

# English Dept. Graduate Student Handbook

**Pages 1-4: Department Overview/Contacts/Logistics**

**Pages 4-6: MA Program**

**Pages 7-16: MFA Program**

**Pages 17-26: General Academic Procedures for All Grad Students and TAs**

## **Department Overview**

The English Department offers a terminal degree in its Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing and an advanced Master of Arts degree in English. Our programs promote innovative approaches to the study of rhetoric and literature and creative writing that cut across historical periods and disciplinary boundaries. At the undergraduate level, we currently offer a Bachelor of Arts in English, with options to concentrate in Literature, Creative Writing, Linguistics, or Professional Writing. We also offer a Bachelor of Science in English that allows for a specialization in Technical Writing.

The University of Idaho's [statement of diversity and inclusion](#) promises that UI “seeks to protect and promote a respectful and civil learning environment.” As a department, we deeply value and encourage meaningful discourse around diversity and inclusion, and it is likely that you will encounter such engagement in your classes here. Along with the greater university community, our department values diverse cultural perspectives, and adheres to the promise that we will strive to honor and include a range of texts sensitive to and conscious of class, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identities, varying mental and physical abilities, citizenship, nationality, sexual orientation, religious background, age, epistemology, academic discipline, veteran status, life experience and the broader spectrum of identity present in our growing communities. As scholars, you are encouraged to explore and consider perspectives that may differ from your own. You will be expected to engage in the wider and rich conversations of who we are and the impact of these identities in any English graduate program. We see this as an undivided department. You are part of a larger community no matter what program you happen to be enrolled in.

## **Department Contacts**

If you have questions or want to set up appointments with any of us, the best first step is an email. We all generally answer email during regular work hours M-F.

[Alexandra Teague](#)

Professor of English and Department Chair, English Dept.

[ateague@uidaho.edu](mailto:ateague@uidaho.edu)

[Michael McGriff](#)

Professor of English, Director of MFA Program in Creative Writing

[mmcgriff@uidaho.edu](mailto:mmcgriff@uidaho.edu)

[Jennifer Ladino](#)

Professor of English, and Director of the M.A. in English  
[jladino@uidaho.edu](mailto:jladino@uidaho.edu)

[Tyler Easterbrook](#)

Assistant Professor of English, and Director of First-Year Composition  
[tylere@uidaho.edu](mailto:tylere@uidaho.edu)

If you are a TA, you work with Tyler as employees of the department and report to him.

[Neil Davidson](#)

Instructor of English, and Associate Director of First-Year Composition  
[ndavidson@uidaho.edu](mailto:ndavidson@uidaho.edu)

Bryan Soderquist  
English Administrative Assistant  
[bsoderquist@uidaho.edu](mailto:bsoderquist@uidaho.edu)

[Rochelle Smith](#)

Reference and Instruction Librarian  
Liaison to the English Dept. (and all of CLASS) (and an MFA alum)  
[rsmith@uidaho.edu](mailto:rsmith@uidaho.edu)

Click here for the full directory of [English Department faculty and staff](#).

The College of Graduate Studies (COGS) is your other main resource for staying on track to graduate. All forms you will need to process prior to graduation can be found here: [Graduate Forms](#). Contact [COGS staff](#) for questions about graduation procedures. (More on this later.)

## **Logistics**

If you are a TA, during training, you'll receive an envelope which lists your faculty email, copy code for the printer, office key, and office number, along with an office hours card, and roster of other TAs' info. If you are not a TA, you should pick up all relevant materials from the department admin assistant before the semester starts.

## **Email**

This is our primary way to contact you and it is your responsibility as a student (and, if you are a TA, an employee) to respond to email in a timely fashion (in academic settings, usually considered 24 to 48 hours on week days). Our department policy is to try to avoid sending emails among faculty after 5 p.m. and on weekends. You should check your email daily during the semester, and weekly during breaks so you don't miss important notices. Email can be accessed through a web browser, Outlook,

other mail applications, and on mobile devices. Log into [mail.uidaho.edu](mailto:mail.uidaho.edu) with your UI username (NetID) and password to access both your student (and, if you're a TA, faculty) email accounts.

All email tutorials, including how to set up and access email and how to forward mail from other addresses, can be found on this Tech Support [tutorial page](#).

Grad students are included on departmental group email lists. In replying to a message sent to listserv accounts, you're sending that reply to dozens of people, and your message will require admin approval for delivery. When relevant, reply to email messages individually instead of using Reply All.

## **WIFI**

To access university wifi, please use your UI username (NetID) and password to connect your device to AirVandalGold.

