**MA Guidelines**

**Department of English**

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**Preamble**

This document is offered as a guide to the MA program in the Department of English. As always, the successful completion of an MA requires students, supervisors and committee members to work in concert. All questions and concerns should be directed to the Graduate Coordinator.

**Registration**

When registering, students should be sure they enroll in ENGL 9000. Once students register, their program registration is continued until they graduate or make a formal written request to the university to have their automatic registration discontinued. Students will be charged fees as long as their program registration continues.

In addition to the automatic registration in the program, students must register (usually by the internet) for each course taken. Students can ask the Cashier’s Office each September to have their tuition fees deducted from their fellowships.

**Paying Tuition**

Graduate students who wish to have their tuition paid from their bi-weekly financial support can now request the service online through [Memorial University Self-Service](https://www5.mun.ca/admit/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin).

In such cases, program and ancillary fees will be allocated over the number of pay periods available within a given semester and will be deducted from bi-weekly support.

We strongly recommend that students sign up for payroll deductions through Self-Service. To do so, click on the “Employee Services” tab and then the “Graduate Student Payroll Deduction Request.”

Graduate students signing up for payroll deductions must do so every semester. Current students already on funding will be able to sign up for online payroll deductions 24 hours after they register. New students will be able to sign up for online payroll deductions on the first day of classes.

All graduate students must complete their online submissions before the last day to register (two weeks after the start of classes). After the last day to register, you will not be able to sign up for payroll deductions until the following semester.

If eligible, opt out of health or dental insurance plans using opt-out forms available through the [Graduate Students’ Union](http://www.gsumun.ca/) (GSU) by the appropriate deadline (refer to the GSU website for more information). All registered international graduate students are automatically enrolled in an emergency health insurance plan. However, you may meet eligibility requirements to opt out of the mandatory plan. Please see the [International Student Advising](http://www.mun.ca/isa/health/) website for details.

**I. Program Requirements**

**A.** **MA by coursework**

In the MA by coursework, students complete eight graduate courses.

Students in this program are usually assigned the Head as their nominal supervisor.

All students take English 7003 (Trends in Contemporary Literary Theory), normally offered in the Fall semester. English 7003 counts as one of the eight required courses.

Course details are available on the departmental website and updated frequently.

All graduate students are allowed to take up to one graduate course in another department in a cognate discipline. Please contact the Graduate Coordinator about the proper procedures for this option.

The coursework MA is usually completed in a single year (three consecutive semesters).

The official time limit for the MA is seven years, but the degree should be completed in a much shorter time.

**B. MA by coursework plus research paper**

Students in the coursework MA may elect to take English 6999 (Master’s Essay for Non-Thesis Students) as one of the eight courses required for their program.

Students normally register for this course in the second or third semester of their programs.

This course requires the student to complete an independent research essay under the supervision of a faculty member who is chosen by the student and approved by the Head.

The essay should be of professional quality and should be approximately 30 pages in length.

The work required for this course should be equivalent to, but not greater than, that required in other graduate courses.

The essay is graded by the supervisor and by a second reader chosen by the Head. The student’s final grade for the course is the average of the supervisor’s grade and the second reader’s grade.

**C. MA with thesis – literary study**

The literary study MA thesis is an original piece of research with a recommended length of 70 to 100 pages. All MA students will be admitted to the coursework stream of the program. Students who wish to write an MA thesis, either academic or creative, should contact the Graduate Coordinator no later than the first semester of the program. The Graduate Coordinator will consult with the Head of Department about the request. Each request will be assessed on the basis of the student’s academic merit, the availability of financial resources and of an appropriate supervisor willing and able to supervise the student’s project.

All students upon entering the MA are assigned the Head as nominal supervisor. As soon as an area for the thesis has been identified, the nominal supervisor is replaced by the thesis supervisor.

The appointment of the supervisor is made by the Head in consultation with the student, the supervisor, and the Graduate Coordinator. In appointing a supervisor, the Head is likely to consider the student’s preference, the appropriateness of the supervisor for the proposed area of research, and the equitable distribution of supervisory duties among faculty members.

With the mutual agreement of the student and the Department, joint supervision of the thesis by two faculty members is acceptable.

In the MA with thesis, students complete five graduate courses and a thesis.

All students take English 7003 (Trends in Contemporary Literary Theory), normally offered in the Fall semester each year. English 7003 counts as one of the five courses required for the MA with a thesis.

The thesis MA is usually completed in two years or less. The official time limit for the MA is seven years, but the degree should be completed in a much shorter time.

**Thesis procedures**

After a supervisor has been appointed, the student prepares the proposal in consultation with the supervisor. The format of the proposal and the process of submission are outlined below.

Thesis proposals are commonly required in academic and creative graduate programs across North America. Learning to articulate your ideas about your work is a crucial exercise in self-reflection that is intended first and foremost to help you to think carefully about and thereby strengthen your project as you begin it. In addition, the skills you develop in writing the proposal and incorporating feedback on it are fundamental to the careers of academics and artists alike. Those pursuing such careers will be required to answer questions about and respond to critiques of their work from funding bodies, publishers, peers, students, and laypeople.

