

# M.A. in English

The **Masters of Arts in English (MAE) – regular or accelerated track (AMAE)** focus on the broad theme of “Literary Landscapes.” Courses emphasize how writing is generated from, intersects with, and creates landscapes. A wide range of writing is covered from various countries of origin and time periods, always with a focus on the vital role of space. Such inquiry considers the iconic terrain of the American West, the battlefields of Europe, and other settings both rural and urban. At the same time, a full understanding of landscape entails mapping narrative minds as the fascination that writers and readers have with places both familiar and alien is explored.

The MAE and AMAE cultivate a close mentoring relationship between students and faculty who have expertise in fields such as writing studies, the literature of the American West, British literature, and pedagogy. Graduate students learn the rigorous skills of scholarship and critical discourse while also fully embracing the opportunities afforded by their network of English professors and fellow graduate students who help to advance their thinking.

The MAE degree requires the minimum completion of 30 course credits and a successful thesis/professional paper defense. MAE students build a degree plan consisting of required courses (3 credits), electives (17-21 credits), and a culminating degree project (a scholarly thesis, 10 credits, or a professional paper, 6 credits). MAE Advisors assist graduate students in developing their degree plan to ensure that the coursework and culminating project enhance their knowledge as well as build and sustain their research interests.

Prior to admittance, students are expected to have completed the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree in English. Students with undergraduate degrees other than English are encouraged to apply; however, they may be required to take additional English courses as a condition of their acceptance. Students entering the program with a BA in hand often complete the program within two years, taking six to nine credits per term, with summer study as a possibility for facilitating progress toward the MAE.

Students enrolled in the MA in English program take one **required** for a total of **three credits** (repeatable up to six credits). Elective courses are selected for the remaining 17-21 course credits. These courses vary in particular subject matter but provide foundational knowledge for graduate-level work in the MAE program.

The Accelerated MA in English (AMAE) is a version of the Master of Arts in English available to MSU undergraduate English majors who would like to complete both their BA and their MA in five years instead of the standard six (four for a BA, two for an MA). The AMAE focuses on “Literary Landscapes” both literal and figurative. Students build their program of study across the final three to four semesters of their undergraduate careers, followed by one year spent exclusively at the graduate level. With a wide array of courses available in English and outside the department (e.g. History and Native American Studies), students select coursework suitable to the development of their areas of interest and expertise.

Eligibility for the program requires students to have a minimum GPA of 3.25 and the ability to enter their senior year with at least 100 credits already completed towards their BA.

The AMAE requires the completion of 30 course credits and a successful thesis/professional paper defense. Students in the program build a degree plan consisting of one required course (3 credits), electives (17-21 credits), and a culminating degree project (either a scholarly thesis, 10 credits; or a professional paper, 6 credits). Over the course of their last three undergraduate

semesters, students must complete at least 12 of these 30 credits on reserve, meaning that they do not count toward the student’s undergraduate degree but are set aside for the student’s graduate degree. The student then completes the remaining 18 credits during the final two semesters of study at the graduate level. Advisors assist students in developing their program of study and ensuring the coursework and culminating degree project meet the requirements of the program in a timely manner.

Throughout their time in the program, students are eligible to take courses at the 500-level, in addition to a limited number of credits (nine maximum) at the 400-level. Students are encouraged to take courses outside of the department should they align with the student’s program of study (nine credits maximum). To optimize the path towards their degree, it is highly recommended that students explore the possibility of taking summer courses, particularly between their fourth and fifth years. Included in the offerings of summer courses is the Yellowstone Writing Project, a series of courses that focus on building and participating in writing communities and the teaching of writing.

## Program Requirements

The Master of Arts degree requires the minimum completion of 30 course credits. **Students will select one of two options, either the professional paper or the thesis.** The first option involves 24 hours of course work and 6 hours of professional paper, the latter 21 hours of course work and 9 hours of thesis. Students are expected to have completed the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree in English. Students with undergraduate degrees other than English are encouraged to apply; however, they may be required to take additional English courses as a condition of their acceptance.

Students entering the program with BA in-hand often complete the program within two years, taking 6-9 credits per term, with summer study as a possibility for facilitating progress toward degree. Undergraduate students majoring in English at MSU and entering the MA program on the accelerated track may reserve up to fifteen (15) credits towards the MA program after being accepted into the accelerated MA in English program—leaving 15 credits left during the final year of graduate study. The coursework used for reserved credits may not be counted toward bachelor’s degree requirements.

