information, see the *Mentoring* section of this Handbook.

Direct admit vs. terminal MA requirements

Students who enter the doctoral program directly from their bachelor's degree are known as "direct admit" students. The PhD requires a minimum of 10 courses (30 credits) for students entering the program without a terminal MA. There are two required courses for the PhD and one highly recommended course:

- ENGL601: Literary Research and Critical Contexts/Introduction to Graduate Studies
- ENGL602: Critical Theory and Literary Criticism [not required, but highly recommended]
- ENGL611: Approaches to College Composition

Students select a minimum of eight additional graduate courses. All PhD students should select courses with two primary goals in mind: 1) filling in gaps in their knowledge of literary history and 2) developing an area of scholarly expertise and the skills necessary to work independently in that area.

PhD students entering the program with an MA from another institution should meet with the DGS to have their academic record evaluated; the DGS will establish what courses taken during the previous MA can count toward the PhD distribution requirements or recommend courses that will enable their completion. Students who begin the PhD program having earned an MA from another institution should expect to complete a minimum of eight courses (24 credits) of coursework, but may be required to complete more at the DGS's discretion.

Independent Studies, Interdisciplinarity, and the DC Consortium

Students may take up to two Independent Study courses to fulfill 600-level electives. If you are interested in taking an Independent Study, you and the professor with whom you hope to work should write up an intended course of study and file it with the GSO for approval before the first day of classes for that semester. Please contact the CGS for additional registration details for Independent Studies.

Students are encouraged to take classes outside of the English Department if the course content is relevant to their work. If you are interested in enrolling in an extra-departmental course, you should consult with your advisors and the Graduate Studies office to ensure that you do not have any outstanding permission blocks which might interfere with your registration. Additionally, you may need to reach out to the department or instructor of the course you wish to enroll in, as some require prior

permission for students to enroll in graduate courses from outside the department. Contact information can be found through the [UMD Directory](#).

If you're interested in taking an undergraduate course that is of particular interest to you, you should discuss this possibility with the course instructor and the CGS. Undergrad courses typically don't require additional permissions for enrollment, but you should discuss this option with your mentors and the GSO before registration.

The [Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area](#) is a nonprofit educational association consisting of seventeen colleges and universities in the District of Columbia and contiguous counties in Maryland and Virginia that serve nearly 290,000 students. Eligible students can benefit from this cooperative arrangement that is designed to permit the sharing of academic resources by member institutions. Students can enroll for courses that are not available at their home institutions at other institutions to augment their program of study and have the courses count as resident credits at their home institutions. Students pay their home institution's tuition rate for the courses they register for through the consortium program. Students are responsible for paying additional fees associated with certain courses (e.g. studio fees, lab fees, books, study materials, etc.). If a university is not in the consortium, you cannot enroll in courses there without paying the full tuition. You can find further information, as well as a list of participating institutions, [here](#).

Enrollment and registration

When you are ready to enroll each semester, you should check Testudo to ensure that there are no holds on your account that may block you from registration. You should then email the CGS with your chosen courses, as all graduate courses are blocked for registration until you receive permission for them (this permission is known as a "stamp," so if you've been stamped for something it means that you've been given electronic permission to enroll). Stamps are limited and based on seat number. If you've been stamped for a course and decide not to take it, please notify the CGS immediately so somebody else can be given a stamp. You can add and drop courses without penalty, provided your overall credit hours don't change, through the first ten days of the spring semester. All PhD students who have advanced to candidacy will be automatically signed up for their 899 dissertation credits by the Registrar's Office. If you have any questions or concerns during enrollment, please contact the CGS.

If you are taking a course in another department, you need to get stamped by them to take it (please reach out to the DGS or CGS in those departments for more information on how to get those stamps).

Satisfactory Progress

All funding/financial aid offers are contingent upon making satisfactory progress. Students are expected to keep in regular contact with the DGS and their advising team throughout all stages of the program. Measures to be used to assess satisfactory progress include grades, other evidence of the quality of coursework, being on schedule for meeting requirements for candidacy (including completing the Qualifying Exam and the Prospectus on time), and being on schedule for completing the dissertation. One of the most important elements of making satisfactory progress is achieving candidacy by the end of the fall semester of the fourth year in the program. If students do not achieve candidacy by this moment, they will not have made satisfactory progress and will no longer be eligible for funding. Importantly, students not eligible for funding cannot remain enrolled in the program. Students in this situation will be able to take an MA, enroll in a different program at the university, or leave the program.

Annual Report

Every semester each student is expected to meet with your faculty mentor to discuss progress through the program and your course of study. You should use these meetings to discuss what courses to take each semester and your progress towards completing your benchmarks. By the end of the academic year, you will complete an annual report that is filed with the GSO. The annual report is designed to inform the department of your progress each year, including courses completed, awards received, and any academic presentations or papers you may have published in the last year. This form is an important part of keeping the Department apprised of your activities and for us to get feedback from you each year.

Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA)

All coursework must be completed with a minimum of a 3.6 GPA. You will meet with your advising team and the DGS to assess progress and the advisability of your intended degree track at the start of the third semester. Students whose GPA for the first fifteen credits of coursework is 3.0 or lower will be offered the option of pursuing the terminal MA degree or resigning from the graduate program.

Incompletes

If a student is unable to finish the assigned work for a course due to illness or other circumstance beyond their control, they may be given an "Incomplete." This grade necessitates a contract between the student and the instructor as to when the work will be completed. Although we recognize emergencies can occur that may warrant a student's request for an Incomplete, we discourage students from taking this option as it can increase time to degree. Requests for an Incomplete must be made to the GSO before the end of the semester in which the Incomplete is taken. The required Incomplete contract form can be found [here](#).

The Incomplete contract must be signed by both student and instructor and returned to the CGS. If an Incomplete is necessary in the first fifteen credits of coursework, the DGS must be consulted in addition to the instructor of the course. Coursework related to the Incomplete must be finished by the end of the next semester. Students may not take their Qualifying Exams until all outstanding Incompletes have been converted to a regular grade.

Foreign language requirement

Each PhD student must demonstrate, by either equivalency or exam, reading knowledge of one language other than English. When satisfying this requirement, students are encouraged to choose a foreign language that is appropriate for their area of doctoral studies. The DGS and the advising team will coordinate with you in determining an appropriate language. In addition to the foreign language requirement administered by the GSO, a student's Dissertation Committee may also recommend more advanced proficiency in the language selected and/or work in an additional language. However, the student is obliged to be tested on (or to provide an equivalent for) only one language.

Equivalencies

Equivalencies include native speaking ability, undergraduate major, passage of an equivalent requirement in another graduate program, or a grade of B or better in a 300-level course in the language taken at the University of Maryland after starting the PhD program. The 300-level course must

emphasize fluent use of the language in a variety of formats and all major assignments in the course must be conducted in the language and not in English. The written work for the course must be evaluated for language and style as well as for organizational accuracy and coherence. The DGS will determine whether coursework or other equivalencies are appropriate and sufficiently recent to attest to proficiency.

The Foreign Language Examination

At least one month prior to the exam, students will choose and submit to the GSO two books of at least 200 pages in the foreign language, one primary work and one secondary (or critical) work (both works must have been originally written in the target language and may not be translated works). The GSO will determine the appropriateness of the student's choice. ('Appropriateness' does not necessarily mean that the primary text must come from your period of specialization and that the secondary text must be about your period, simply that the texts are equivalent in difficulty to other texts students are tested on.) Once the student's choice of texts has been approved, the GSO will assign an appropriate faculty member to administer the exam and provide them with a set of guidelines and expectations for the exam. The faculty member administering the exam will choose one 250- to 300-word passage from the primary work and one from the secondary work. The student will have three hours to prepare both translations with the help of a dictionary. The faculty administrator will evaluate the translations and determine whether or not the student passed or failed based on the guidelines provided by the GSO. The GSO will keep on file all exams and make them available to students preparing for the exam. The GSO can also provide a list of texts used in previous exams, if you're unsure what constitutes an appropriate primary or secondary text in your chosen language. In the event that you fail your first attempt, your examiner will provide detailed feedback in order to help you prepare for your second attempt. Students can retake their exam until the time they meet the requirement or they reach unsatisfactory progress in their fifth semester.

Frequent languages used for the exam include French, Spanish, German, and Italian, but other languages may be used—including computer and sign languages—if an appropriate examiner can be found. If you have any questions about language options, please consult the CGS.