## **MyUI**

MyUI is a portal where students can register for classes, see their grades, update their personal information, and more. If you're a TA, it's also how you access your class roster (Faculty | Class List Summary), find student information like email addresses, and enter early warning, midterm, and final grades for your own students. Log into [My UI](#) with your UI username (NetID) and password. HR provides information about how to register and navigate this on their [website](#). My UI is also where you can access your Degree Audit and visit your Study Plan to ensure you are on track to graduate.

## **Forms**

For any forms that need the Chair's signature, please email the form to both the Chair and admin assistant. If that's not possible, you can leave them with a written request in the Chair's mailbox.

## **Mailboxes**

Mailboxes are adjacent to the main office in Brink 200. Please check these daily, as mail is delivered each day and space is limited. Important notices for TAs are posted next to the TA mailboxes.

## **Teaching Assistant Offices**

Offices are assigned. An opportunity to switch offices will be given at the end of the year before classes let out, but not before. Please make friends and be respectful of your officemates. Desks are not assigned but chosen between office mates on a first-come-first-served basis.

## **Photocopier**

Out of necessity, our policy is strict: each TA is allowed ten copies per student per semester. To make these copies, key into the machine using the last 4 digits of your Vandal number. Otherwise, you have access to copying and scanning (which is encouraged), but not to printing in the office. You may print from your computer or use the Copy Center or Library (at your expense). Personal items, articles, anything you need as a student will have to be copied outside of the office.

## **Laptops for TAs**

If you are working as a TA for the English Department, you will be eligible for a departmental laptop. You must work with the admin assistant (who will liaise with the Office of Information Technology) to sign out a laptop, and then return it at the end of the year. You *must* return your laptop at the end of the year even if you are a returning TA. Please note that no student information can be saved on private laptops or computers. If you need to use a private computer at any point, you can save student data using your UI OneDrive account.

## **UI English Digital Resources**

### **Department webpages**

[First-year Writing at U of I](#)

[MFA Creative Writing](#)

[MA English](#)

[Writing Center](#)

[Grace Nixon Institute](#)

[English Department Undergraduate Studies Facebook](#)

### **MFA program-sponsored sites**

[Write in Idaho](#): MFA program blog

[FUGUE](#): our graduate-run literary journal

[MFA Twitter](#)

[MFA Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube channel \(which includes some great past DVW events\)](#)

## **English Department Graduate Programs**

### **MA English**

The MA English degree is a flexible two-year graduating program focused on advanced studies in literature, rhetoric, linguistics, and writing composition that will challenge you to think and write critically about how words can reflect and shape the world. While pursuing your MA degree, you will work closely with internationally-renowned faculty who are active researchers in their field and specialize in topics such as literature and environment, digital humanities, narrative theory, comparative literature, film, critical theory, and writing pedagogy. This degree will prepare you for a range of exciting careers and opportunities, and our strong commitment to mentoring and professional development has produced a great track record of placing students into leading doctoral programs in literature and rhetoric/composition, teaching positions at colleges and universities, and exciting alt-ac jobs. There are many opportunities for MA students to become involved in our department's vibrant community and culture, including the annual English Graduate

Student Conference, monthly reading groups, internships and research assistantships, and work on department publications. Welcome!

## **MA English Requirements**

Designed as a two-year program, 33 credits are required for the degree. These 33 credits can comprise either 30 credits of coursework and 3 credits of a final Master's Project, or 27 credits of coursework and 6 Thesis credits.

### **Coursework**

We consider nine credits per semester as a full-time load. You must earn at least 24 of your total 33 credits in the Eng Dept. at UI. Coursework for the MA is normally at the 500-level; however, you can include up to six credits of work at the 400-level in your study plan, with the approval of the MA Director. You can only count 3 credits of teaching practica to your overall courseload. Directed Studies may, in rare cases, be arranged with professors, but these can only be used for material that is not offered in any regular courses and that is essential to a student's degree.

### **Master's Project**

Projects may address topics in literature and literary theory and criticism or composition and rhetorical theory. The final project, after 30 credits of coursework, consists of 3 research credits (ENGL 599). The student works with a faculty member to revise--meaning extensively rewrite--a seminar paper until it's suitable to be submitted for publication. The student also writes an abstract for the paper, a concise explanation of initial and additional research and revisions (3-5 pages), and an annotated bibliography of work in the field. Upon completion of the project, the student must successfully complete an oral defense conducted by the major professor.