## Required Courses

### Required Core Courses

ENGL 565	Literary Landscapes	3
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Choose one of the following:

ENGL 575	Professional Paper (Max 6 credits (Plan B Only))	
ENGL 590	Master’s Thesis (9 credits (Plan A Only))	

**Electives (Students enrolled in the MA in English are encouraged to take electives in addition to those listed below, including courses ENGL 562 and ENGL 563 (from the MA:EE Option); the Yellowstone Writing Project’s Advanced Institute; 400-level courses in the English Department; and approved graduate courses from other departments, such as American Studies, History, and Native American Studies.)**

ENGL 505	Teaching College Composition	3
ENGL 510	Studies in Critical Theory (Max 6 credits)	3
ENGL 520	Pedagogy Theory and Practice (Max 6 credits)	3
ENGL 530	Writing Theory and Practice	3
ENGL 550	Focused Research Seminar (Max 6 credits)	3
ENGL 591	Special Topics	1-4
ENGL 592	Independent Study	1-4

ENGL 598	Internship	1-6
ENGL 588	Professional Development	1-3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

### Accelerated Program Requirements

Students in the accelerated MA program aim to finish their four years of undergraduate study with a total of 135 credits: 120 credits required for the BA, and 15 credits reserved for the graduate program that facilitate the completion of the MA in only one additional year. If a student took 16.875 credits per semester, they would reach 135 across eight semesters, or four years, of study. We encourage students to take 15 credits per semester in three of their eight semesters, and 18 credits per semester in the other five, as this, too, adds up to 132. We also encourage, if possible, that students take 18 credits per semester earlier in the undergraduate careers—in three of their first five semesters, to be exact—so that their last three semesters as undergraduates can have lighter undergraduate course loads as they also begin taking graduate level courses on reserve. Without taking into account something like AP/dual enrollment transfer credits and summer classes, both of which would make this process considerably easier, a generic path to the accelerated MA, in terms of credit distribution, looks like this:

#### First Year

First semester: 15 credits (all undergraduate)

Second semester: 18 credits (all undergraduate)

#### Second Year

First semester: 18 credits (all undergraduate)

Second semester: 15 credits (all undergraduate)

#### Third Year

First semester: 18 credits (all undergraduate)

Second semester: 15 credits (12 undergraduate, 3 graduate on reserve)

#### Fourth Year

First semester: 18 credits (12 undergraduate, 6 graduate on reserve)\*

Second semester: 18 credits (12 undergraduate, 6 graduate on reserve)

#### Fifth Year

First semester: 9 credits (all graduate)

Second semester: 6 credits (all graduate)

\* On this model, the fourth year is a challenging one. We advise that the student takes three to six reserved graduate credits in the form of a 400-level class; that is, that the student take only 3 credits at the 500-level each semester or one semester during this fourth year, as a means of mitigating the strenuousness of the course load.

What follows is a more in-detail mapping of a standard progression through the program for a LIT major:

Year 1	Credits	
	Fall	Spring
WRIT 101W - College Writing I	3	
Core US	3	
Core Q	3	
LIT 201 - Intro to Literary Studies	3	

LIT 285D - Mythologies	3	
Core IA		3
LIT 202CS - The Environmental Imagination		3
Core IS & IN		6
University Elective		3
LIT 110IH - Introduction to Literature		3
Year Total:	15	18
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
Literature Electives	6	
University Electives	12	
National Literature Elective		3
LIT 310 - American Literature to 1900		
LIT 311 - American Literature after 1900		
LIT 320 - Advanced British Literature I (Formerly LIT 324)		
LIT 321 - Advanced British Literature II (Formerly LIT 325)		
LIT 322 - Advanced British Literature III (Formerly LIT 326)		
Literature Elective		3
University Electives		9
Year Total:	18	15
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
LIT 300 - Literary Criticism	3	
University Electives	9	
Writing Elective	3	
Literature Elective	3	
Literature Electives		6
University Elective		3
National Literature Elective		3
LIT 310 - American Literature to 1900		
LIT 311 - American Literature after 1900		
LIT 320 - Advanced British Literature I (Formerly LIT 324)		
LIT 321 - Advanced British Literature II (Formerly LIT 325)		
LIT 322 - Advanced British Literature III (Formerly LIT 326)		
Grad Class Reserve *3 credits toward MA		3
Year Total:	18	15
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
University Electives	9	
National Literature Elective	3	
LIT 310 - American Literature to 1900		
LIT 311 - American Literature after 1900		
LIT 320 - Advanced British Literature I (Formerly LIT 324)		
LIT 321 - Advanced British Literature II (Formerly LIT 325)		
LIT 322 - Advanced British Literature III (Formerly LIT 326)		
Grad Class Reserve *Credits toward MA		6

LIT 494RH - Seminar: Research Issues	3	
	9	
Grad Class Reserve *Credits toward MA	6	
Year Total:	18	18
<b>Total Program Credits:</b>	<b>120 (15 Reserved</b>	<b>Grad Credits)</b>

<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Credits</b>	
	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
Grad Classes	6	
ENGL 575 - Professional Paper	3	
Grad Classes		3
ENGL 575 - Professional Paper		3
Year Total:	9	6
<b>Total Program Credits:</b>	<b>30 (15 + 15 Reserved</b>	<b>Grad Courses)</b>