

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Catherine Ingrassia, Ph.D.

Professor and chair

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Associate professor and associate chair

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Associate professor and director of the M.A. program

David Wojahn

Professor and director of the creative writing program

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Associate professor of art history and director of the MATX program

[english.vcu.edu](http://www.english.vcu.edu) (<http://www.english.vcu.edu>)

The purpose of the Department of English is to teach students to see their worlds with clarity and respond to them with sensitivity, through reading and writing. Students are invited to read and explore a diversity of texts created in different times and voices and then to respond to these texts variously and critically, situating them within their contexts and discerning their important aesthetic features, rhetorical elements and social functions.

Students in this department also are encouraged to express themselves in expository or imaginative works that engage thought and feeling, evince purpose clearly, marshal appropriate evidence and observe principles of rhetorical decorum.

The Department of English offers a Bachelor of Arts in English, as well as minors in American studies, British studies, English (for non-English majors) and creative writing, the Master of Arts in English and the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, and a doctoral program leading to a Ph.D. in Media, Art, and Text. Use the program index links to view individual program descriptions and curricula, or visit the department's website (<http://www.english.vcu.edu>) for additional information.

- Creative Writing, Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) with a concentration in dual genre (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/creative-writing-mfa-concentration-dual-genre>)
- Creative Writing, Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) with a concentration in fiction (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/creative-writing-mfa-concentration-fiction>)
- Creative Writing, Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) with a concentration in poetry (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/creative-writing-mfa-concentration-poetry>)
- English, Master of Arts (M.A.) (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/english-ma>)
- English, Master of Arts (M.A.) with a concentration in research (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/english-ma-concentration-research>)
- Media, Art, and Text, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/college-humanities-sciences/english/media-art-text-phd>)

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- Linguistics (p. 3)
- Media, art, and text (p. 4)

English

ENGL 500. Practicum in College English. 1-6 Hours.

Semester course; 1-6 credits. May be repeated for credit. May not be applied toward degrees in English. Prerequisite: permission of director of graduate studies. Student participation in planned educational experience under the supervision of English department faculty. The practicum may include classroom teaching, Writing Center tutoring, or participation in research projects.

ENGL 501. Introduction to Graduate Studies in English. 1 Hour.

Semester course; 1 lecture hour. 1 credit. Required of all new graduate students seeking the M.A. in English. An introduction to the theoretical and practical aspects of advanced English studies.

ENGL 528. Children's Literature II. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of classic and current children's books from a variety of literary genres. Magazines and media-related reference resources and journals are reviewed. The creative use of literature, its sociocultural functions and its contribution to the development of the oral and written expression of children from nursery to grade eight are explored. A focus on children with special problems is included. May not be taken for credit toward undergraduate English major if student has taken ENGL 351/TEDU 351. May not be used to fulfill literature requirement for M.A. in English or M.F.A. in Creative Writing, but may be taken as elective credit. Crosslisted as: TEDU 528.

ENGL 532. Applied English Linguistics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: ENGL 390. Application of linguistic theories and methods to selected teaching problems, such as teaching English grammar and usage, teaching English as a second or foreign language, or teaching standard English to students who speak different dialects.

ENGL 550. Studies in Linguistics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: ENGL 390. A general introduction to one area of linguistic study, such as pronunciation, grammar, stylistics, dialects, usage standards, lexicography, onomastics or semantics.

ENGL 552. Teaching English as a Second Language. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Provides students who plan to teach English to people whose native language is not English with a variety of instructional/learning strategies. Presents and explores current approaches and methodology, as these relate to linguistic features and pedagogy. Crosslisted as: TEDU 552/LING 552.

ENGL 560. Studies in British Literature and Culture. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Covers important topics in British literary and cultural studies including major literary periods, genres, major authors or literary movements. May be repeated for credit with permission of the instructor.

ENGL 570. Special Topics in American Literature and Culture. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Covers important topics in American literary and cultural studies including major literary periods, genres, authors and literary movements. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

ENGL 601. Young Adult Literature. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examination of literature written for young adults, literature appropriate for young people in middle schools and high schools. Focuses on the content, characteristics and teaching of such literature. Crosslisted as: ENED 601.

ENGL 605. Introduction to Scholarship in English Studies. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Introduces the practice of research and scholarly discourse in English studies. Emphasizes scholarly resources (printed and electronic) and textual studies.

ENGL 606. Literary Criticism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A comparative study of critical approaches to literary texts (reader-oriented, new critical and formalist, psychoanalytic, archetypal, feminist and gender-oriented, structuralist, poststructuralist, new historicist and postcolonial). These approaches will be evaluated in terms of their capacity to address major components of the literary process (author, text, reader, history, culture); they will also be tested on selected literary texts. Some attention is given to the historical development of criticism, but the primary focus is on its theoretical claims, methodologies and aims.