## **MA English Sample Timeline**

### **First Year**

#### **Fall**

- Adjust to Moscow, UI, graduate school, English Dept.
- Read this handbook and familiarize yourself with [COGS dates and deadlines](#)
- Meet with MA Director in the early weeks of the semester
- Plan approach to fulfill the requirements for your degree
- Submit Transfer Credit Evaluation form (if applicable) to MA Director
- Make friends, attend events, get to know faculty
- Learn to use the library and other useful campus resources
- Work with MA Director to select courses for Spring

#### **Spring**

- Check progress toward degree requirements
- Meet with MA Director to fill out Annual Performance and Evaluation Form

- Work with MA Director to select courses for Summer/Fall

### Summer

- Consider doing a summer internship, field institute, or volunteer work
- Consider and begin to research longer-term goals (more graduate school vs. careers, etc.)
- Consider taking a summer seminar with the Grace Nixon Institute

## **Second Year**

### Fall

- Select your Major Professor for your Master's Project
- Work with Major Professor to select seminar paper to revise in the spring and develop timeline for completion of Master's Project
- Submit Program of Study form to COGS
- Apply to graduate schools with early deadlines (if applicable)
- Work with MA Director /Major Professor to select courses for Spring

### Spring

- Apply to graduate schools and/or jobs
- Complete Master's Project
- Submit Application to Graduate to COGS
- Submit final project form to COGS

**Note:** A TAsip or RAsip in the MA program may be held for a maximum of two years. This timeline represents a very general model for your progress toward the degree. There may be good reasons to depart from this schedule. The key is to be aware of what you're doing, keep medium- and long-range goals in mind, and consult frequently with your advisor.

## **MFA in Creative Writing**

The MFA is the terminal degree for those wishing to teach creative writing at the college or university level; it is also among the credentials expected of those seeking employment in arts administration, editing, and related fields. The curriculum provides theoretical and practical training in fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and editing and publishing. The program's principle aim is to teach aspiring writers their craft and at the highest possible level. We gladly speak to students about publishing, teaching, and editing, but our first concern is the craft of writing. While applicants apply and are admitted to only one genre, we encourage them to cross-pollinate: we like to see poets working at narrative pacing in a fiction class, and we like to see prose writers attentive to rhythm and associative logic in poetry. We encourage students to experiment and to push themselves in new directions. We also insist that they understand and can speak with conviction of where they might place themselves in any of several literary traditions.

You must take at least 9 credits per semester to maintain your TAsip; most students take between 9 and 12. At the end of your three years, you will defend your thesis: a collection of poetry, short stories, creative nonfiction, or novel. The thesis defense (a reading and oral interview) is designed to test your ability to articulately discuss your creative process, intellectual and creative influences, chosen genre, aesthetic perspective, design, and intent.

A little history: the MFA program in Creative Writing admitted its first class of seven students in Fall 1994 with a faculty of four: Mary Clearman Blew, Tina Foriyes, Ron McFarland and Lance Olson. From the start, the program was conceived as a three-year sequence of workshops and techniques classes. Along with concentrations in writing fiction and poetry, ours was one of the first in the nation to offer a concentration in the just-emerging genre of creative nonfiction. Also, from the start, and unlike many MFAs, the UI program not only allowed but encouraged students to enroll in workshops in all genres.

## **MFA: Three Years at a Glance**

### **First Year**

- Take a minimum of 18 credits, 9 each semester
- Get to know your fellow students and faculty members.
- Work on developing a balance of writing, classwork, and teaching.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Explore Moscow and the surrounding areas.
- Attend as many readings and events as you can. Attendance of official creative writing events is expected for all students throughout their years in the program (and is fun)!
- Read for *Fugue* (if you're interested)
- Meet with a professor in your primary genre or the MFA Director(s) to start a Study Plan and discuss early questions and concerns and your progress in the program.
- Take a workshop (as relevant) with a Distinguished Visiting Writer.

## Second Year

- Read in the second-year Symposium series.
- Take a workshop from a DVW (as relevant).
- Expand your mind—do a lot of generative work in a number of different areas to play around with craft. Experiment by taking courses outside of your genre.
- Participate in more of a leadership role in the MFA community—consider being an editor for *Fugue*, holding a position in the English Graduate Association, facilitating the Symposium series, managing a social media account for the program, and other opportunities.
- Attend the AWP Conference
- Apply for Centrum Fellowship and/or Writing in the Wild Fellowship.
- Continue to take workshops, literature, and Traditions/Techniques (extra workshops and T/T classes count as electives).
- Re-read this handbook; familiarize yourself with [COGS dates and deadlines](#).
- Decide on your major professor and begin to seriously consider (and ideally choose) your second and third readers for your thesis committee (by the end of this year)

## Third Year

Overall this year: Take your ten credits of ENGL 500.

### (First Semester)

- Meet with your major professor to map out thesis draft deadlines and goals.
- Work on writing your thesis
- Revise your CV/resume and meet with your major professor to discuss future goals.