Timeline

If foreign language equivalency is not fulfilled prior to admission, students have the option of taking the Foreign Language Exam at the end of their first or second semester of the PhD program. Students who have not fulfilled the foreign language requirement by the end of their second semester will test out of or enroll in a prerequisite entry-level foreign language class in their third semester. Students who pass the exam can drop the prerequisite language class. Students who do not pass will complete (or test out of) the prerequisite class and have another opportunity to take the Exam at the end of their third semester. Students who have not fulfilled the foreign language requirement by the end of their third semester will take a 300-level language class in their fourth semester. Students who do not receive a grade of "B" or better in the foreign language class during their fourth semester will retake the class and/or the Exam in their fifth semester. The foreign language requirement must be fulfilled before the student can be admitted to the Qualifying Exam. We encourage all students to satisfy the requirement during the first year of study; however, the absolute deadline for taking the Language Examination is the end of the fifth semester in order to maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree. Exam results

should be returned in 2-4 weeks, which should be factored into your decisions about scheduling the Exam. If you haven't received results within this timeframe, please reach out to the CGS.

Qualifying Examination

To advance to candidacy, all PhD students must complete the oral Qualifying Examination (QE), sometimes referred to as a "comprehensive exam," or "comps" for short. Before scheduling the QE, the student will have finished coursework (including any outstanding Incompletes) and satisfied the Language Requirement. This exam is normally taken in the fourth or fifth semester and may be taken no later than the seventh semester. Students will not have made satisfactory progress if the exam is not taken by the end of the seventh semester. During the QE semester, students must be registered for at least six credit hours in order to meet the university's Continuous Registration policy; international students may be required to register for more credit hours. Please contact the CGS to register for ENGL898: Pre-Candidacy Research (or an equivalent course).

Qualifying Examination Committee

Each student will assemble a Qualifying Exam Committee in consultation with the DGS and their advising team. The QE Committee consists of four members, including a chair and three readers. From this point until the constitution of the Dissertation Committee, the QE Committee serves as the student's advising committee. In many cases, the QE Committee will become the Dissertation Committee (or at least share many of the same members, though this is not a requirement). Students are expected to meet regularly with the chair and first reader of their QE Committees. If students wish to consider adding a QE committee member from another department or from another university, they must contact the DGS. For mediation between committee members and other committee-related issues, please see the *Troubleshooting* section of this Handbook.

The reading list

The reading list for the Qualifying Exam can serve several purposes. The first is to ensure that students have a broad base of knowledge in their academic area, so the reading list should cover any major gaps in the student's education in their period/field. Depending on your prior education and how developed your research ideas are at this stage, the reading list may also serve to deepen your knowledge in relevant sub-fields or lay the groundwork for the dissertation. Students should discuss these expectations with members of their Committee before the list is compiled to ensure that everyone is working toward the same goals. Because every student will have different needs at this point in the program, it is not unusual for QE lists to vary widely.

The reading list, compiled by the student in consultation with their Committee, should include roughly 80-120 novel-length works covering two of the following categories: a literary period, a recognized field, and/or the proposed subject of the dissertation. The field may be interpreted as any discrete literary concern that has accrued a body of serious critical thought, and may include such diverse subjects as genre; literary, linguistic, or theoretical criticism or methodology; or a sub-period. Typically, students develop a longer literary period or field list and a more focused list on the proposed dissertation topic. On the whole, the longer period or field list accounts for 70% of works studied for the exam and the focused list accounts for around 30%. Around 75% of the lists combined consists of primary texts and 25% of secondary titles. (When devising a period or field list, it may be useful to consult the [MLA's Job](#)

[Information List](#) to see how departments orient their hiring.) This is a rough estimate, but Committees should not greatly exceed the maximum number of titles of 120. Students should consult the GSO if they feel their workload is excessive or their Committee's expectations are too burdensome.

The reading list must be approved by the Committee chair and all Committee members. This list, along with the QE form, must be submitted eight weeks before the defense. Readings lists are made available to all students via [the ELMS PhD Basics Site](#).

Scheduling the QE

To schedule the QE, the student should contact the GSO at least eight weeks before the proposed exam date. The CGS will assist the student with scheduling an exam date and reserving a room.

The Qualifying Examination

The oral exam consists of two 60-minute parts:

- a presentation by the student and follow-up discussion of the presentation
- a general examination on the reading lists

Working in consultation with the student and other members of the Committee, the chair prepares two to four topics or questions for the student's oral presentation. The student will receive these from the GSO one week before the exam and will prepare an oral presentation on ONE of the topics of their choice. The exam begins with the fifteen- to twenty-minute presentation on the selected topic. The student may bring to the exam a copy of the reading list, handouts with excerpts or pointers, and brief presentation notes, but not a full script of the presentation. PowerPoint or any other technological aids may also be used for their presentation. A thirty- to forty-minute discussion follows the presentation. The criteria for evaluation of this part of the exam include the student's ability to use specific textual evidence in the construction of an argument, the coherence and persuasiveness of the presentation's overall argument and local interpretations, and its theoretical grounding as well as its critical and historical contextualization.

Part Two is an approximately one-hour oral examination on the period/field and focus reading lists. The emphasis here is on breadth.

At the conclusion of the Examination the student leaves the room, and the Committee discusses and votes on the performance. Three passing votes constitute a passing grade. The chair informs the student in person and the DGS in writing about the result of the Exam. If the student fails the QE, they may retake it only once. The student will receive a written assessment from the chair indicating the reasons for the failure. The QE Committee and reading list should remain the same from the initial to the second attempt. Changes must be requested in writing and submitted to the DGS for approval. The DGS or a representative from the Graduate Studies Committee will be present at the second attempt to ensure procedural fairness. Failing a second time disqualifies the student from continuing in the PhD program.

Expected time to degree and University deadlines

In most cases, the English Department offers students a funding package for 6 years and assumes that you will complete your degree in that timeframe. The timeline below gives you the semester benchmarks that you are expected to meet (barring any exceptional circumstances), followed by the absolute last deadline that a student can meet and remain in good standing.

- You are expected to complete your coursework by the fourth semester (the official deadline is the fifth semester).
- You are encouraged to meet the Foreign Language Requirement by the end of your second semester (the official deadline is no later than the fifth semester).
- You are expected to advance to candidacy by successfully passing your Qualifying Examination in your fifth semester (the official deadline is by the seventh semester).
- You must file an approved dissertation prospectus no later than four months after the Qualifying Exam. The prospectus is usually written in the sixth semester.
- The dissertation should be completed by the twelfth semester (the university stipulates that the dissertation needs to be submitted within 4 years of advancement to candidacy or within 9 years of admission).

Any petitions for an extension must be made in consultation with your committee and the DGS. You must provide a timetable for the completion of the benchmark with the extension factored in that must be approved by your advisor and committee. For a timetable, see Appendix 2 of this Handbook.

4. Mentoring

Academic advising vs. mentoring

Graduate students participate in several separate but complementary mentoring schemes: a peer-to-peer buddy system, a faculty mentoring program, and a pedagogical mentoring program for those students whose funding package includes teaching experience.

Academic advising differs from mentoring in that its purpose is to help you complete degree requirements and graduate on time. Mentoring is intended to provide you with more personalized guidance from faculty members whose scholastic interests align with yours. Students can expect their faculty mentors to help demystify graduate school, model professional and pedagogical responsibility, guide their professional development, help them cultivate good writing and research skills and habits, and (where applicable) assist them in finding other mentors and advisors.

Peer mentoring

The Graduate English Organization (GEO) assigns all incoming graduate students a “buddy,” a more advanced graduate student in the same degree program who shares similar academic interests. The GEO buddy is available to answer questions about the program, about settling into College Park and the UMD community, and about graduate student life generally. These assignments are made prior to students’ arrival on campus. If you have not been assigned a GEO buddy by the time you arrive on campus, please contact the GEO Social Chair. If you aren’t sure who the Social Chair is, please consult the CGS.

Faculty mentoring

The English Department graduate teaching faculty is composed of Visiting, Assistant, Associate, Full, Distinguished, and Emeritus Professors (an honorific conferred on retired faculty who may continue to work at the University on a part-time basis). They have many responsibilities, which include teaching graduate and undergraduate courses, conducting research, writing and publishing academic articles and monographs, and advising students. They may also be involved in academic conferences, publication of journals, or management of campus organizations such as CLCS. Faculty service requirements dictate that they should be available to work with students with similar research interests, and you are encouraged to reach out to them, usually via email. Faculty expect to hear from students. They are one of your best resources on campus, so you should not hesitate to talk to them. However, please be aware that faculty members on leave or sabbatical may have limited availability.

English PhD students are assigned a team of two faculty mentors on arrival. After the completion of coursework, this mentoring team is replaced by the Qualifying Exam committee (see *Examination Committee* in the *Qualifying Exam* section of this Handbook). After advancing to candidacy, the QE Committee will be replaced by the Dissertation Committee (four departmental faculty and one member from another UMD department). It is fine if these different teams are made up of the same group of people or if some of the same people appear in all committees/teams.

