

English-Literature

Degrees Available at SIUE

- Master of Arts in English, Literature Specialization

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

- Literature

Program Format

The program can be completed through traditional daytime courses and evening/weekend courses.

Literature at SIUE

A master's degree in English, with a specialization in literature, prepares students for advanced graduate work, secondary and college teaching, and a variety of careers in nonprofits and the private sector that require excellent writing and critical-thinking skills. The literature specialization's vibrant curriculum allows students to study a range of literary texts, from the contemporary U.S.A., to world diasporas, to Chaucer's England.

The program of study is designed with flexibility in mind so students can take courses and create an exit plan crafted for their own literary and career interests. Our innovative exit options allow students to complete a traditional thesis, create an action research project, develop a public humanities program, or study the digital humanities, making this MA an excellent choice for students who wish to prepare themselves for a variety of careers after graduation. Students interested in this degree often go onto further advanced graduate study or teach at the community college level.

Admission Requirements

- Graduate School application and \$40 fee
- Submission of all academic transcripts
- Successful completion of a bachelor's degree prior to enrollment
- Minimum GPA of 2.50
- International Applicants: Proof of English Proficiency, minimum requirements are TOEFL (79), IELTS (6.5) or equivalent
- Three letters of recommendation.
- A one-page statement of purpose
- A recent sample of the applicant's writing, at least ten pages in length. The admissions committee prefers to read papers which engage in literary analysis, but will accept any paper which demonstrates the ability to conduct scholarly investigation.
- Accelerated Combined Degrees: Current SIUE undergraduate students may apply for the accelerated option to earn graduate-level credit for courses taken their senior year.

Program application materials may be uploaded during the application process, but official transcripts must be sent directly from the school attended, and test scores must be verifiable with the appropriate testing service.

College of Arts and Sciences

Department of
English Language and Literature

Faculty

Graduate Program Director

Catherine M. Seltzer, PhD
University of North
Carolina

Jill K. Anderson, PhD
Michigan State University

Charles S. Berger, PhD
Yale University

Tisha Brooks, PhD
Tufts University

Elizabeth Cali, PhD
The University of Texas
at San Antonio

Tiana Clark, MFA
Vanderbilt University

Jessica R. DeSpain, PhD
University of Iowa

Helena Gurfinkel, PhD
Tufts University

Heather G.S. Johnson, PhD
Indiana University

Joshua Kryah, PhD
University of Nevada, Las
Vegas

John S. Pendergast, PhD
University of Missouri

Anushiya Ramaswamy, PhD
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Howard Ramsby, PhD
Pennsylvania State
University

Nancy K. Ruff, PhD
Princeton University

John R. Savoie, PhD
Yale University

Geoffrey W. Schmidt, MFA
University of Alabama

Valerie A. Vogrin, MFA
University of Alabama



Admission Requirements cont.

Please contact the Graduate Admissions office with questions regarding the application submission process at graduateadmissions@siue.edu.

For applicants to the literature specialization, there is a requirement of one year of college-level course work (or its equivalent) in the same modern or classical foreign language, with at least a C average. These requirements may be satisfied during the course of the student's graduate studies.

Graduation Requirements

Students in the literature specialization can choose to complete a thesis or an exit project. Both options require the student to submit a prospectus that is approved by a committee of at least three faculty members (one of whom is the project director) who will consult with the student throughout the course of the project. Both options also require the student to complete an oral defense of the project before their committee.

Thesis

Students who choose to write a thesis may enroll in English 599 for a maximum of six credit hours. We strongly suggest that students who take all six credit hours split the thesis work into two semesters rather than taking all six hours at once. An acceptable thesis for the literature specialization should be a cohesive, comprehensive research study of at least 60 pages in length.

Exit Project

Students who do not wish to write a thesis may choose to develop an exit project that allows them more freedom in scope and content. Students who choose the exit project will enroll in English 598 for three to six credit hours depending on the dedicated time necessary for project completion. Before beginning the exit project, students must justify why they are choosing the three- or six-credit option in a prospectus that is approved by the exit project committee. The examples below should not be understood as exhaustive, but rather illustrative of the level of work required for the three- and six-credit options.

We assume that students will spend twelve hours per week in the completion of their exit projects. Therefore, the three-credit option should necessitate approximately 180-200 hours, whereas the six-credit option should necessitate approximately 380-400 hours of dedicated time. All projects should be academically rigorous, and the student should conduct thorough research appropriate to the particular focus and format of the study.

Example three-credit exit projects:

- A selection of materials from previous course work (usually three seminar-length papers) revised and expanded over the course of the semester and accompanied by a short reflection discussing the work that they've accomplished.
- A blog kept over the course of the Master's program from which the student has chosen specific examples to demonstrate growth over time. In an accompanying paper, the student discusses the blog's breadth and development, the audience it reached, and discourses that have occurred as a result of its publication.
- The planning and facilitation of a public exhibition (either physical or digital) in which the student curates the items on display using scholarly research. The student will accompany the exhibit with a paper explaining the exhibit's rationale, the work it entailed, and the outcomes of the display.
- An action research project that inquires into a pedagogical concern in a secondary teaching environment. In this case, a teacher investigates a relevant problem in his/her school's English curriculum, researches the topic, develops meaningful actions,

and creates plans and materials in preparation for enacting practical solutions.

Example six-credit exit projects:

- A digital edition of a textual corpus using current best practices for text encoding. The project should be accompanied by an editorial rationale, an introduction and annotation.
- A digital archive of an extensive collection of digital items that is thoroughly created and formally annotated (such as a substantial collection of books, news coverage of a literary event, etc.). Students should submit plans of all program curricula and an assessment of activities.
- The planning and execution of a community program about literature or literary history. Students should submit plans of all program curricula and an assessment of activities.

The Prospectus

Whether choosing the thesis or the exit project, students are required to submit a prospectus of 3-5 pages accompanied by a bibliography of sources.

Students choosing the thesis should explain their planned argument and provide a synopsis of each chapter.

Students choosing the exit project must give a synopsis of their intended project, outline their work plan, and provide a rationale for the amount of dedicated time required.

The project committee must approve the prospectus by signing the prospectus form. Although the department strongly encourages students to complete their prospectus prior to beginning exit course work, the approved prospectus must be submitted to the graduate director no later than the second week of exit coursework.

Note: All research involving human subjects must comply with regulations and guidelines found at the Graduate School's Office of Research and Projects. Proposals must be cleared by the appropriate board and approved by the Graduate Dean before data collection begins. Federal regulations require mandatory training for all researchers, including students writing a thesis, dissertation or research project.

Curriculum

The specialization in literature requires 30-36 semester hours for completion of the master of arts degree. Program elements include the following:

Required courses (18 hours):

- ENG 501 Modern Literary Studies, taken in the first available term.
- Students must complete five literature courses.

Electives (12 to 18 hours):

Courses may be elected in literature, creative writing, composition and/or linguistics. Elective hours may also include six hours of ENG 598 (Preparatory Reading/English and American Literature) or ENG 599 (Thesis). Students may, with the written approval of their advisor and of the Director of Graduate Studies, choose an elective from another SIUE department. Use the Graduate Student Request form to obtain approval prior to registration in any such course.

In total, no more than nine hours from 400-level courses can count toward the literature specialization.

Contact Information

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