### (Second Semester)

- Keep revising your thesis and share drafts with your second and third readers.
- Prepare for and successfully defend your thesis.
- Submit all paperwork to COGS at appropriate times (spend plenty of time reading what is due when and getting organized): [COGS dates and deadlines](#)



## **MFA Symposia**

These events are a cherished tradition in the program. Several times a year, second-year candidates are invited to participate in a symposium in a public venue in which they read from their work and have the opportunity to take questions from the audience as a way to prepare for their thesis defense. The symposia series is optional, and voluntarily coordinated by second-year MFA students, who schedule the symposia dates and venues (in conversation with the MFA directors). While participation in this event is not required, it is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the work of fellow MFA students. Past symposia readings have been held at the 1912 Center, East City Park, PCEI, Craft Artbar, and other community locations.

## ***Fugue* Literary Journal**

*Fugue* is managed and edited by graduate students. Though the journal is usually edited by MFA students, MA students are also welcome to get involved. Editors usually work their way up by being readers first, so get involved early! Questions can be directed to *Fugue* faculty advisor Mike McGriff or to the current staff.

From [Fugue's website](#):

Begun in 1990 at the University of Idaho, *Fugue* has continuously published poetry, plays, fiction, essays, visual-text hybrids, and interviews from established and emerging writers biannually. Every year, *Fugue* hosts our Annual Writing Contest, publishing winners in both prose and poetry and awarding them \$1,000 each. Past judges include Pam Houston, Dorianne Laux, Chen Chen, Mark Doty, Ellen Bryant Voigt, Jo Ann Beard, Rebecca McClanahan, Patricia Hampl, Traci Brimhall, and Aisha Sabatini Sloan. Like many journals and magazines in recent years, *Fugue* has entered the world of digital print. While our Summer/Fall issues are still printed hard copy and distributed to contributors and subscribers, we now publish Winter/Spring issues digitally. Digital publication allows us to host our digital content here, on our website, completely free to the public. The current masthead and past issues in the wonderful digital archive can be found [here](#).

## **MFA Thesis and Defense**

As an MFA student, you will undergo intensive theoretical and practical training across genres—including fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, editing and publishing. The degree culminates with a thesis of publishable quality (approximately 25k-30k words of fiction, 90-110 pages of prose/nonfiction, or 48 pages of poetry), to be defended in the Spring of each candidate's final year in the program. The defense comprises a public reading at a location of the student's choosing. A panel of three committee members will pose questions of the student's work, the answers to which should demonstrate:

- That they have analyzed their own creative work and have situated it within the literary traditions and conventions of their genre
- Their understanding of how their work exemplifies, expands, or bridges the boundaries of those traditions, conventions, and genres

- That they have a well-defined artistic vision, ideal, or purpose which either guided the development of the creative work or arose during the process of creating

The thesis and thesis defense have three important and interconnected elements: the Student, the Major Professor, and the College of Graduate Studies (COGS).

**The Major Professor**, who oversees the thesis and thesis defense, establishes thesis expectations with the student during the end of the second year and beginning of the third year. Every Major Professor has a different pedagogical approach regarding how and when the thesis and thesis materials are completed and revised. The Major Professor also serves as a professional mentor during the thesis process, which may include discussing things like the book beyond the thesis, navigating the world of publishing, life after the MFA, etc. The student should start by meeting with the major professor to discuss the timeline for the thesis and how to best work together. Some students and major professors find regularly scheduled meetings during the Fall of the third year to be helpful for the student's progress and motivations; others meet more sporadically until the Spring semester. This is an individualized process that the two parties agree upon.

**The Student's** role during this process is to establish a Major Professor by the end of their second year, to research COGS's deadlines and expectations for thesis/graduation paperwork (there are several), and to complete their Study Plan within Degree Audit during the Fall (or early Spring) of year three, and—of absolute importance—to meet all COGS deadlines. (The Major Professor has no direct sway or involvement with COGS, and all responsibilities for COGS requirements ultimately lie with the graduate student.)

During the Fall semester of the third year, the student should research COGS guidelines for thesis formatting, make a checklist of all required paperwork, and make a checklist of all COGS deadlines (which may change, year to year). The COGS website has all of the relevant information, downloadable required forms, and deadlines. Students are highly encouraged to physically drop by the COGS office, to ask questions, and to seek clarity regarding things like deadlines and thesis formatting, etc. The Writing Center is also an excellent resource for formatting the thesis in MS Word. The student is responsible, importantly, for gathering all of the necessary signatures for the COGS forms. Copies of MFA theses are available at the UI library.