Basic expectations for student mentees

Students are expected to meet with their mentors at least once every semester, but you are encouraged to meet with them more often—whatever best suits both parties. It is up to you to contact your mentor

to arrange meetings. Faculty mentors are there to help guide you through the PhD program, and can offer advice not only on coursework and research, but on other aspects of academic life, including conferences, publications, and professionalization opportunities.. Meetings will be most productive when you accept responsibility for leading the meeting. Your role is to raise the issues and questions, while the professor's role is to respond. At the end of the academic year, the GSO will send out an annual update form that you are required to fill out to remain in good standing with the program. The form will ask for an updated CV, about courses taken, benchmark requirements completed, and any presentations, publications, or other professionalization opportunities. The DGS will send out a reminder towards the end of the spring semester about the annual report, so please make sure to update your CV throughout the year so that you are prepared to complete it.

If you have difficulty making contact with your mentor or want to change your mentors, please contact the CGS and DGS, and they will work to help you find alternate mentors or approve alternates you have already chosen. For more about mediating mentor conflicts, please see the *Troubleshooting* section of this Handbook.

Basic expectations for faculty mentors

Mentoring is consistently cited by graduate students as an important aspect of graduate programs. A good faculty mentor will take an active interest in all aspects of the professional life of their mentees. Faculty mentors should meet frequently with students, at least once a semester; preferably more often. This is a time to discuss the student's goals, to share resources and opportunities, and to offer intellectual and professional guidance. Mentors should review and return student work promptly, with explicit feedback, establishing a timeframe for responding when the student turns in the work.

The department encourages students to have a conversation about expectation setting when they ask a faculty member to be their advisor/dissertation chair. A list of recommended conversation questions can be found in Appendix 4 of this Handbook.

If there is ever a moment when you feel that your advisor or committee member is not meeting your expectations well enough, you should discuss it with them sooner rather than later. If that is not a possibility or the professor is uncommunicative, please reach out to the DGS, whose primary concern is to support students and help them to complete their program successfully.

Pedagogical mentoring

When you begin to teach, you will be assigned a pedagogical mentor. These mentors are assigned on a semester-by-semester basis by the Director of Academic Writing (ENGL101 sections), the Director of Professional Writing, or the DGS.

Academic Writing Program (AWP) and Professional Writing Program (PWP)

New teachers are individually mentored by one of the assistant directors, administrative fellows, or the director. The mentor is available to answer course questions and concerns. Additionally, the mentor observes one or two of the mentee's classes and reviews the mentee's responses to student essays at two different points over the course of the semester. Mentees also meet regularly in larger groups to discuss the semester's work (specific assignment goals and related class activities), to address any issues that may arise, and to help plan for future classes.

200-level and lecture courses

All graduate students assigned as TAs for large lecture courses or instructors of record for 200-level courses are assigned teaching mentors (usually either the course lecturer or a member of their own QE/Dissertation committee). Mentor groups for the lecture courses meet regularly to discuss grade-norming, topics for discussion sections, and student progress. Mentors and mentees for free-standing courses meet to discuss aspects of pedagogy that are relevant to the particular needs of the instructors. Mentors visit instructors' individual 200-level classes or discussion sections at least once per semester. The classroom visit is followed by an informal meeting with the instructor to discuss pedagogy and a brief written report is shared with the student and filed with the Graduate Studies Office (GSO). Also, consider asking your mentor each semester to write a teaching letter for you that can be placed into your portfolio for when you go onto the job market. This is a great opportunity to be observed and have someone write about your teaching for potential jobs.

Questions or concerns about the mentoring process

You may find that the faculty member(s) initially assigned to you (or later chosen by you) may not end up being the best for advising your course selection or chairing your research project. If this turns out to be the case, please contact the DGS to discuss the situation and/or change your mentor(s). More details and a fuller sense of expectations can be found on [the Mentoring page](#) on our departmental website. Additionally, please peruse the *Troubleshooting* section of this Handbook.

5. Teaching

An important part of the 6 years' work at Maryland is teaching. Funding packages are structured so that students will not have to teach during their first year in the program. Students coming in as of Fall 2022 will TA or teach as instructors of record (depending upon availability of teaching opportunities and need for TAs) two courses, one per semester, during their second through sixth years. Students admitted prior to Fall 2022 should consult their offer letter.

ENGL611 and ENGL101

ENGL611, Approaches to College Composition, is a required course which helps prepare students to teach their first ENGL101 course. The goal of ENGL101 is to familiarize students with the kind of writing they will have to do in college, broadly referred to as academic writing. While characteristics of academic writing vary across university disciplines, successful academic writing incorporates inquiry and rhetoric to engage in a scholarly conversation. These three concerns—*inquiry, rhetoric, and conversation*—are the three major components of ENGL101. The goal of the course is to teach students how to participate thoughtfully, critically, and persuasively in academic conversations.

The [Academic Writing Office](#) (Tawes 1116) assigns a mentor for your first semester teaching ENGL101—usually but not always the Fall semester of your second year—who observes your class during the term and provides an assessment of your work for your record. A second observation may take place if the observing faculty member or director of the Academic Writing Program (AWP) deems it necessary. During your first semester as a 101 instructor, the AWP requires that you attend weekly discussion sessions in which program mentors discuss teaching strategies and provide guidelines for ensuring your adherence to the established curriculum. See also the *Pedagogical Mentoring* in the *Mentoring* section of this Handbook.

TAships and 200-level courses

Once you have gained experience as a 101 instructor, you will have the chance to teach other types of courses. The Associate Chair coordinates teaching requests, and your assignment will have you lead a discussion section as part of a larger lecture course taught by a faculty member or teach a free-standing 200-level literature course. The English Department provides various tools to assist you in preparing for teaching a literature course, including sample syllabi, which can be requested from the Main English Office. You can find descriptions of courses currently offered [here](#).

You will be assigned a teaching mentor who will meet with you throughout the semester as needed and observe and submit a written observation report to the GSO. The observation will include a written summary of the lesson, your teaching style, and how you manage the classroom. These observations are important for the job market and should be included in your portfolio. Mentor groups for the lecture courses may decide to plan regular meetings to discuss grade-norming, topics for discussion sections, and student progress. If you are teaching a 200-level course, you may wish to meet to discuss aspects of pedagogy that are relevant to the particular needs of the instructors; topics could include facilitating successful class discussions, teaching a common text, responding effectively to student work, etc.

The GSO assigns these mentors based on your academic advisors or their expertise in the subject you are teaching. If any issues arise, please contact the GSO.

Scheduling Office

Policies and expectations

Graduate student teaching assignments are determined by several factors: a student's year in the program, declared preferences and teaching history, as well as departmental priorities and needs. In general, English PhD students teaching for the first time can expect to teach ENGL101. The Scheduling Office endeavors to provide all students with a variety of teaching experiences and courses across the years of their academic program.

Course request form

In December of each year, students receive a link in their email connecting them to the Enrolled Graduate Student Schedule Request Form, where they indicate which classes they would prefer to teach in the following academic year. This form asks you to indicate your top five choices, as well as any other courses you would like to be considered for. Additionally, the form provides fields to describe your teaching experience, upload your CV, and indicate your teaching availability for the coming year. Because course assignments must be made on a yearly rather than semester basis, students should indicate their schedule to the best of their knowledge at the time of filling out the form. Should any changes to your schedule that would affect your teaching availability arise, please notify the Scheduling Office immediately, as they may be able to avoid future scheduling conflicts.

Scheduling conflicts

Should you encounter a scheduling conflict, you have must discuss resolutions with the Scheduling Office directly by emailing the Associate Chair. Feel free to include the DGS on the email to keep them in the information loop.

Post-funding

After completing their sixth year in the program, PhD student instructors are eligible to take on a 2-2 teaching load (two courses in the Fall and two courses in the Spring), subject to departmental availability. For more, see *Seventh Year* in the *Later Stages* section of this Handbook.

Other Resources

The University's [Teaching and Learning Transformation Center](#) (TLTC) organizes workshops, roundtables, lectures, and other enrichment programs. For example, the Graduate Teaching Assistant Portfolio Retreat encourages students to write their statement of teaching philosophy in the company other graduate students who seek to enter the job market..

The Graduate English Organization organizes enrichment activities to support graduate students in their professionalization. Additionally, the Director of Graduate Placement is available to guide you through the process of applying for academic and extra-academic positions. The Graduate Placement Committee holds meetings (open to all graduate students) that provide information about the diverse job opportunities for PhD students. The Department also offers a semester-long Publications Workshop (ENGL809) in which students and a faculty member exchange criticism to aid in the preparation of one's work for publication. Students have been particularly well-served in the recent past by these offerings,

publishing papers in reputable journals and rehearsing conference papers for a well-informed audience. The Graduate School also provides its own series of events around professionalization, which can be found [here](#).