Before the student begins the thesis, the student and the supervisor should review the School of Graduate Studies [Guidelines for Theses and Reports](http://www.mun.ca/sgs/go/guid_policies/theses.php). These Guidelines should be followed at every stage of the preparation of the thesis. The thesis bibliography will normally follow the Modern Language Association format.

The thesis should be well underway by the start of the fourth semester (usually the fall of the second year). The thesis should not normally take more than two semesters to write.

When the project nears completion, the supervisor forwards names of potential examiners and an abstract of the thesis to the Graduate Coordinator and the Head, who approach potential examiners. The examiners are approved by the School of Graduate Studies.

When the thesis is completed it is submitted under the School of Graduate Studies procedure:

<http://www.mun.ca/sgs/go/guid_policies/theses.php>

The thesis goes to an external examiner and an internal examiner, who make reports. Usually the thesis is returned for corrections. Students should be available to make these corrections and to resubmit the thesis promptly. If students are not on campus, they should leave an electronic copy of the thesis with the supervisor, in case there are unexpected small problems or the work needs to be reprinted. **N.B. Students will be charged fees until the final submission of the corrected thesis to the School of Graduate Studies.**

**Thesis proposal – literary study**

All MA students writing a thesis must submit a proposal, normally at the beginning of their third semester.

The proposal must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the supervisor and must be accompanied by a statement from the supervisor that the supervisor is in full support of the project as described. The statement from the supervisor must include the following:

* the student's name
* a working title

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The Graduate Coordinator ensures that the proposal conforms to these guidelines, and then forwards the proposal to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee for consideration. The departmental Graduate Studies Committee is required to return the thesis proposal to the supervisor and the candidate no later than 30 days after receipt. The departmental Graduate Studies Committee must respond to the proposal with either an approval or a request for revisions. Such a request must include specific reasons why the GSC is not willing to approve the proposal.

The thesis proposal should be a minimum of 3000 words in length and normally should not exceed 5000 words. These word lengths do not include the bibliography. The whole proposal should be double-spaced.

The bibliography must include all works mentioned in the proposal and other works that will be used in the thesis.

All citations and the bibliography must conform scrupulously to the most recent MLA guidelines.

The proposal must include these sections:

1. Topic and Thesis – this section must provide an introduction to the topic, a justification of the choice of texts/authors, an explanation and contextualization of key terminology, and – most importantly – a clear thesis statement that outlines the argument.
2. Theory/Methodology – this section indicates and justifies the theoretical and methodological frameworks that will be used in the thesis.
3. Scholarship review/Scholarly significance – this section must survey the existing scholarship on the thesis topic and position the thesis topic within that critical history. The section must also offer a clear indication of how the thesis adds to that scholarship.
4. Chapter outline – this section indicates a proposed breakdown of chapter content.
5. Working bibliography – this section should be divided into primary and secondary texts and must conform scrupulously to the most recent MLA guidelines.

**D. MA with thesis – creative project**

The creative thesis is an original piece of creative writing. All MA students will be admitted to the coursework stream of the program. Students who wish to write an MA thesis, either academic or creative, should contact the Graduate Coordinator no later than the first semester of the program. The Graduate Coordinator will consult with the Head of Department about the request. Each request will be assessed on the basis of the student’s academic merit, the availability of financial resources and of an appropriate supervisor willing and able to supervise the student’s project.

All students upon entering the MA are assigned the Head as nominal supervisor. As soon as an area for the thesis has been identified, the nominal supervisor is replaced by the thesis supervisor.

The appointment of the supervisor is made by the Head in consultation with the student, the supervisor, and the Graduate Coordinator. In appointing a supervisor, the Head is likely to consider the student’s preference, the appropriateness of the supervisor for the proposed area of research, and the equitable distribution of supervisory duties among faculty members.

With the mutual agreement of the student and the Department, joint supervision of the thesis by two faculty members is acceptable.

In the MA by thesis, students complete five graduate courses and a thesis.

All students take English 7003 (Trends in Contemporary Literary Theory), normally offered in the Fall semester each year. English 7003 counts as one of the five courses required for the MA with a thesis.

The thesis MA is usually completed in two years or less. The official time limit for the MA is seven years, but the degree should be completed in a much shorter time.

**Thesis procedures**

After a supervisor has been appointed, the student prepares the proposal in consultation with the supervisor. The format of the proposal and the process of submission are outlined below.

Before the student begins the thesis, the student and the supervisor should review the School of Graduate Studies [Guidelines for Theses and Reports](http://www.mun.ca/sgs/go/guid_policies/theses.php). These Guidelines should be followed at every stage of the preparation of the thesis. The thesis bibliography will normally follow the Modern Language Association format.

The thesis should be well underway by the start of the fourth semester (usually the fall of the second year). The thesis should not normally take more than two semesters to write.