After Winter Break, the defense itself should be scheduled at a time and place that works for all committee members. The student is responsible for selecting a time and venue and arranging for proper sound and seating and so forth.

**COGS** defines, implements, oversees, and enforces the graduation requirements for thesis students across all colleges and disciplines. Their role is to standardize the graduation process and enforce the research standards of U Idaho. Their rules and deadlines are firm. COGS Dean Jerry McMurtry has final approval on all special petitions. The COGS website will be more up to date than this document, and should be checked frequently!

COGS Thesis Deadline Dates: <https://www.uidaho.edu/cogs/deadlines/thesis-dissertations>  
 Everything You Need to Know about your Thesis Requirements:  
<https://www.uidaho.edu/cogs/resources/student-resources/thesis-dissertation>

Graduate Forms: <https://www.uidaho.edu/cogs/forms>

Steps for Completing your MFA through COGS: <https://www.uidaho.edu/-/media/UIDaho-Responsive/Files/cogs/BrochuresHandbooksGuides/steps-to-your-masters-degree.pdf>

### **Thesis Timeline at a Glance**

#### **By the end of your second year:**

- Ask the faculty you would like to serve as your major professor if they are willing.

#### **During Fall of your third year:**

- Ask your second and third readers to be on your committee. Circulate for signatures and submit the Major Professor, Committee Member Appointment, or Committee Changes form (see link to COGS forms above). Email the form to your committee members to sign digitally, and then email to the department admin so they can add the chair's signature. Then email the form to COGS. If you need to petition the CW Director and COGS to assign someone outside the dept. and/or non-Graduate Faculty on the committee, you may be required to submit a COGS Petition.
- Meet with your Major Professor to discuss deadlines and a working plan for the year.
- Talk to your second reader about a plan for the year. See more on the role of the second and third readers below!
- Create or Revise your Study Plan. The Study Plan can be accessed within your Degree Audit on VandalWeb. The objective of the Study Plan is to note which courses you have taken and which you plan to take in which semester, and in which category each course counts. Consult your MP early and often and as necessary. Make sure to doublecheck what you've taken against the degree plan requirements. Study Plan Info: <https://www.uidaho.edu/registrar/graduation/audit>  
*\*Note, in your Study Plan, per COGS changes, all credits for 500 now go in one box; all credits for 598 go in a different box. Do not list these by semester!*

#### **By January of your final semester:**

- Submit a full draft of your thesis to your Major Prof, and—if they agree to review it—your second reader.
- Apply to graduate: <https://www.uidaho.edu/registrar/graduation> (Deadline in late January)
- Schedule your Thesis Defense. Write to your thesis committee members with options for thesis Date, Time, and Venue. Make sure your proposed dates aren't conflicting with AWP or readings. Once your committee has settled on a date and venue, email the CW Directors with your final schedule for the master calendar. Past campus venues include:
  - The Borah Theater (in the Bruce. M. Pitman Center)
  - The Aurora, Crest, Horizon, and Panorama Rooms in the ISUB

- the Forge Theater (404 Sweet Avenue)
- the Arena Theater in Shoup Hall. (6<sup>th</sup> and Rayburn)
- The 1912 Center (412 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St)
- PCEI – Outdoors (1040 Rodeo Dr.)
- The atrium and rooms on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of IRIC
- Reserving the space and setting up the space—microphone/s and speaker/s, the committee table and chairs, virtual technology, and anything else necessary—are the responsibility of the thesis student herself. The English Department and MFA program have a portable sound system that you can borrow; please let the director of creative writing know in advance if you’ll need to use it, and arrange pick up.
- Follow link and click “Graduate Students”:  
<https://www.uidaho.edu/registrar/graduation#accordion-row-3fdd75e3-8afd-4682-8fb5-9d05d5336864->

#### Two to Six Weeks Before Your Defense Date:

- Submit “Request to Proceed”  
 If you forget this part, you are unable to do your defense. COGS recommends submitting with 10 business days to process.  
<https://www.uidaho.edu/-/media/UIdaho-Responsive/Files/cogs/COGS-Forms/Request-to-Proceed-with-Final-Defense.pdf?la=en&hash=BE550DC0309083149DE0ACF96296C7FE3356C722>
- Start your ETD (Electronic Thesis or Dissertation) process. Among other things, this acquaints you with your ETD Administrator, who can help with the particulars of formatting, the thesis abstract, and so forth.  
 You’ll have to set up an ETD (Electronic Thesis Defense) account to submit your thesis to COGS. COGS will send it back to you and work with you if anything is off. Here are the boxes I (Cady Favazzo) clicked, (I think in the order I clicked them):
  - Traditional Publishing
  - Delayed Release
  - Add note to administrator: “creative writing embargo forthcoming”
  - Allow search engine access.
  - Do not file for copyright.
  - Include in institutional repository: Yes.
  - PDF and Supplementary Files: Thesis PDF + Embargo  
 \*The embargo overrides the potential implications “Traditional Publishing” and “Delayed Release” and “Allow Search Engine Access” and “Do not file for copyright” and “Include in Institutional Repository”
  - Administrative Documents: Repository Agreement
  - Miscellaneous Documents: Embargo

#### Right Before and After Your Defense:

- Format your thesis manuscript draft, with correct margin widths and page numbering and front matter and cover page, etcetera.