6. Candidacy

Once the student passes the Qualifying Examination, they must submit the [Application for Advancement to Candidacy Form](#) to the GSO. The student will receive a step promotion and a small raise in stipend once having advanced. Students generally complete the dissertation in 2-3 years after becoming ABD (“all but degree” remaining to complete program).

Dissertation committee

Students should begin to think about assembling a Dissertation Committee while identifying areas of specialization for the Qualifying Examination. In many cases (but not all), the Dissertation Committee is the same as the Qualifying Examination Committee. Students should consult with the DGS and their advising team/QE Committee concerning the selection of the Dissertation Committee. When selecting members for your Committee(s), you should consider—and discuss—expectations, as every committee is different. For instance, you should clarify divisions of labor with potential committee chairs and readers, as well as how often you should expect to meet with them, what kind of support you should expect to receive, and how you should prepare for each meeting. If you have issues meeting or communicating with any members of your Committee, you should reach out to the DGS. See also the *Troubleshooting* section of this Handbook.

Consisting of five faculty members, the Dissertation Committee normally includes the four members of the candidate's Dissertation Committee and an additional member from the University's graduate faculty who serves as the Graduate Dean's representative. In accordance with Graduate School regulations, that representative must be from outside the department. The Dean's Representative may also serve as a full member of the committee. One member serves as the dissertation director. If two faculty members are to serve as co-directors, permission from the Graduate School must be obtained. In some cases, a committee member from another university may serve if his/her area of expertise is needed. The faculty member must be approved by both the Department and by the Graduate School; please contact the CGS for more details on this process. This Committee should be assembled by the time that the prospectus is submitted.

Dissertation prospectus

The prospectus is to be submitted within four months of passing the Qualifying Exam. The prospectus establishes that the student has defined a research question that is worth pursuing and has the knowledge base to pursue it. The prospectus should be developed in consultation with the Dissertation Committee. The prospectus should demonstrate that the student:

- has defined and delimited an interesting research question
- can explain the importance of the research question and the contribution that it will make to the field
- is familiar with the existing scholarship related to the research question and can describe the relationship of the dissertation project to that scholarship
- has developed a theoretical framework for the argument and a methodology for the project

The prospectus should be between 8-12 double-spaced pages in length. It should include a bibliography and a one-page abstract. Upon completion of the prospectus, the committee chair should email the GSO to inform them that the committee has signed off and approved the prospectus. The CGS will then send the Prospectus Completion Form to the student to fill out and submit their approved prospectus. If a student requires more time to complete the prospectus, they and their committee chair must reach out to the GSO to ask for an extension and provide a timetable for completion of the prospectus. Failure to complete the prospectus within the 4 month timeframe will result in the student being considered to not be in good standing, and will jeopardize their funding in the program.

If a student does not meet the four-month deadline for submitting the prospectus, they must submit to the DGS an expected submission date in writing (email); this new date should have been discussed with and approved by the student's advisor and committee. If the student takes more than six months to submit the prospectus, they must meet with the DGS and the advisor to make a plan for submission and establish steps for moving forward. Students that take more than six months are no longer in good standing, and they risk having their funding (teaching assignment) taken away for the upcoming semester. For this reason, it is vital that a student with a late prospectus be in contact with the DGS as soon as possible and develop a plan for submission that can be shared with the Associate Chair's Office.

Dissertation

Students at this stage of the program have successfully passed the Qualifying Examination and advanced to candidacy. PhD candidates are expected to file an approved dissertation prospectus within four months of passing the QE. At least three of the four members of the Dissertation Committee are expected to meet annually with the student to review progress. A successful defense of dissertation is the final requirement for the degree. Students must defend within 4 years of advancing to candidacy.

Dissertation Workshop

We urge PhD candidates to enroll in the Dissertation Workshop (one credit of ENGL888) in the semester following successful passage of their Qualifying Examination. Taught by members of the department's faculty and structured as a seminar that meets every few weeks, the Workshop helps students advance their work on the dissertation, whether they are developing a prospectus or writing individual chapters.

Dissertation Defense Committee

When the dissertation is nearly complete and the director(s) approve(s) moving on to this penultimate step, students will need to arrange for the defense. At the beginning of the term that you intend to defend, you must notify the GSO and the Graduate School of your intent to defend by submitting the [Nomination of Thesis or Dissertation Defense Committee form](#). The official deadline to submit this form varies by semester and can be found [here](#).

All members of the Defense Committee appointed by the Graduate School must attend the defense. Students should discuss the format of the defense with their directors. If any member of your committee (excluding the chair and in extreme circumstances the Dean's Rep) will need to attend the defense remotely, please consult [this page for Remote Defense Request information](#).

Scheduling the defense

Once the Committee has been constituted and the form submitted, please contact the CGS to schedule the dissertation defense. This event will be announced to the Department one week in advance.

We urge students to defend in either the Fall or Spring terms. Because tuition remission does not cover Summer term, students who choose to defend in Summer would be responsible for paying out-of-pocket to register for course credits and fees on account of the Graduate School's continuous registration policy (see *Continuous registration* in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook). Currently, these costs run between \$900 and \$1,700. Please be mindful of the deadlines set by the Graduate School as they are firm and vary each semester. The deadlines are available here:

<https://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar/deadlines/academic-deadlines>.

The Defense Examination

Typically, the defense is a two-hour discussion of the dissertation. The defense usually begins with a presentation from the candidate on the experience of writing the dissertation (key discoveries, important changes in critical perspectives, main critical contributions, etc.).

The Department of English follows the Graduate School's policy on the Open Dissertation Examination. The Dissertation Examination consists of two parts: Part 1 is a public presentation by the candidate on the main aspects of the research reported in the dissertation. During Part 1, questions from the audience will be permitted. For questions from persons who are not members of the Defense Committee, the chair has discretion to decide whether such questions are germane to the topic of the dissertation and how much time will be allotted for the answers. Part 2 is a formal examination of the candidate by the Committee. This part will be open only to the Committee and other members of the Graduate Faculty. During Part 2, only members of the Defense Committee will be permitted to ask questions.

Remote participation in dissertation defense by a Committee member other than the chair is subject to [Graduate School policy](#). The remote participant is visible to the Committee and the candidate. If the remote connection fails at any time during the defense, the Dean's Representative will deem the defense as failed and it will need to be rescheduled. More details about the Defense Examination are to be found on the [Graduate School website](#) or by consulting the CSG.

Submitting the dissertation

Four of the five members of the Defense Committee must approve the dissertation for the candidate to pass. Candidates are frequently asked to make revisions to the dissertation before submitting it to the Graduate School. The approved dissertation must be submitted electronically to the Graduate School by the [deadlines posted for graduation](#) in a given semester. Information about all aspects of electronic submission of the dissertation is available on the Graduate School's Information for Current Students page under [Thesis and Dissertation Resources](#). Please be advised that the University does not offer copyediting services; students must find and pay them on their own and cannot use University funds.

Upon satisfactory completion of the oral defense and the electronic submission of the dissertation to, and its approval by, the Graduate School, students will be awarded the PhD.

Support during the dissertation

There are many formal and informal sources of support for dissertating students at UMD. Students interested in workshopping their prospectus or first chapter with other students in the English department may request a stamp of approval for ENGL888 from the GSO.

Beyond the formal support of their Dissertation Committee and departmental course offerings, students have the option of joining several casual writing groups, both within and outside the English Department. Informal graduate student writing groups meet throughout the academic year. Consult the GEO for details. Information about this writing group is distributed over the English and Comparative Literature PhD listservs. The Graduate Writing Center also hosts and facilitates dissertation writing groups; information about these services can be found [here](#). Additional dissertation workshops and seminars may be available through the Consortium and nearby institutions such as the [Folger Institute](#), which offers a year-long dissertation seminar as one of its Scholarly Programs. If you are interested in applying to such a seminar, please discuss these options and opportunities with your mentors or the GSO.

7. Later Stages

Seventh year and beyond

Students remain enrolled at UMD until their time to degree expires, 4 years after the semester date of their advancement to candidacy (for more about this part of the process, see the *Candidacy* section of this Handbook). For instance, if you advanced to candidacy on April 1, 2022, you will be enrolled until the end of the spring semester in 2026. If you advanced in June 2023, you will be enrolled until the end of summer 2027. Students who may need more time to complete their degree requirements are able to submit a Time Extension Petition, an option which should be discussed with the DGS. Departmental funding ends after sixth year, but students who are still in good standing are eligible, with DGS approval, for a 2-2 teaching load, subject to Departmental availability. They are also able to apply for GASHips and still have access to health insurance.