ENGL 611. Authors. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study of the relationships among authorship (in material or discursive form), texts and cultural contexts.

ENGL 614. Cultural Discourses. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study of contemporary literary and nonliterary texts produced within a designated period of time.

ENGL 620. Intertextuality. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study of texts, potentially of disparate genres and contexts, focused on similar theme, concern or issue. Will examine both foundational, originating texts and subsequent reactions.

ENGL 624. Texts and Contexts. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study of the ways in which texts shape, reflect and inform their cultural contexts.

ENGL 627. Genres. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A sustained and detailed examination of one or more genres.

ENGL 629. Form and Theory of Poetry. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated once for credit. Will address a number of key issues concerning the structure of verse and the function of poetic discourse and will provide readers and writers of poetry an opportunity to study and practice a broad range of poetic forms and techniques, as well as to explore various genre conventions and their thematic and rhetorical significance. Students may study poems from various periods, with some focus on the contemporary, and apply to them the insights offered by major theorists of poetry and poetics. They also may write imitations, parodies and responses examining and demonstrating poetic approaches.

ENGL 630. Form and Theory of Fiction. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated once for credit. Will address a number of key issues concerning the structure, conventions and function of narrative discourse and will seek to give readers and writers of fiction an opportunity to study a broad range of narrative forms, as well as to explore genre conventions and their thematic and rhetorical significance. Students will read stories and novels from various historical periods, with some focus on the contemporary, and apply to them the insights offered by major theorists of narrative. They also may write imitations, parodies and responses examining and demonstrating the aesthetics of fiction.

ENGL 631. Form and Theory of Creative Nonfiction. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated once for credit. Will address a number of key issues concerning the structure, conventions and function of varied types of creative nonfiction and will seek to give readers and writers an opportunity to study a broad range of forms in the genre, which may include magazine articles, research-based reportage, New Journalism, memoir, biography, autobiography, the meditative essay, the personal essay, the lyric essay and others, as well as to explore genre conventions and their thematic and rhetorical significance. Students will read across this range of forms, with some focus on contemporary writing, and apply to them insights offered by major theorists of the genre. They also may write imitations, parodies and responses examining and demonstrating the aesthetics of creative nonfiction writing.

ENGL 632. Community Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course teaches students how to use research in rhetoric and composition to design and deliver a community writing project that is mutually empowering, knowledge generating and publicly oriented – designed to inspire social change.

ENGL 636. Teaching Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines theories and practices of teaching writing, with emphasis on the connections between theory and practice.

ENGL 637. Theories of Rhetoric and Composition. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: ENGL 636. A study of theory and scholarship in rhetoric and writing.

ENGL 638. Responding to Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course studies theories and practices for responding to expository and persuasive nonfiction texts, both students' and professionals', academic and creative.

ENGL 652. Studies in Writing and Rhetoric: _____. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study of an area or specialized issue in rhetoric and/or writing such as the history of rhetoric, theories of invention, qualitative research methods in writing, or studies in style.

ENGL 661. Themes in Interdisciplinary Studies. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A study in depth of a theme, topic, or concept involving two or more disciplines.

ENGL 666. Creative Writing: Fiction. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 workshop hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: graduate standing in M.F.A. program or permission of the Creative Writing Committee. All students seeking to enroll must contact the creative writing M.F.A. director. Study of the art of fiction writing, with the goal of producing professionally acceptable and publishable fiction. Workshop members shall produce a substantial amount of writing, short stories or a portion of a novel, and in addition shall be able to evaluate and articulate the strengths of their own work. Graded as pass/fail.

ENGL 667. Creating Writing: Poetry. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 workshop hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: graduate standing in M.F.A. program or permission of the Creative Writing Committee. All students seeking to enroll must contact the creative writing M.F.A. director. Study of the art of poetry writing, with the goal of producing professionally acceptable and publishable poetry. Workshop members shall produce a substantial amount of poetry and in addition shall be able to evaluate and articulate the strengths of their own work. Graded as pass/fail.

ENGL 668. Creative Writing: Drama. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 workshop hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: graduate standing in M.F.A. program or permission of the Creative Writing Committee. All students seeking to enroll must contact the creative writing M.F.A. director. Study of the art of playwriting with the goal of creating plays that are suitable for production. Workshop members shall produce a substantial volume of writing, one-act plays, or a portion of a longer play, and, in addition, shall be able to evaluate and articulate the strengths of their own work. Graded as pass/fail.

ENGL 670. Literary Editing and Publishing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. A course in which the student learns to edit fiction, poetry, drama, or nonfiction. Genre covered will vary from semester to semester. Attention will be paid to the ways in which editors work with writers in all the technical aspects of editing, revising and publishing. Ethical responsibilities of editors to authors and their texts will be stressed. Questions considering the publishing world at large will be considered.