- Write an abstract for your thesis. Consult prior examples, draft with your Major Prof or ETD Administrator.
- Compose and Revise a Final Draft of your thesis, error-free and perfectly formatted. Copies of your Final draft must be given to all members of your thesis committee at least 7 days prior to the defense. Send via email or in their mailboxes, as they request.
- Print and bring your Final Defense Form to your defense. This form is generated by COGS after you submit your Request to Proceed. Ask your committee to sign after the defense.
- If possible, print and bring “[Repository Agreement](#)” to your defense. Major professor should sign. Upload to ETD.
- Print and bring the embargo form to your defense. Major professor should sign. The Embargo form (see end of this section) is necessary for you to retain the ability to publish your manuscript as a book. You will upload it to ETD under “Miscellaneous” or “Supplemental Files.” This is an important step, and the department has created a special agreement with COGS for a much longer embargo that will give you time to publish your manuscript before COGS publishes it online.
- Submit everything well before COGS’ final deadline, usually around April 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Thesis FAQ**

### **What are the roles of Second and Third Readers?**

As with the major professor, the second reader and the student discuss how they want to work together. Some second readers will be involved throughout the third year and can read in-progress drafts. Other second readers may not read a draft until far closer to the thesis date. Again, because all faculty work differently with students and have differing pedagogical approaches, the roles of the Major Professor and Second Reader are to be established individually with each student. The Third Reader’s role is entirely different. The Third Reader is responsible for reading only the final version of the thesis and serving as a member of the thesis committee during the defense. The Third Reader is not expected to offer editorial comments, meet with the student, or read drafts.

### **What is appropriate to ask of each reader? And how often will we meet?**

Each reader will establish their expectations, etc., with the individual student. Do take into consideration that faculty are often serving on many committees, and their primary responsibilities are as major professor. Therefore, it’s best to consider how much feedback you really, ideally need from your second reader, and at what stage that would be most helpful, rather than just de facto showing everything to both the major prof and second reader.

### **What kind of feedback is normal to get, and what is the normal turnaround on feedback?**

Again, this all depends entirely on the Major Professor and their pedagogical approach. The student should schedule a meeting early in the Fall semester of the third year to discuss and establish these expectations. Students should approach different faculty members and ask them how they mentor students during the thesis process. Every student has different needs; likewise, every faculty member has different expectations and approaches. Part of your committee and major professor decision might be whether or not you think your two styles of working on your thesis will be compatible.

**If one is working on a project that is longer than the thesis requirement, is it okay to ask readers to consider the whole project?**

Generally speaking, it depends on the Major Professor and the genre. The Major Professor and Second Reader may or may not read work beyond the page limit of the thesis. The Third reader will read only the final draft of the thesis, which must adhere to the page limit determined by the Creative Writing Program and COGS. In some cases, it may be helpful to focus your time with your committee on just your shorter thesis, and then use that feedback to consider the longer project on your own. Many students find that only after their thesis defense, and after some time outside the program, revision and expansion comes naturally. In these cases, detailed feedback on a longer project during the MFA years is moot.

### **How do I format my thesis?**

Follow COGS guidelines: <https://www.uidaho.edu/cogs/resources/student-resources/thesis-dissertation> Chatting to someone from COGS is really helpful. They're in Morrill Hall 104.

Formatting requirements include a title page, an abstract, and a clickable table of contents. The left and right margins should be 1.25, top and bottom should be 1. Looking at examples from past MFA-ers can be helpful.

### **Clickable TOC**

You have to have a clickable Table of Contents. To do this, you will need headings. These are the steps that former MFA student Cady Favazzo used on a Windows computer:

- Make the titles of your poems (or stories or chapters) headings.
  - You can “Heading 1” in “Styles” in the Home tab
  - You can edit your “Heading 1” style to be the font and size you’d like it to be (default is Arial or something)
    - Click on the arrow for “Styles” in the bottom left corner
    - Click “Heading 1”
    - Click “Options” and you can choose your font etc.
- In the “References” tab in Word, click “Table of Contents”
- Click on an Automatic TOC option and one should automatically generate based on your headings and page numbers
  - Link for help: [https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/04/Creating\\_Clickable\\_Table\\_of\\_Content\\_Word\\_PC\\_and\\_Mac.pdf](https://academicsuccess.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/04/Creating_Clickable_Table_of_Content_Word_PC_and_Mac.pdf)

### **Arrange Your Manuscript**

If you are working on arranging your manuscript (ordering poems or stories or essays) you can use the “Navigation Pane” and the headings you made to reorder without copying and pasting your work to different pages.