Professionalization

Professionalization is an essential element of graduate education and prepares PhD students to enter the job market after graduation. Engaging in purposeful professional development and career planning are important parts of the graduate experience and essential to maintaining a personally satisfying career. All graduate students should participate in departmental events, attend career workshops, and pursue professional development opportunities in and outside of the University. After their first year, students should start to think about participating in academic conferences and submitting written work for publication.

Conferences

Graduate students typically start attending academic conferences in their second or third year. Academic conferences are an opportunity for students to network within their field, as well as gain experience presenting their work for a community of their peers. The Department provides support for each student to offset the cost of conference travel. For more information about conference funding, see *Travel and conference funding* in the *Funding and Fellowships* section of this Handbook. You may arrange

conference travel yourself or through the Business Office's travel agency. Conference registration fees can be reimbursed from Departmental travel funds, but only if the student is presenting at the conference. Conference membership fees must be paid (usually at a reduced rate) by the student. It can be a good idea to attend a local conference as an observer before traveling to present at a conference, to get a sense for how an academic conference works. Because the DMV is home to so many universities and cultural institutions, students have many opportunities to attend or participate in local conferences during their time at the University.

Presenting at an academic conference usually requires that students submit a brief abstract for consideration as part of a panel or roundtable discussion. Every conference's submission, admission, and registration process is different, so students should consult individual conference websites for further information. Academic conferences are professional industry events, and attending students should conduct themselves with the same degree of professionalism expected at their home institution.

Finding relevant conferences can be a challenge, so you are encouraged to discuss conference opportunities with faculty and other graduate students in your field. Additionally, you can find current calls for papers in the humanities collected by the University of Pennsylvania [here](#). Information on conferences hosted by the University of Maryland can be found [here](#).

Publishing

Publishing in scholarly journals and other publications is a crucial element of building an academic CV. Students may enroll in ENGL809, the Academic Publishing Workshop, if they wish to critique and revise materials they hope to submit for publication with the help of their peers and Department faculty. You will receive an email from the GSO about this.

Ideally, students should strive to have one essay published as a peer-reviewed article or book-chapter by the time they go on the job market. In many of your graduate seminars, you will be asked to write research papers which could become the basis for publishable essays. During coursework, you should keep in mind those papers or projects that you most enjoy or speak most to your interests as possible publications. While you need not worry about publishing in your first two years of the program, as you complete your QE and prepare your dissertation prospectus, you should begin to think about pieces you have written which might be suitable for submission for publication. Alternatively, you might consider a chapter (or a piece of a chapter) you write for your dissertation. There is no standard timeline for thinking about publication or work on it; what makes most sense for you will depend on your progress and the feedback from your advising team.

If there is something that you have written that you would like to turn into a publication, you should discuss this possibility with the professor the seminar paper was written for or one of your committee members. You should ask if they can provide feedback on the writing itself, as well as suggestions for possible publication venues: relevant journals, edited volumes, etc. As mentioned above, you should also consider enrolling in the yearly Academic Publishing Workshop run by the DGS.

When you have identified a potential journal for placement, you should read their policies about submitting materials carefully as different journals have different expectations. Some smaller journals do not accept unsolicited material, and most have specified word limits and publication styles. You are almost never allowed to "double submit" a piece in academic publishing; this means that once you have submitted a piece to a journal, which is referred to as "Under Review," then you may not submit that

essay to another journal for consideration until the first journal has responded with their decision. It can take anywhere from 4-8 weeks to hear back from most journals, though the wait may be longer. When an article is under review, the journal's editors find a scholar in the field to read the essay and offer feedback on its strengths and weaknesses, and make a determination about publishing the essay after receiving this evaluation. Generally, you will get one of four responses (though the precise terminology may vary): Publish, Publish with Minor Revisions, Revise and Resubmit, or Do Not Publish. This response will come with comments to help guide your revision, unless the article has been rejected, in which case there may not be any feedback forthcoming.

Students should seek out further advice at the revision stage by reaching out to their committee members for advice. You are also encouraged to take advantage of your graduate student peers' expertise! Editors are generally very busy and may not be able to provide any more feedback than what they say in the emailed report, and additional feedback from mentors and classmates can help further improve your work.

Social media and the internet

In the 21st century, the internet is a useful and ubiquitous tool for disseminating information. Like any other method of communication, email and other electronic forms of communication should be used courteously. While emails to faculty mentors and other Departmental personnel need not be overly formal, please observe basic email etiquette by checking your University email accounts regularly and reply promptly when required. Please be careful not to hit "reply all" by accident, as this can cause problems, especially with large listservs. You should pay special attention to communications from the DGS and CGS, as the Graduate Studies Office will not spam you with irrelevant information.

Social media can be a great way to engage with the scholarly community at and beyond the University of Maryland. Staying abreast of academic chatter may also alert you to opportunities which might not reach you otherwise. However, you should be aware when engaging with the academic community on social media that they can see your activity as well. Be sure that your (public) internet presence is a positive reflection of you and the Department. You may find it preferable to keep separate professional and private social media accounts.

Other professionalization opportunities

Both ARHU and the Graduate School maintain websites designed to help students find relevant professionalization opportunities on and off campus. ARHU's career development web page can be found [here](#), while the University's career center website can be found [here](#). You may also wish to make use of [Imagine PhD](#), a career exploration and planning tool for the humanities and social sciences.

Within the Department, GEO hosts a number of professionalization events each year, including CV workshops, alumni lectures, paleography workshops, and more. These opportunities are free for students to participate in and distributed over the GEO listserv. If you haven't already been added to the listserv and Facebook page, please contact GEO leadership.

Guidance

The DGS is always willing to meet with students to address professionalization questions or materials. You can also check in with the CGS to see if there are other faculty members in the field who might have pertinent knowledge

The Job Market

The timeline for the academic job market is outlined below. The DGS, who is also the Chair of Graduate Career Development, will also hold workshops throughout the academic year that address applying for and preparing oneself for jobs outside of the academic teaching route, such as nonprofit work, publishing, and university administration.

The Academic Job Search

May

- Discuss job market with dissertation advisor and committee members. If all are agreed, contact referees and ask for a letter to be submitted to the Interfolio dossier by September 1.

June

- Draft job materials. If you are unsure what these materials should look like, you should review the advice sample documents on our Canvas Job Seekers site. These materials should include a letter of application (no more than 1 ½ to 2 single-spaced pages), your CV, a 1-1 ½ page, single-spaced abstract of your dissertation, a 1 page single-spaced statement of your teaching philosophy, and (if you choose) a diversity statement.
- Decide on a sample of your writing (likely a piece of a dissertation chapter or an article that you have published) that you want to submit as part of your application materials.
- Research postdocs in your field, paying special attention to application processes and deadlines.
- Collect teaching materials, including samples of course syllabi, assignments, course evaluations, statement of teaching philosophy.
- Join MLA, CCCC, or other appropriate professional organizations if you have not already done so.
- Open an Interfolio account (<http://www.interfolio.com/>) and request letters of recommendation for your credential file.
- Have official transcripts (undergraduate and graduate) sent to your Interfolio account.

July

- Send job materials to your dissertation advisor by July 1, then revise.

August

- By August 1, you should have emailed the Chair of the Graduate Career Development Committee your revised job materials (not including the writing sample).
- Revise job materials.

September

- Once the new job list is posted in mid-September, access the JIL (Job Information List), by going to [the ADE \(Association of Departments of English\) link on the MLA website](#). You should also check [the Chronicle of Higher Education listings](#).
- Polish writing sample (maximum of 25 pages).
- Work on the teaching portfolio and, if necessary, statement of research plans.
- Check with Interfolio to make sure that all of your letters have arrived by September 15th .

October and November

- Apply!
- Continue checking for new listings.
- Prepare oral statements on teaching and research for use in skype and in-person interviews
- Attend departmental mock interview session via Skype or Zoom.

December

- Attend departmental mock in-person interview session.
- Decide what you would give as an on-campus talk

Some resources you may find helpful include articles for job seekers on the [MLA Association of Departments of English \(ADE\) website](#), [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#), [MLA's Guidelines for Search Committees and Job Seekers](#), and Ms. Mentor's Impeccable Advice for Women in Academia.

If you're looking for further guidance, please contact the Chair of the Graduate Career Development committee/DGS.

Graduation

At the beginning of each semester, the CGS will distribute instructions for graduation, including applying to graduate, submitting the appropriate paperwork, and all other University requirements. The Undergraduate English Office handles all commencement activities for the Department, including graduate students. They will reach out to graduating students directly about event logistics and regalia information. The Department has one graduation ceremony in the Spring. You are not required to attend the University commencement. Your diploma will not be given to you at commencement but mailed to you from the registrar several weeks later if you choose not to attend in person. Students who will graduate in the Summer but wish to walk in the Spring should contact the CGS.

