ENGLISH, MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.)

Program goals
The Department of English offers an M.A. degree for students seeking study beyond a bachelor's degree which prepares graduates to pursue a doctorate, to teach in secondary or higher education or to obtain other positions in the public and private sector. The M.A. in English is designed for students pursuing advanced English studies, and students may choose to focus their course work in either literature or writing and rhetoric. The M.A. in English with a research concentration is designed for students pursuing advanced English studies with an emphasis on research, criticism and methodology.

Student learning outcomes
1. Develop advanced reading and writing skills
2. Engage in theoretical and/or textual/bibliographical scholarship
3. Conduct original research and advance an original argument under faculty direction
4. Explain and defend original research in a formal presentation or defense
5. Survey the professional and academic work to which the degree leads

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs
The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reg/academic-reg/)

Degree candidacy requirements
A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master’s or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student’s graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student’s faculty regarding the student’s academic achievements and the student’s readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduation requirements
As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reg/grad/graduation-info/)

Apply online today. (https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/)

Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree:</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry:</th>
<th>Deadline dates:</th>
<th>Test requirements:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>GRE-General</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
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In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/), the following requirements represent the minimum acceptable standards for admission:

1. A baccalaureate degree in an area appropriate to the study of literature or writing
2. A GPA that indicates the applicant can successfully pursue a graduate degree
3. Three letters of recommendation from former instructors
4. Completion of the general GRE
5. A writing sample, optimally ranging from 10-15 double-spaced pages

Should students wish to be considered for a possible graduate teaching assistantship, they must also complete a separate Graduate Teaching Assistantship Application, which can be found on the program’s website. This separate/additional application also requires an undergraduate, graduate or professional paper, as well as a brief personal essay (two to three pages) in which applicants discuss their relevant teaching experience, educational background and particular interest in a graduate degree, suggesting where their education seems to be leading.

Applicants may also indicate whether they intend to write a thesis and with which faculty members they hope to study.

Degree requirements
In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-reg/grad/graduation-info/), students are required to complete course work in core and elective courses and to conduct significant research.
1. Credit hour requirements: Students in the M.A. in English program are required to earn a minimum of 30 graduate credit hours beyond the baccalaureate. At least half of the credit hours presented for graduation must be at the 600 level or higher.

2. Other requirements: Students must complete one of two final projects: either a directed study, under the supervision of a faculty member with a public presentation; or a thesis in consultation with a faculty committee, which culminates in an oral defense. Students must obtain approval for their final projects from their supervising faculty and the M.A. committee.

### Curriculum requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 501</td>
<td>Introduction to Graduate Studies in English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 605</td>
<td>Introduction to Scholarship in English Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or ENGL 606</td>
<td>Literary Criticism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 695</td>
<td>Directed Study/Major Project and Presentation</td>
<td>1-3</td>
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**Recommended electives**

Select 23-25 credit hours of the following: 23-25

- ENGL/TEDU 528  Children's Literature II
- ENGL/ENED 532  Applied English Linguistics
- ENGL 550  Studies in Linguistics
- ENGL/TEDU/LING 552  Teaching English as a Second Language
- ENGL 560  Studies in British Literature and Culture
- ENGL 570  Special Topics in American Literature and Culture
- ENGL/ENED 601  Young Adult Literature
- ENGL 605  Introduction to Scholarship in English Studies
- ENGL 606  Literary Criticism
- ENGL 611  Authors
- ENGL 614  Cultural Discourses
- ENGL 620  Intertextuality
- ENGL 624  Texts and Contexts
- ENGL 627  Genres
- ENGL 629  Form and Theory of Poetry
- ENGL 630  Form and Theory of Fiction
- ENGL 631  Form and Theory of Creative Nonfiction
- ENGL 632  Community Writing
- ENGL 636  Teaching Writing
- ENGL 637  Theories of Rhetoric and Composition
- ENGL 638  Responding to Writing
- ENGL 652  Studies in Writing and Rhetoric: ___
- ENGL 661  Themes in Interdisciplinary Studies
- ENGL 666  Creative Writing: Fiction
- ENGL 667  Creating Writing: Poetry
- ENGL 668  Creative Writing: Drama
- ENGL 670  Literary Editing and Publishing
- ENGL 671  Film and Television Scripts
- ENGL 672  Writing Nonfiction
- ENGL 692  Independent Study
- ENGL 694  Internship in Writing

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 30.

### Accelerated opportunities

The department offers opportunities for qualified undergraduate students to earn both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. See the program page in the Undergraduate Bulletin for details.

**Contact**

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**Program website:** english.vcu.edu/ma (http://english.vcu.edu/ma/)