ENGL 671. Film and Television Scripts. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 workshop hours. 3 credits. Study of the theory and practice of producing shooting scripts for television and motion pictures. Emphasis will be placed on the various kinds of scripts most commonly used by directors and cinematographers (e.g., silent, narrated and dramatized). Attention will also be paid to the ways in which script writers adapt material to audiences, and the ways in which strict time frames are imposed on scripts. Students will write scripts of various kinds and lengths. Graded as pass/fail.

ENGL 672. Writing Nonfiction. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 workshop hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for credit. Enrollment requires permission of the instructor. Study and practice of writing one or more modes of nonfiction on the professional or preprofessional level under critical supervision. Emphasis will be placed on such matters as organization, style, revision and adaptation to particular audiences and publications. Possible kinds of writing could include reports; writing based on statistics; writing textbooks; writing separate chapters of books; and writing reviews, criticism and advocacy materials. Graded as pass/fail.

ENGL 673. Teaching Creative Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. The course is intended for those who teach or plan to teach creative writing. A comparative analysis of different approaches to the teaching of creative writing. Attention will be paid to the different ways in which elements such as dialogue, sound pattern, scene development, line break, meter, voice and distance can be taught.

ENGL 692. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.

1-3 hours. Variable credit. Maximum of 6 credits. Prerequisite: permission from department chair. For students in English/English education to pursue, in depth, a particular problem or topic about which an interest or talent has been demonstrated.

ENGL 694. Internship in Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 6 practicum hours. 3 credits. Permission of director of M.A. program required. Analyses and practices of professional writing in settings such as business, government and industry.

ENGL 695. Directed Study/Major Project and Presentation. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. May not be repeated for credit. Students who choose not to write a thesis will complete a substantial project with a graduate faculty adviser and share the results of his or her research in a public presentation. This project may be an expansion or reworking of a seminar paper or group of seminar papers and must contain a statement of the theoretical, critical or methodological issues important to the project. An abstract of the research will be submitted three to four weeks before the presentation date scheduled for that semester and must be approved by the M.A. committee. The presentation will take place before the adviser, M.A. committee members, and interested faculty and students on the date designated by the M.A. director. Graded PR. Note: Students who present a paper at a national conference or publish in a reputable journal may be exempted from the presentation upon the approval of the M.A. committee.

ENGL 798. Thesis. 1-3 Hours.

Continuous courses; hours to be arranged. Credits to be arranged; 1-3 credits per course. Preparation of a thesis or project based on independent research or study and supervised by a graduate adviser.

ENGL 799. Thesis. 1-3 Hours.

Continuous courses; hours to be arranged. Credits to be arranged; 1-3 credits per course. Preparation of a thesis or project based on independent research or study and supervised by a graduate adviser.

Linguistics

LING 552. Teaching English as a Second Language. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Provides students who plan to teach English to people whose native language is not English with a variety of instructional/learning strategies. Presents and explores current approaches and methodology, as these relate to linguistic features and pedagogy. Crosslisted as: ENGL 552/TEDU 552.

LING 650. Second Language Acquisition. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course is designed for those who plan to work with English language learners in diverse instructional settings. A major focus of this course is analyzing second language acquisition theories and how they apply in classroom settings. In-depth analysis of readings will enhance the students' understanding of second language acquisition and the research related to this field. Students will observe classroom teaching, analyzing the application of SLA theories utilized in the instructional setting. Crosslisted as: TEDU 650.

Media, art, and text

MATX 601. Texts and Textuality. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Explores theories of texts and textuality as they relate to the study of media, the arts and discourse of any kind.

MATX 602. History of Media, Art, and Text. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines the history of communication technologies in their social and cultural contexts, with an emphasis on the development of contemporary digital technology and new media. Students will explore how the interactions between communication practices and technologies are related to institutions, identity formation, cultural values, social practices and economic conditions.

MATX 603. Mass Media. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines the history of mass media and the leading theories, concepts and methods for mass media research.

MATX 604. Interdisciplinary Workshop. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment restricted to first-year MATX students. Students gain an understanding of current interdisciplinary theory and practice across media, art, and text. Examination of real-world examples provides a foundation for academic and professional careers in today's interdisciplinary digital environment. Workshopping of students' preliminary dissertation ideas, conference abstracts, teaching portfolios and professional websites develops content and skills needed for the MATX e-portfolio. Graded as pass/fail.

MATX 690. Seminar in Media, Art, and Text. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Graduate-level research and reading centered on interdisciplinary study.

MATX 696. Internship. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits; may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Planned experiences approved by student's adviser under the supervision of professionals and evaluated by university faculty.

MATX 791. Directed Study. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits; may be repeated for credit. Focuses on a selected topic chosen by student and approved by student's adviser.

MATX 897. Dissertation Project. 1-12 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-12 credits; may be repeated for credit. Research and work leading to the completion of the dissertation project.