Appendix 1: New Student Checklist

Graduate School Checklist

The Graduate School provides a general checklist for all incoming students, which can be found [here](#). If you have any questions about the items on this checklist, you can contact the Graduate School directly by phone at (301) 405-3644, by email at gradschool@umd.edu, or in person at the Lee Building, Room 2123.

The English Department

In addition to the guidelines provided by the Graduate School, there are several steps new PhD students in the English Department should take before or soon after the start of the fall semester:

1. **Contact your GEO buddy.** Over the summer before your first semester, GEO will reach out to pair you with a “GEO buddy” who is more advanced in the program and can help guide you through the early stages of the program. If you haven’t received a GEO buddy assignment by August, please reach out to GEO leadership.
2. **Explore housing options.** Graduate students at the University have a number of housing options available to them. While many students elect to live in off-campus housing, there is some limited graduate student housing on campus. There are two all-graduate student apartment communities on University property. The Graduate Gardens and Graduate Hills communities are owned by the University of Maryland and managed on the University's behalf by a property management company. Information about these and other housing options can be found [here](#). If you are interested in living off-campus, the GSO recommends that you reach out to current students about resources and advice. If you’re unsure who to contact, start with the GSO, your GEO buddy, or GEO leadership.
3. **Explore transportation and parking options.** For more information, please see the *Parking and Transportation* subsection of *Introduction* to this Handbook. If you will require a parking space, you should register with DOTS as soon as possible; the DOTS website can be found [here](#).
4. **Set up your university email.** Instructions for setting up your two UMD email accounts can be found in the *University email* subsection of the *Introduction* to this Handbook.
5. **Set up direct deposit.** The Department strongly recommends that you set up direct deposit so your biweekly paychecks and any fellowship money you have been awarded can be deposited directly into your bank account. To find instructions for setting up direct deposit, see the *Direct Deposit* subsection of the *Introduction* to this Handbook.
6. **Meet with the DGS to discuss the terms of your offer letter and course credits.** To ensure you understand the terms of your offer letter, you should review the terminology provided in the *Understanding your offer letter* section of this Handbook and make a list of any further questions you have for the DGS. Additionally, if you are entering the program with a terminal MA, you should discuss your academic record with the DGS, who will decide which requirements your previous graduate study will satisfy. Before this conversation, you should carefully read the *Degree requirements* section of this Handbook. To arrange a meeting with the DGS, please contact the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

7. **Meet with your advising team to discuss enrollment.** As soon as possible, you should reach out to your advising team to discuss your coursework and the best approach to ensure you satisfy degree requirements in a timely manner.
8. **Request stamps from the GSO.** Once you've had the chance to meet with the DGS and your advising team, you should email the CGS to request stamps for the courses you wish to enroll in for the fall semester. For more about stamps and registration, please see the *Enrollment and registration* subsection of the *Degree requirements* section of this Handbook.

Appendix 2: Recommended Timetables

Sample course of study for a PhD student entering with a BA (full TAship)

Year 1	Semester 1 No teaching Take 3 courses Take foreign language exam	Semester 2 No teaching Take 3 courses (Retake foreign language exam if necessary)
Year 2	Semester 3 TA one course Take 2 courses	Semester 4 TA one course Take 2 courses Get Qualifying Examination reading list and committee approved Suggested: Apply for Summer funding to support QE study
Year 3	Semester 5 TA/ Teach one course Take Qualifying Examination Suggested: Begin applying for conference funding from department and ARHU if you have not already Enroll in ENGL 898 and/or 809	Semester 6 TA/ Teach one course Write Dissertation Prospectus (due 4 months after QE) and organize Dissertation Committee Suggested: Enroll in ENGL 899 and/or 809 if you have completed the QE
Year 4	Semester 7 TA/ Teach one course Write first chapter of dissertation Suggested: Have your teaching observed by all members of your Dissertation Committee this year Enroll in ENGL 809*	Semester 8 TA/ Teach one course Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Discuss job opportunities with committee and Graduate Placement Director Enroll in ENGL 809*
Year 5	Semester 9 TA/ Teach one course Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Have your teaching observed by all members of your Dissertation Committee this year Enroll in ENGL 809* Prepare for Job Market by attending job market meetings held by DGS	Semester 10 TA/ Teach one/two courses (for a total of 3 for the academic year) Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Discuss job opportunities with committee and Graduate Placement Director Enroll in ENGL 809*
(Possible) Year 6	Semester 11 TA/ Teach two courses Continue writing the dissertation Prepare for the job market	Semester 12 TA/ Teach two courses Finish dissertation and schedule defense

*ENGL 809 (Academic Publication Workshop) and ENGL 898 (Dissertation Writing Workshop) can be taken at any point from Semester 6 forward.

**Competitive Dissertation Fellowship may take the place of teaching in Year 5.

Sample course of study for a PhD student entering with an MA (full TAship)

This schedule assumes 9 credit hours (3 courses) of transfer credit from the previous MA.

Year 1	Semester 1 No teaching Take 3 courses Take foreign language exam	Semester 2 No teaching Take 3 courses (Retake foreign language exam if necessary)
Year 2	Semester 3 TA /Teach one course Take 1 courses Get Qualifying Examination reading list and committee approved Suggested: Begin applying for conference funding from department and ARHU if you have not already ENGL 898 with advisor	Semester 4 TA / Teach one course Take 1 course Enroll in ENGL 898 with advisor Take Qualifying Examination
Year 3	Semester 5 TA/ Teach one course Write Dissertation Prospectus (due 4 months after QE) and organize Dissertation Committee Suggested: Enroll in ENGL 899 and/or 809*	Semester 6 TA/ Teach one course Write first chapter of dissertation Suggested: Enroll in ENGL 809*
Year 4	Semester 7 TA/ Teach one course Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Have your teaching observed by all members of your Dissertation Committee this year Enroll in ENGL 809*	Semester 8 TA/ Teach one course Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Discuss job opportunities with committee and Graduate Placement Director Enroll in ENGL 809*
Year 5	Semester 9 TA/ Teach one/two courses (for a total of 3 for the academic year) Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Have your teaching observed by all members of your Dissertation Committee this year Enroll in ENGL 809*	Semester 10 TA/ Teach one/two courses (for a total of 3 for the academic year) Continue writing the dissertation Suggested: Apply for Dissertation fellowships Discuss job opportunities with committee and Graduate Placement Director Enroll in ENGL 809*
(Possible) Year 6	Semester 11 TA/ Teach two courses Continue writing the dissertation Prepare for the job market	Semester 12 TA/ Teach two courses Finish dissertation and schedule defense

*ENGL 809 (Academic Publication Workshop) and ENGL 898 (Dissertation Writing Workshop)

**Competitive Dissertation Fellowship may take the place of teaching in Year 5.

Appendix 3: Advisor Expectation Setting Meetings Guide

The department encourages students to have a conversation about expectation setting when they ask a faculty member to be their advisor/dissertation chair. To start off, you might consider reminding the professor of what your interests are or where they are now since you arrived. The professor may know you well, but it never hurts to remind them of your interests and how they are developing. You could begin by saying, “As may know, my primary areas of interest are...”

Discussion Questions

The additional questions listed below should be discussed when requesting that a faculty member join your committee as an advisor/chair. If you require any clarification, please reach out to the GSO.

Do you have space to take on another advisee or to chair another dissertation?

Sometimes faculty members have the availability to serve as a committee member but not an advisor/chair. It is important to give the faculty member the latitude to decide in what way they can best work with you.

When I turn in work (drafts of dissertation chapters), when might I generally expect to hear back from you with feedback? Is your feedback generally written or is it oral?

Faculty members have different practices in offering feedback. Some have a quick turnaround of a week or two, while others will tell you that you should expect to hear back a month from receiving a draft. Sometimes faculty members are swamped generally and take a semester to reply. It’s important to have a sense of how your potential advisor offers feedback and how that might relate to your own practices and personality.

How often do you expect for us to be in contact and/or meet in a given semester/year?

Some advisors expect to meet with you at least once a semester regardless of how much progress you have made. Others prefer to meet to give specific kinds of feedback based on a draft. Try to get a sense of the frequency and kind of meetings you should expect to participate in—whether in person, over email, or over the phone/video calls.

How/when should I think about publishing? Are there journals you would recommend at this stage? How/when should I think about presenting at conferences? Are there any upcoming conferences you would recommend?

If you have written a seminar paper for the professor, you might use this question as a way to begin a conversation on revising that essay toward publication or for presentation at an academic conference. (For more about conferences and publishing, see the *Professionalization* subsection of the *Later stages* section of this Handbook) Your advisors should help you find relevant professionalization opportunities in addition to providing feedback on your written work.

