

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY,  
BAKERSFIELD**

**THE  
MASTER OF ARTS  
IN ENGLISH**

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**A HANDBOOK**

**2025-2026**



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**BAKERSFIELD**  
Department of English

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### THE MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

The Master of Arts in English provides the following: (1) a carefully planned and integrated program ensuring a foundation of professional skills through a common core of courses; (2) some uniform degree of coverage in British and American literature; (3) more intensive training in reading, critical analysis, research, and writing than is possible in undergraduate work; and (4) breadth through an emphasis on the fields of literature, language, and composition.

To meet these objectives, the English graduate program has been designed primarily to provide the following: (1) a well-balanced program for those who wish to terminate their studies at the master's level and whose primary aim is to teach in a community college; (2) advanced training for teachers who wish to improve their professional skills and status; (3) a variety of courses for students who plan to pursue the Ph.D. degree at another institution; and (4) continuing education for those who wish to extend their knowledge as an end in itself through an interesting and stimulating series of classes in literature, criticism, and language, as well as the teaching of composition and English as a Second Language.

The MA in English qualifies students to teach in the California community college system or secondary schools as well as prepares them for careers in editing, advertising, and public information.

## PROGRAM MISSION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

### THE MISSION OF THE MA IN ENGLISH PROGRAM

The mission of the MA in English Program is fourfold:

- To develop students' knowledge of current critical and scholarly approaches to the study of literature and language.
- To enhance their knowledge of the structure and history of the English language.
- To clarify problems and issues raised by contemporary research in the teaching of composition.
- To reinforce students' knowledge and application of primary and secondary sources

#### 1. Linguistics

##### *1.1 Linguistic Analysis*

Students will be able to analyze the grammar of English.

#### 2. Composition

##### *2.1 Theories and Practices of Composition Instruction*

Students will be able to apply current theories and best practices in the teaching of composition.

##### *2.2 Discourse Analysis*

Students will be able to analyze linguistic and rhetorical patterns in different modes of discourse.

#### 3. Literature

##### *3.1 Analyzing Literature*

Students will be able to compose an original essay on a literary text.

##### *3.2 Applying Critical Theory*

Students will be able to examine literature using specific critical approaches.

##### *3.3 Researching Criticism*

Students will be able to exhaustively survey the existing criticism on any literary text.

## GETTING INTO THE MA IN ENGLISH PROGRAM

### APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Persons seeking graduate study in English must apply online through Cal State Apply at [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply). Admission to graduate study by the university does not constitute acceptance into the English MA Program.

Students must also notify the English Department's Graduate Program Director of their intention to pursue the MA degree. The Graduate Program Director will familiarize the student with the requirements and timetable of the MA Program.

Detailed information on Application Procedures and Policies can also be found at [www.csub.edu/catalog/2024-2025-admissions-procedures-and-policies](http://www.csub.edu/catalog/2024-2025-admissions-procedures-and-policies).

Requirements for admission to CSU Bakersfield are in accordance with Title 5, Chapter 1, Subchapter 3, of the California Code of Regulations. Complete information is available at [www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu).

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the graduate program leading to the Master of Arts in English requires the following:

1. A baccalaureate degree in English from an accredited college or university;
2. A 3.0 GPA (A=4.0) for the last 60 semester units (90 quarter units) attempted, and a 3.0 GPA in upper-division English courses.
3. Students who do not meet the 3.0 GPA requirement for upper-division English courses can qualify for the program by scoring at or above the 70th percentile on the verbal measure of the Graduate Record General Test OR by presenting an approved personal statement and writing sample to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
4. For international students whose first language is not English, a minimum score to 550 on the paper-based TOEFL exam, 80 on the internet-based TOEFL exam, or 6.5 on the IELTS. Documentation must be provided in original form by the testing institution; copies submitted by the applicant are not acceptable.

Students who have a baccalaureate degree in a subject other than English will have to complete up to seven courses (21 units) that comprise the undergraduate core requirements for English, with a GPA of 3.0, before being considered for admission to the master's degree program in English. The undergraduate core requirements are described below. All courses are to be selected in consultation with the Graduate Program Director for English.

1. One upper-division course in linguistics, such as ENGL 3610 or 3620 or its equivalent.
2. Any six other upper-division courses in English, which may include courses in genre, major figures, periods, or creative writing; ENGL 3000 is highly recommended.

## CLASSIFICATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

There are three classifications for students in the English graduate program:

### **Classified**

A student who meets all the requirements for admission to the master's degree program in English will be admitted as a Classified Graduate Student. A Classified Graduate Student may take any graduate-level course meeting the requirements of his or her plan of study as long as the appropriate prerequisites have been met.

### **Conditionally Classified**

A student who meets most but not all of the requirements for admission as a Classified Graduate Student may be admitted as a Conditionally Classified Graduate Student. The letter of acceptance will list the conditions that students must fulfill to become classified. A Conditionally Classified Graduate Student may take no more than two three-unit courses that count towards the requirements for the MA in English while meeting the specified conditions.

### **Candidacy**

Classified students who have maintained a 3.25 GPA will be advanced to candidacy in the term in which they intend to graduate.

## GETTING THROUGH THE MA IN ENGLISH PROGRAM

### ADVISING

MA students should stay in contact with the Graduate Program Director, so the department can provide current information to help the student move expeditiously through the program. It is the student's responsibility, in consultation with the graduate program director, to choose appropriate courses and to organize a thesis, project, or examination committee (Graduate Committee), and the program's Graduation Outline should be frequently consulted and followed. Meeting with the graduate program director is an important first step in the MA program. The graduate program director advises and guides students during the period of graduate study and responds to any concerns students may have while in the program.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MA IN ENGLISH

You need 10 courses minimum (30 units) **plus** either ENGL 6710 or ENGL 6720 (3 units) for the degree and 9 of the courses must correspond to the 9 DOMAINS; your tenth/elective course can be a course from any domain (meaning you will have two courses in one domain) or it can be ENGL 6000, which is available to students enrolled in the Teaching Assistantship Program.

### Graduate Courses

#### Domain I

##### *Area 1 – Methods of Research*

ENGL 5000: Methods of Scholarly Research

#### Domain II

##### *Area 2 – Criticism*

ENGL 5010: Criticism

#### Domain III

##### *Area 3 – Language*

ENGL 5610: Theories of English Grammar or ENGL 5620: History of the English Language

#### Domain IV

##### *Area 4 - Medieval*

ENGL 5300: Chaucer

##### *Area 5 – Renaissance*

ENGL 5310: 17<sup>th</sup> Century British Literature **or** ENGL 5320: Shakespeare

##### *Area 6 – Restoration/18<sup>th</sup> Century British*

ENGL 5330: 18<sup>th</sup> Century British Literature **or** ENGL 5340: Development of the English Novel

#### Domain V

##### *Area 7 - 19<sup>th</sup> Century British*

ENGL 5350: 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Literature

##### *Area 8 - 20<sup>th</sup> Century British/Postcolonial*

ENGL 5520: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Poetry **or** ENGL 5360: Postcolonial Literature **or** ENGL 5370: British Literature: 20<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present

## **Domain VI**

### ***Area 9 – Early American***

ENGL 5220: Early American Literature **or** ENGL 5230: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature

### ***Area 10 – Later American***

ENGL 5240: Modern American Literature **or** ENGL 5250: Contemporary American Literature

## **Domain VII**

### ***Area 11 – Ethnic American***

ENGL 5210: Ethnic Literature

## **Domain VIII**

### ***Area 12 – Textual Analysis***

ENGL 5110: Approaches to the Analysis of Writing

### ***Area 13 – Rhetorical Theory***

ENGL 5120: Rhetorical Theory

## **Domain IX**

### ***Area 14 – Instruction in Composition and Literature***

ENGL 5130: Composition Theory & Practice **or** ENGL 5020: Special Methods: Instruction in Literature

### ***Area 13 – Basic Writing and Second Language Writing***

ENGL 5140: Methods and Materials in Teaching Second Language Writing **or** ENGL 5150: Teaching Basic Writers

## **Elective**

## **Comprehensive Exam or Thesis**

ENGL 6710: Comprehensive Exam **or** ENGL 6720: Thesis or Project

Fillable electronic copies of the MA in English Graduation Outline are available at

<https://www.csub.edu/english/degrees/masters.shtml>

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Time Limitation on Course Requirements**

State law mandates a seven-year limitation on course credits. Students who fail to complete their degree programs within the seven-year limit may petition the Department's Graduate Studies Committee to permit the revalidating of outdated courses. If granted, such revalidation will normally require an oral or written examination on the course content, supervised by a specialist in the field.

