

# ENGLISH - MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

The MA program combines courses in global literatures in English and literary theory with rigorous training in critical analysis. Applicants must complete the verbal, analytic and quantitative sections of the GRE General Test and hold a bachelor's degree by the time they enter the program.

## Requirements

The degree requirements listed here are subject to change. Students wishing to pursue graduate work in English literature should visit the department's Graduate Studies (<https://www.colorado.edu/english/current-students/graduates>) webpage for the most up-to-date degree requirements.

### Program Requirements

Students must complete 30 credit hours of coursework (10 courses), at least 21 of which must be taken at CU Boulder. All courses must be at the 5000 level or above. Subject to approval by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, up to 6 hours of coursework may be taken in departments other than English. Students may earn the MA degree in literature through coursework alone; a thesis is optional.

All graduate students must follow the Graduate School's requirements for graduation (see the Graduation Requirements (<http://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/academics/graduation-requirements>) webpage).

Students will meet with the graduate program assistant at least once a year to guarantee that they are on track to meet these requirements. If a student is enrolled in a certificate program, some of these categories may be met by taking courses in other departments that are required for the certificate (with approval from the associate chair for graduate studies).

### Distribution Requirement

The courses required for the MA should be distributed as follows:

1. Two courses before 1800 (courses should survey a broad range of literature from two different periods prior to 1800)
2. Two courses after 1800 (courses should survey a broad range of literature from two different periods after 1800)
3. One multicultural and/or postcolonial course (may overlap with req. 1 or 2)
4. One poetry intensive course (may overlap with req. 1 or 2)

## Degree Plans

### Plan I: Thesis Option

Courses in the following fields are required. A requirement may be waived if a student has taken an equivalent graduate course at another institution; waivers must be approved by the associate chair for graduate studies.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Required Courses</b>		
ENGL 5019	Survey of Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory (first semester)	3

ENGL 5459	Introduction to the Profession (second semester)	3
Courses that satisfy each of the following categories:		12
Formalisms		
Technologies/Epistemologies		
Bodies/Identities/Collectivities		
Cultures/Politics/Histories		
ENGL 6959	Master's Thesis	6

A master's thesis is 50–75 pages in length, and represents an original work of literary analysis that is supported by extensive research into primary and secondary sources. It includes an abstract of 250–350 words and a bibliography, exclusive of the page length for the body of the thesis.

A master's thesis is *optional* for the MA in literature; however, there are several benefits to writing a thesis:

- The student continues to develop their skills as a writer and take pleasure in literature.
- The student has the opportunity to work directly with a faculty member of their choice in an area of the student's choosing.
- If the student plans to apply to doctoral programs in English, they can use part of their thesis as a writing sample. Since the student completes a thesis at the end of their degree program, this capstone project may reflect their current strengths as a writer better than their earlier seminar papers. Students who apply to PhD programs can also use a seminar paper or the paper revised in the professionalization seminar as their writing sample.

**The decision to write a thesis must be made by the end of the student's first year of study.** After deciding to write a thesis, the student will put together a three-person committee that includes: 1) their thesis director, who must be a member of the graduate faculty of the English Department, and 2) two other members of the graduate faculty, one of whom may be from another department. The student must establish their committee early in the thesis-writing process so committee members can work with the student to guide and develop their thesis.

It takes two semesters (each with three credits) to research and write an MA thesis. During each of these two semesters, the student's thesis hours replace elective courses necessary to complete the degree. At least two weeks before the thesis defense, the student must give their completed thesis to their committee members and file a Master's Examination Report with the Graduate School. See the graduate program assistant for help with this process.

See the index in the Graduate Student Handbook (<https://www.colorado.edu/english/current-students/graduates/forms-additional-information>) for the MA-LIT Thesis Action Item Checklist, which includes deadlines and a suggested schedule.

The thesis defense is an oral examination that lasts about an hour. All committee members must be present in person or via teleconference. A positive vote from at least two of the committee members is required to pass. A student who fails the defense may not reattempt it for at least three months, and not until any work prescribed by the committee has been completed. The student may retake the examination only once, and the second exam must cover the same material and include the same committee members as the first.

## Plan II: Non-Thesis Option

Courses in the following fields are required. A requirement may be waived if a student has taken an equivalent graduate course at another institution; waivers must be approved by the associate chair for graduate studies.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Required Courses</b>		
ENGL 5019	Survey of Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory (first semester)	3
ENGL 5459	Introduction to the Profession (second semester)	3
Courses that satisfy each of the following categories:		12
Formalisms		
Technologies/Epistemologies		
Bodies/Identities/Collectivities		
Cultures/Politics/Histories		
<b>Electives</b>		
Choose additional courses from English or other departments to fulfill 30-credit minimum (may include creative writing).		12
Total Credit Hours		30

## Language Requirement

Students earning the MA in literature must complete a foreign language requirement demonstrating proficiency in one foreign language, prior to the semester in which they intend to graduate. There are three options for fulfilling this requirement:

1. Take a language proficiency exam in the language of the student's choice.
2. Take two semesters of a 2000-level language course for credit and complete them with a grade of B or better (courses would be in excess of the 30 credit hours required for the degree). Summer language intensive programs at other universities can be substituted for the 2000-level course with the approval of the associate chair for graduate studies.
3. Transfer in two language courses taken at another college or university. In order to qualify, the courses must:
  - a. have been taken within the last three years,
  - b. be equivalent to a 2000-level language course at CU Boulder, and
  - c. be passed with a grade of B or better.

Language exams are administered at least once each semester by the English department. For uncommon languages, students may be asked to make independent arrangements for their exam. The language exam consists of translating a text written in a foreign language into written English using English-language sentence structure. The text is at the reading and comprehension level of a fourth-semester student of the chosen language. Students are given two hours to complete the translation, and the exam is open book, open computer.

## Advancement to Candidacy

Students must submit their Candidacy Application for an Advanced Degree (<https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/sites/default/files/attached-files/candidacyappadv-form2018-re.pdf>) by the stipulated deadline, which is generally the third or fourth week of classes in the semester in which the student plans to graduate. The candidacy application confirms that all degree requirements will have been

completed by the end of the semester. Return all forms to the graduate program assistant for signatures and submission to the Graduate School.

All students planning to graduate must apply online to graduate. This step must be completed regardless of whether the student plans to attend the commencement ceremony. See the Graduation ([catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/graduation](http://catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/graduation)) section for more information.

## Time Limit

MA students have four years from the semester in which they are admitted and begin coursework to complete all degree requirements. To continue past four years, the student must file a petition for an extension of the time limit with the dean of the Graduate School. Such petitions must first be submitted for endorsement to the associate chair for graduate studies. Extensions may be granted for up to one year.