Are there any possibilities of collaborating with you on a project or possibly serving as a research assistant for you?

Your advisors may be involved in editing journals or collections, or research projects of their own including articles and monographs. Some professors prefer to hire graduate students as readers or assistants, which can provide valuable experience in addition to paid administrative or editorial work in your field. You should not expect or demand that faculty offer these opportunities, but you are encouraged to ask!

If you are heading toward exams, you should discuss expectations with potential committee members in advance.

Because QEs vary from student to student, you should establish early on what (potential) committee members' expectations for your reading list and exam experience are so you can prepare yourself accordingly. In addition, you should ask if the potential advisor has their own recommendations for preparing for the exam. What do they see as the exam's purpose? What are their expectations for you?

These questions are meant to be talking points, and you do not need to ask them all. Of course, you might feel it is important to ask them all early on. What matters most is that you understand how your possible mentor operates and what they expect of you. This conversation also allows you to help them understand your own expectations and goals.

Appendix 4: Troubleshooting and FAQ

Meeting degree requirements

The timetables in *Appendix 2* and the outline provided in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook are intended to help you meet program benchmarks on a reasonable timeline. If you need help deciding which courses you should enroll in, you should consult both your academic advisors and the DGS.

While students are expected to follow the timeline laid out in their offer letter, if your studies are disrupted by circumstances beyond your control, you should reach out to the Graduate Studies Office to discuss your options for advancing in the program and graduating in a timely manner.

Frequently asked questions

How do I sign up for classes?

When you are ready to enroll in classes each semester, you should check Testudo to ensure that there are no holds on your account that may block you from registration. You should then email the CGS with your chosen courses, as all graduate courses are blocked for registration until you receive permission for them (this permission is known as a "stamp," so if you've been stamped for something it means that you've been given electronic permission to take it). All PhD students who have advanced to candidacy will be automatically signed up for their 899 dissertation credits by the Registrar's Office. If you are taking a course in another department, you need to get stamped by them to take it (please reach out to the DGS or CGS in those departments for more information on how to get those stamps).

If you have any questions or concerns during enrollment, please contact the CGS. For more information, see the "Enrollment and Registration" in the *Coursework* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

How do I get MA courses transferred to my PhD courses?

Newly admitted PhD students entering the program with an MA from another institution should meet with the DGS to have their academic record evaluated; the DGS will establish what courses taken during the previous MA can count toward the PhD distribution requirements or recommend courses that will enable their completion. For more information see "Direct admit vs. terminal MA requirements" under the *Coursework* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

Who do I go to with questions about course selection?

You should discuss your course selections with the DGS, CGS, and other members of your academic advising team. For more information, see the *Coursework* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section and the *Mentoring* section of this handbook.

Can I count a 600-level course for 700-level credit?

Yes, but you will have to make arrangements with the instructor to do additional work to have that course count as a 700-level course. Students may *not* take an independent study for 700-level credit except in extreme circumstances and only after receiving permission from the DGS. For more

information see “Independent studies, interdisciplinarity, and the DC Consortium” under the *Coursework* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

I do not feel like there are enough courses for my interests. What do I do?

Graduate course offerings are limited by departmental resources and faculty availability. However, the program provides for many opportunities to learn both within and outside the English department, including independent studies, enrolling in undergraduate classes for graduate credit, enrolling in relevant courses in other departments at UMD, or enrolling in courses at other Consortium universities and institutions. You should discuss these options with the DGS and your academic advising team. For more information, see “Independent studies, interdisciplinarity, and the DC Consortium” under the *Coursework* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

Can I get placed on a waitlist?

If you are interested in a course which is already full, please reach out to the CGS, who maintains a waitlist for each course. The GSO doesn’t use the waitlist option in Testudo.

Can I email faculty to get permission to join class if it’s full?

No. You should reach out to the CGS to get placed on the waitlist. Faculty refer to the CGS to see if space is available, so you will be placed on the waitlist regardless.

I am taking a class in another department and I’m having issues. What can I do?

Please refer to the CGS in that department and then the English CGS if the issues are still unresolved. You may also want to consult the Ombudsperson. The Ombudsperson is an impartial, independent and confidential resource for graduate students at the University who helps to surface and resolve school issues. The Ombudsperson provides confidential and informal assistance in resolving these conflicts and promotes fair and equitable treatment within the university. See more information on their website here: <https://gradschool.umd.edu/about-us/ombuds-office>

Why can’t I do an Independent Study with a faculty member in another department?

Independent Studies in the English department are registered under specific faculty section numbers. Faculty get certain service requirements based on how many times their section number is used for courses like Independent Studies. However, faculty in other departments are unable to use their section numbers for our department and are not able to use them for service requirements. If possible, you may take an Independent Study with them in their department.

What kind of support is there for Language Exams?

The GSO can provide previous texts used and may be able to find you either a language course or another University resource (such as the Language House or a private tutor).

Can students study for their Language Exam together?

Yes! Students are encouraged to collaborate and share resources while studying for the Language Exam. You may also request to view materials from past exams to aid you in selecting your texts. You are also

encouraged to reach out to other students who have already passed the exam, as their experience may enable them to provide useful studying suggestions.

What happens if I fail my QEs?

You will be provided a written statement by your Committee chair explaining why you failed. You will be given the opportunity to retake the exam in a later semester, if you are in your sixth semester or earlier. If you are in your seventh semester and are about to meet the deadline to pass your QE, you will not be given the option to take the exam in the next semester; you must take and pass the Exam by the end of your seventh semester

Does passing my QEs count as advancing?

No. The University requires an official advance to candidacy form to be submitted after the qualifying exam. You will be given the form after you pass your exams. For more information, see the *Qualifying Exam* subsection in the *Degree Requirements* section of this Handbook.

What happens if I need more than 4 months for the prospectus?

You and your director must provide the DGS with a timeline of the anticipated submission. If you are still waiting for a few readers to sign off on it, then all you need to do is inform the GSO. The DGS may ask you and your director to meet to discuss any potential obstacles for completion.

My advisor keeps asking for additional rewrites for the prospectus. Is this normal?

It's not uncommon for directors to request a few revisions to articulate the argument or fine-tune the scope of the planned chapters. However, if they continue to request extensive rewrites or seem to have major issues with your planned dissertation, you may want to seek further CGS or DGS guidance.

Can I defend in Summer? Why is it discouraged?

The University requires that all students must be registered in the semester they graduate in. TAs hip remissions don't cover the Summer term, so students will have to pay out of pocket for one credit of ENGL899 and Summer student fees, a total which ranges from approximately \$1,000 to \$2,000.

What happens if I take more than 4 years to finish and defend my dissertation?

If you run out of time to degree, you may request a time extension for a semester or year, if your director and the DGS agree and approve. The Graduate School discourages more than two extensions.

I no longer want to complete my PhD. Can I get an MA? What are my next steps?

If you are direct admit, you may be able to achieve an MA if your coursework meets the course requirements for the MA degree. You should meet with the CGS and DGS to discuss your options.

Advisors and mentors

My advisor has a lot of students they mentor and I sometimes feel that I'm not given the same consideration as others. What can I do?

The GSO assigns initial advisors with their overall advising load in mind, but some of our faculty do have a larger advising load than others. Faculty may give priority to students writing dissertations or preparing

for exams, given the urgency and timeliness of their students' needs. Please know that this does not mean that faculty are not interested in meeting with you or talking about your needs, just that they may be facing deadlines or other time-sensitive activities at certain times of the year. However, if you feel there is a difference between the type of mentoring you receive compared to others in your same circumstances, please contact the CGS and DGS to resolve communication issues or help you find a more appropriate and responsive advising team. Students are free to change advisors whenever it suits their needs, but they must inform the GSO of any changes.

What if my teaching mentor hasn't observed me?

If you are having issues with your ENGL101 teaching mentor, please contact the director of the AWP. If the instructor of record for your 100-level course you are TA-ing is not providing instructions, guidance or feedback, please contact the Associate Chair. The GSO assigns teaching mentors based on your advising team or scope of class for 200-levels and you should contact the CGS in that case.

QE and Dissertation Committees

QE and Dissertation Committees should establish expectations early on. Students and their directors should discuss expected frequency of electronic communications and in-person meetings, as well as the expectations for other members of the committee. Unfortunately, personalities and pedagogical methods are not always compatible, and conflicts do sometimes arise. If you are experiencing difficulties communicating or establishing mutual expectations with your Committee members, you should first bring the issue to the attention of your director, who may be able to help resolve the problem. If you and your director agree that the problem is insurmountable or the director is contributing to the problem, you should reach out to the GSO. You may request that conversations with the DGS and CGS be kept confidential.

Frequently asked questions

What happens if my committee members don't get along?