When the project nears completion, the supervisor forwards names of potential examiners and an abstract of the thesis to the Graduate Coordinator and the Head, who approach potential examiners. The examiners are approved by the School of Graduate Studies.

When the thesis is completed it is submitted under the School of Graduate Studies procedure:

<http://www.mun.ca/sgs/go/guid_policies/theses.php>

The thesis goes to an external examiner and an internal examiner, who make reports. Usually the thesis is returned for corrections. Students should be available to make these corrections and to resubmit the thesis promptly. If students are not on campus, they should leave an electronic copy of the thesis with the supervisor, in case there are unexpected small problems or the work needs to be reprinted. Students will be charged fees until the final submission of the corrected thesis to the School of Graduate Studies.

**Thesis proposal (creative project)**

All MA students writing a creative thesis must submit a proposal, normally at the beginning of their third semester.

The proposal must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the supervisor and must be accompanied by a statement from the supervisor that the supervisor is in full support of the project as described.

The statement from the supervisor must include the following:

* the student's name
* a working title

The Graduate Coordinator ensures that the proposal conforms to these guidelines, and then forwards the proposal to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee for consideration. The departmental Graduate Studies Committee is required to return the thesis proposal to the supervisor and the candidate no later than one month after receipt. The departmental Graduate Studies Committee must respond to the proposal with either an approval or a request for revisions. Such a request must include specific reasons why the GSC is not willing to approve the proposal.

The thesis proposal should be a minimum of 3000 words in length and normally should not exceed 5000 words. These word lengths do not include the bibliography. The whole proposal should be double-spaced.

The bibliography must include all works mentioned in the proposal and other works that will be germane to the thesis.

All citations and the bibliography must conform scrupulously to the most recent MLA guidelines.

The proposal must include these sections:

1. Topic – this section must provide an introduction to the project, describing its form, content, claim to originality, and approximate length.
2. Technique and Method – this section should describe the approach that the student expects to take, giving specific attention to matters of technique. For example, in the case of a proposal for poetry, the section might discuss such matters as themes, verse-forms, language, groups of poems; in a proposal for fiction, the section might discuss characterization, theme, point of view, style, and so forth. (The lists of specific items are not meant to be prescriptive.)
3. Review of Literature and Scholarship – this section must position the creative project in the literary and/or artistic “territory” that the work inhabits. The section might discuss such matters as historical context(s), literary tradition(s), or theoretical paradigms. The section must reveal the relationship between the project and a specific body of relevant texts, explaining how the project enters into a distinctive conversation with them.
4. Outline – this section outlines the structure of the project.
5. Working Bibliography – this section should consist of all works germane to the creative thesis.

**II. Funding**

**Basic fellowship funding**

Full-time students who are admitted to our program and who qualify normally receive basic fellowship funding. There are no duties for this funding other than satisfactory progress in the program. MA funding is available to a maximum of two years.

In addition, the Department offers a number of graduate assistantships, for which students can apply after they have arrived on campus. (The departmental office will inform all eligible students when graduate assistantships are available.)

**Conference funding**

Limited funding for conference travel is available to our graduate students. Students should use a “Graduate Student Request for Travel Assistance” form (which can be obtained from the English Department office) to request funding from the School of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Students’ Union, the Faculty of HSS, and the Department of English, and TAUMUN. This form must be filled out and approved **prior to** making any travel arrangements. After their conference travel, students must submit their original receipts for expenses incurred with a “Travel Claim A” form (which can be obtained from the English Department office). We strongly advise students to discuss this whole process with the Graduate Coordinator before making travel arrangements.

**Scholarship database**

The School of Graduate Studies maintains a searchable database for other scholarships and awards. Students should consult this frequently:

<http://www.mun.ca/sgs/current/scholarships/>

**III. Further Information**

**Leaves of Absence and Program Extensions**

University policies on leaves of absence and program extensions are outlined in the University Calendar. Any students who are considering taking a leave of absence should consult the Graduate Coordinator or the Head of Department.

**Ethics Review**

Any research which uses materials from living subjects (including interviews and questionnaires) must be given an ethics review. This review must be undertaken before the start of the research and before application for any relevant funding. Students should ask the departmental Graduate Coordinator for details.

**Conflict Resolution**

The Graduate Students’ Union offers helpful guidelines on sexual harassment, discrimination, student complaints, and academic appeals. Students who have concerns in any of these areas are encouraged to consult the [GSU guidelines on conflict resolution](http://www.mun.ca/gsu/home.php?).

The Department of English supports the GSU’s position that potential conflicts between students and their instructors or supervisors should be handled as early and as informally as possible. Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly are encouraged to address their concerns in the first instance to the instructors or supervisor or committee involved. If, however, students feel that their concerns cannot be handled at this level, they should refer their concerns to the Head of Department. If the Department cannot address the concerns to the students’ satisfaction, they may go outside of the Department to the School of Graduate Studies.