- From “View” click the box to check “Navigation Pane”
- On the left side of your screen, you should see the headings and be able to rearrange pages.

### **Page Numbers**

Two types of page numbering are required. Front matter (acknowledgments, abstract, TOC) should be lowercase Roman numerals and the rest of the document should be regular numbers. Numbers should be in the top right corner, and there should be no numbering on title page.

- To change from roman numerals to regular numbers, you have to add a section break and then change the number formatting.
- To add the section break, in Word, go to the “Layout” tab and click “Breaks,” scroll down to “Section Breaks,” and then “Next Page” to insert a break between your last page of front matter and your first page of content.
- To change the number style, start with your front matter. Double click into your header, click on “Page Number” and then “Format Page Number.” Change the number format to lowercase Roman numerals and make sure the button “Start at” (i) is filled in.
- Then, go to the first page after your front matter. Double click in your header. Click on “Page Number” and then “Format Page Number.” Change the format to be regular numbers. Then, make sure that you have selected “Start at” (1) and *not* continue from previous section.
- This will only work if you have added a section break. These instructions work for PC, and you may need to visit COGS for more specific help.



TO College of Graduate Studies

FROM \_\_\_\_\_ [student] RE Thesis Embargo Extension

As I plan to publish excerpts of my thesis in journals that may prohibit the publication of material previously available electronically; as I anticipate part or all of this thesis to be published as a book by a commercial publisher; and as it can take several years for such publication to happen, and I need in the meantime to protect the copyright potential of my work begun and developed at the University of Idaho—

I wish to embargo any digital distribution of my thesis for twenty (20) years.

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Major Professor Signature Date

rev 03/21

COLLEGE OF LETTERS, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES • DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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To enrich education through diversity, the University of Idaho is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



## **General Academic Procedures for all Graduate Students**

Be familiar with the [Student Code of Conduct](#). These are rules to which you are held accountable in our department and in our institution. More specific to the English Department, here are some things to bear in mind when it comes to graduate student comportment: As employees and degree-seeking candidates, you are held to high expectations of **professionalism**. At base, we expect an atmosphere of exceptional **civility** to be maintained at all times, but we hope that you will conduct yourselves collegially and contribute to **a productive and community-driven atmosphere** anytime you are on campus, in your office, or in the classroom.

### **Office Conduct**

Please be respectful of your colleague's space and of their time. These offices are very much public, professional spaces, and more importantly, they are shared with others.

Post your **office hours** with clear contact info on a placard outside your office. You are expected to be available, in your office or another clearly communicated location, for at least 1 hour per week.

### **Faculty/Staff Interaction**

Good colleagues respect the time of faculty, staff and fellow students. Be sure to honor the posted office hours and availability of anyone you are trying to get ahold of. Respond to email in a timely fashion (usually 24 to 48 hours on work days).

Follow appropriate procedures for requesting **letters of recommendation** from faculty. Ideally, you should contact them four to six weeks prior so they have time to potentially observe you teaching or otherwise read through your materials and then write a strong letter.

### **Deadlines**

Deadlines are a part of the rigor of academic study. You will encounter deadlines in your classes and in requests made by staff for the completion of paperwork and procedures. Because these deadlines often directly affect your good standing as a student and employee, we adhere to them strictly. You are advised to keep a reliable calendar and it is considered your responsibility to keep track of all deadlines communicated in advance by the department.

### **Overrides**

Genre-specific MFA workshops will be given priority to students identified with that genre. MA students do not take MFA workshops, except under exceptional circumstances. Students outside of the genre need to have the faculty send a permission email to the department admin assistant (or faculty can do the override themselves). Techniques/Traditions classes may say "Instructor Permission Required" to keep M.A. students from registering before MFA students. Again, the faculty member can lift that hold quickly, or ask the admin assistant to, so you can get registered!

## **Academic Calendar**

Know the university policy on withdrawal/readmission and note the specific deadlines for each semester. Here's the [current academic calendar](#).

## **Performance Evaluation**

Performance evaluations are only submitted to COGS if the recommendation is warning or non-continuing in the program. Annual evaluations are still completed at the department level to assess each student's progress toward degree completion. This is separate from any teaching evaluations.