Unfortunately, given the collaborative nature of graduate education, interpersonal conflicts can arise on exam and Dissertation Committees. Should an issue arise, you can approach your director with your concerns and work with them to mitigate these conflicts. In some circumstances, removing member cross-talk and setting up a pipeline where all comments/drafts are processed through the director resolves the issue. Some students strategically pick a neutral reader to act as a buffer in these situations. The CGS and DGS are also available to meet and discuss these or other options.

It is not the responsibility of the student to mitigate professional and personal conflicts among faculty, but these conflicts should not negatively impact your education. It is an unfortunate truth in academia that interpersonal faculty conflicts can permeate into many aspects of a department, but they are usually a nuisance and not a hindrance. If interpersonal conflicts are interfering with writing or research, you should contact the GSO, who are always available to advocate for students' needs.

My director never lets me see other Committee members' comments.

Some directors prefer a "pipeline" method, wherein you send a draft to committee members and they send revisions directly to the director who passes them along, in their entirety or abridged, to you. There are pros and cons to this arrangement, but if you feel you would benefit from receiving direct feedback

unadulterated from your readers, please try and arrange this with your chair. If your chair is uncooperative, please contact the DGS to find alternatives.

If I need to find a new advisor after my QEs, what should I do?

It's not uncommon that after your exams, you and your director determine that you should not work together in the future in this capacity. You should consider other members on your committee, or other faculty whose research interests coincide with yours. The DGS and CGS can work with you on options.

What happens if my Committee asks me to do extensive revisions?

For many students, the transition from writing papers for classes and chapters for your dissertation can be difficult. Your committee may ask you to revise your writing to bring it to the level that is expected of doctoral candidates. Just because you passed your QE and have proved that your acumen and research topic is consistent with departmental expectations, there is no similar test for writing, so this adjustment may take time. Please don't consider this as an indication you are not ready; your Committee is likely providing you extensive guidance to help you achieve success in your dissertation. However, if the revision process feels overly punitive or arduous, please reach out to the DGS and CGS for guidance.

My faculty is on leave/sabbatical. Can I still work with them?

Yes. However, you should understand that faculty who are on leave/sabbatical may take longer to respond to University communications. If a member of your Committee is going on leave/sabbatical, you should discuss with them (and your director), prior to their departure, what mutual expectations are for communication and feedback while they are away from campus.

How can I add external faculty to my committee?

If you wish to add external faculty to your Dissertation Committee, you should discuss this option with both your director and the GSO. The GSO will need to officially request the external faculty member to be added to the faculty as a special member, a process that can take up to eight weeks. You should add them as Special Members of the faculty no later than your penultimate semester in the program.

Do I need to reserve rooms for my defense or exams?

Yes. To schedule the Qualifying Examination and the dissertation defense, the student should contact the GSO after confirming a mutually agreeable time with all members of the relevant committee. The CGS will assist the student with scheduling an exam date and reserving a room. For more information see "Scheduling the QE" under the *Qualifying Exam* subheading of the *Degree Requirements* section and "Scheduling the Defense" under the *Dissertation* subheading of the *Candidacy* section of this Handbook.

Why do I need to pay student fees? Is there any way I don't have to pay them?

The University requires that students pay fees for certain services. These fees are determined by certain student governmental assemblies. If you are ABD and not on campus, you can request a waiver of mandatory fees. Please contact the CGS for more information.

I think my direct deposit/paycheck is incorrect. Whom do I go to?

If you think you received less in your paycheck than you should, please contact the Business Office to see if your wages are correct or if more taxes/deductibles were taken out than you expect. If you receive less

in your fellowship disbursement, please contact the Business to ensure they have the correct fellowship information for you. If you received fewer funds for an ARHU or Graduate School fellowship, the Business Office may be able to help you navigate the process to find the appropriate office.

My remission didn't pick up a course and now I have to pay for it. What do I do?

Please contact the CGS. Most likely, you either didn't drop and add the same number of credits within the same day or it was added to your schedule after the University Human Resources Benefits Office processed the remission requests. The CGS can backdate your registration to the correct date and the next time remission requests are processed, it will be picked up.

I am an international student. Who do I go to for registration/funding letters that either ISSS or my consulate needs?

Please contact the CGS for these letters for ISSS. Your consulate may request official letters from either the GSO, the Registrar's Office or ISSS themselves.

Appendix 5: Directory

General

Below you will find a brief outline of departmental administration structure and contact information for the personnel you are most likely to interact with during your time in the program.

- **CHAIR:** responsible for overall leadership of the department, coordinating with administrative offices and key staff for guidance and strategy of the department
- **ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, ARHU:** responsible for interpretation and implementation of academic policies for all departments in ARHU
- **DIRECTOR, CW:** responsible for directing the Creative writing MFA program
- **DIRECTOR, AWP:** responsible for the Academic Writing Program, including the ENGL101 course
- **DIRECTOR, CMLT:** responsible for Comparative Literature PhD program
- **ASSOCIATE CHAIR:** responsible for teaching assignments and assists Chair with teaching and academic policies within department
- **DIRECTOR, ENGL HONORS:** responsible for undergraduate English Honors students
- **DIRECTOR, WRITING CENTER:** responsible for directing the drop-in Writing Center
- **DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES:** responsible for directing the undergraduate English major and minor and assisting undergraduate students
- **DIRECTOR, CLCS:** responsible for directing the Center for Literary and Contemporary studies, which runs many events, workshops and conferences

NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	EXTENSION	ROOM #
Bailey, Amanda	Chair	abailey7@umd.edu	5-3807	2119B
Bauer, Ralph	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs	bauerr@umd.edu	5-3847	3244
Bernal, Linday	Coordinator, CW	lbernal@umd.edu	5-3820	2116E
Bertram, Lillian-Yvonne	Director, CW	lyb@umd.edu	5-3819	3103
Enoch, Jessica	Director, AWP	jenoch1@umd.edu	5-3761	1116C
Balachandran Orihuela, Sharada	Director, CMLT	sbalacha@umd.edu	5-3839	2116D
Wong, Edlie	Associate Chair	edlie@umd.edu	5-3806	2119C
Fleming, Julius	Director, ENGL Honors	flemingj@umd.edu	5-9657	3124
Wilder, Sara	Director, Writing Center	swilder@umd.edu	5-3786	1205C
Trudell, Scott	Director of Undergraduate Studies	trudell@umd.edu	5-7689	1128E
Ray, Sangeeta	Director, CLCS	rays@umd.edu	5-3801	2120A

Graduate Studies Office

- **DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES:** responsible for running the Graduate Studies Office, leading the Graduate Studies Committee, and directing the admissions and recruitment process and the various fellowship applications
- **COORDINATOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES:** Responsible for day to day operations of the office, key contact for students, faculty and staff, maintain records, including benchmarking
- **GRADUATE ASSISTANT:** responsible for providing front-desk support and other tasks as assigned by the DGS and CGS

NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	EXTENSION	ROOM #
Rudy, Jason	Director of Graduate Studies	jrrudy@umd.edu	5-3810	2116B
Burgard, Robert	Coordinator of Graduate Studies	rburgard@umd.edu	5-3798	2116D

Other

NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	EXTENSION	ROOM #
Bleach, Alexa	ClassRm/lab support	akbleach@umd.edu , or tawes_support@umd.edu	5-3781	0210
	Business Office		5-0466	2119H
Roper, Kit	Academic Program Specialist, UG	sroper1@umd.edu , or english@umd.edu	5-3825	1128
	Graduate Assistant, Bus.	english_business@umd.edu	5-3200	2119J
Crussiah, Grace	Coordinator, PWP	gjc@umd.edu	5-3760	1220C
Deinert, Emily	Librarian for English	edeinert@umd.edu	5-9820	5101D McK
Drummond, Michele	Assistant Director of Scheduling	mdrummon@umd.edu	5-2076	2119G
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Greenwell, Jennifer	Business Office	jgreenw@umd.edu	5-1	2119

Hilliard, Lyra	Blended Learning, AWP	lyrahill@umd.edu	No phone	2201
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Lewis, Karen	Assistant Director, UG	lewiske@umd.edu	5-3758	1128C
McClung, Helen	Academic Program Specialist, PWP	hmccclund@umd.edu	5-3763	1220
Nelson, Karen	Center for L&C	knelson@umd.edu	5-3185	2120B
Nesline, Kevin R.	Director of Operations & Technology	remmell@umd.edu	5-3808	2119A
Saremi, Shawn	IT Coordinator	saremi@umd.edu	5-8514	2103
Wible, Scott	Director, PWP	swible@umd.edu	5-3760	1220D
Woldekidan, Sarah	Scheduling Coordinator CAARES Committee Chair	smwold11@umd.edu	5-3804	2119