### **Maintaining Graduate Student Status**

All graduate students are required to maintain continuous enrollment through completion of degree requirements or lose graduate student standing at CSUB. A student who does not enroll for two consecutive semesters loses graduate student standing and must reapply for admission to the University and to the major department. For this reason, it is important for you to sign up for English 7000 through Extended University when you are not enrolled in any other courses but need to maintain continuous enrollment as you complete your thesis, project, or comp exams. There is a minimal fee.

## FINISHING THE MA IN ENGLISH PROGRAM

To graduate with the master's degree in English, students must follow the Graduation Outline, which consists of ten (10) 3-unit courses (with various requirements and prerequisites attached), and one 3-unit culminating experience course. A culminating experience is EITHER the Comprehensive Examination (English 6710) OR a Thesis or Project (English 6720). The English MA therefore = min. 33 units. Your seminars/courses count toward the degree if you receive a final grade of B (3.0) or better in the course. You are eligible to graduate if you have an overall 3.25 GPA in the required coursework.

If you want to begin and finish the degree in two years, you should 1) adhere to the Graduation Outline requirements, 2) take 5-6 courses the first year, 3) take 4-5 the second, and 4) begin work (reading/research) on your culminating experience no later than after two semesters in the program at this pace.

For more information, including thesis, project, and comprehensive examination requirements, MA in English reading lists, instructions for writing a prospectus, sample prospectus cover sheets and signature pages, sample theses and projects, and a comprehensive graduate student checklist, please visit <https://www.csub.edu/english/degrees/masters.shtml>.

## THE WRITING CERTIFICATE AND TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

### THE WRITING CERTIFICATE

CSUB's Certificate in Writing is the perfect supplement to your Bachelor's or Master's degree, regardless of your area of study. Holders of a BA or BS pursuing a credential may earn in-service units and improve their own writing skills at the same time; those in a Master's Program may benefit from an additional emphasis on writing when they enter the job market.

This certifies the completion of specialized training in writing by those who hold a BA or an MA degree, whether or not they are involved in a graduate degree program. Candidates for this certificate must complete with a B or better four specific graduate writing courses selected from the following five: ENGL 5110, 5120, 5130, 5140 and 5150.

### TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP PROGRAM IN WRITING

The Teaching Assistant Program in Writing begins with a one-semester apprenticeship in a composition course or courses in the department. If the faculty mentor's evaluations are positive and enrollment is sufficient, the student will be assigned to his or her own class for a maximum of two semesters. Students are required to take ENGL 6000 in conjunction with their apprenticeship. Prerequisites for the Teaching Assistant Program in Writing are (1) completion of ENGL 5130 with a grade of B+ (3.3) or better; (2) completion of 10 hours of tutoring; (3) advancement to classified status; and (4) a graduate GPA of at least 3.5. ENGL 6000 can count as an elective towards the MA.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

**English Club:** Students majoring or minoring in English are welcome to meet in an informal setting to discuss literature, language, classes, and all other aspects of campus life. Meetings are generally held every other Friday afternoon.

**Sigma Tau Delta:** The English Department is home to the Xi Tau Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, an international honor society for English majors and minors. Juniors, seniors, and graduate students are encouraged to apply.

### PUBLICATIONS

**Calliope:** *Calliope* is an academic journal produced annually that publishes literary criticism, scholarship, and book reviews written by students at CSUB. The editorial team is faculty advised but composed of students, who learn publishing practices and oversee every step of review, layout, and production.

**Orpheus:** *Orpheus* is a literary journal published annually to encourage creative writing and artistic thinking among the students of CSUB. The editorial team is faculty advised, but composed of a student body, which oversees every step of production.

### HONORS AND AWARDS

**Sigma Tau Delta Creative Writing Awards:** The Sigma Tau Delta Creative Writing Awards are presented annually to honor the creative work of CSUB students.

**The Li'i Pearl Outstanding Student in English Award:** *The Pearl Prize* honors a student who has made a special contribution to the department, the school, the university, and/or the community at large and who serves as a “proud representative” of the department.

### EVENTS

**The California Writers Series:** Each year the English Department sponsors two or more readings by poets and fiction writers living and working in California.

**The Lectures in Language and Linguistics:** The L3 series aims to bring a California-based linguist and/or language expert to CSUB's campus every semester to speak on a given topic and meet with students and faculty.



## KEY CONTACTS

### ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

<b>CONTACT:</b>	<b>OFFICE:</b>	<b>PHONE:</b>	<b>EMAIL:</b>
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### SCHOOL OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

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For more information, please visit [www.csub.edu/english](http://www.csub.edu/english)