## **Student Records**

Offer letters, disciplinary actions regarding appointment, evaluations, etc. are held on record in the department. COGS also keeps separate files on individual students. Know that any departmental emails that pertain to your academic or professional performance are considered public record.

## **Travel and Research Funds**

The department chair will email a call for requests for travel and/or research funding each semester (usually Sept. 15 and Feb. 15); funding is competitively awarded. The Graduate Professional Student Association (GPSA) also provides financial assistance for academically-related student travel, (such as conferences, workshops, and research trips.) GPSA travel award funds may only be used for transportation, meals, lodging, and registration fees. Students are eligible to apply for up to two funding cycles before their trip and one after. Please note that every department member is expected to complete a Travel Authorization Form if they are traveling as an employee well in advance of departure. Contact the dept. admin assistant to get this form and with questions.

## **Scholarships**

The English Department is fortunate to have had generous donors over the years, and we do our best to offer scholarships to graduate students. Most students will be awarded some Nixon scholarship funds annually, and the department will put out periodic calls for applications for financial-need-based or other scholarships, if they come available. Please know that these deadlines are not determined by the department, but by financial cycles beyond our control, and when money comes available, we let you all know as soon as we can, and distribute it as fairly as we can. Decisions about scholarships are made by the graduate directors and the scholarship committee, which is chaired by the English Dept. associate chair.

## **Good Standing**

To remain in good standing, graduate students should adhere to all guidelines set forth by the Graduate Student Handbook and complete coursework and graduate forms in a timely manner.

Your Study Plan will need to be approved by your Major Professor. You should not be taking courses without discussing them with your Major Professor or Program Director. MFA candidates may take any other English courses (as may MA students, save for genre specific workshops).

Coursework outside of program/department is acceptable, even encouraged, but work closely with your director or advisor in determining which courses will work best for your research and degree.

All students are expected to choose a thesis advisor and to select a thesis committee by the deadline, including submission of the Major Professor selection form.

These guidelines govern general department procedures; individual professors will set expectations for their classes in course syllabus.

### **Residency**

In-state and out-of-state waivers are offered for all TAs; to acquire in-state residency for personal reasons or if you want to set yourself up to give up your TAs in your final year and pay in-state tuition (which students have occasionally done), see the [Idaho.gov](http://Idaho.gov) website.

### **English Teaching Assistantships and First-Year Writing Program**

1. [Core Duties](#)
2. [Teaching Load and Course Releases for 101P](#)
3. [Professional Development Requirements](#)
4. [Process for Scheduling Teaching Assignments](#)
5. [Teaching FAQs](#)

### **Core Duties**

Graduate students with teaching assistantships receive in-state and out-of-state waivers (these do not cover web fees), teach a 2-2 course load, and receive ongoing pedagogical support from the First-Year Writing Program. TAs are renewable provided students have demonstrated satisfactory progress toward completing their degree and strong teaching performance. (If you hold a COMM or other department TAs, please coordinate with the program director about TA expectations.)

As a TA, you are a member of the First-Year Writing Program faculty and are held to high standards of professional behavior in your interactions with students, graduate student peers, faculty, and staff members. Failure to meet core duties can result in the termination of your TAs. These basic responsibilities include the following:

- teaching your classes on their scheduled days/times (with minimal cancellations)
- developing & updating course materials (i.e., syllabus, assignment sheets, lesson plans, and course schedule that lists topics, homework, and deadlines)
- maintaining your course Canvas page, including tracking attendance and recording grades
- assigning and grading student projects in a timely manner (e.g., returning rough drafts before the final draft is due)
- holding office hours (1 hour/week minimum) in your office or elsewhere in the Department
- communicating with students via email and Canvas announcements

- [submitting grades](#) by their published deadlines: athlete grade reports, early-warning grades (due ~4 weeks into term), midterm grades (due at midterm), final grades (due at end of term)

### Teaching Load and Course Releases for English 101P

Typically, TAs teach a 2-2 load of First-Year Writing courses capped at 20 students per course (either English 101 or English 102 based on departmental needs). **However, TAs are eligible for a course release after teaching THREE sections of English 101P, a 4-credit version of English 101 that includes 1 hour/week of supplemental instruction.** Earning a course release means that you will only teach 1 course in a future semester (rather than 2). If you want to earn this course release, you should start teaching sections of English 101P early in your degree program and specify your interest in 101P when developing your teaching schedule for upcoming terms (see “Process for Scheduling Teaching Assignments,” below). **Please note that you cannot teach sections of English 101P in the first semester of your TAship.**

### Professional Development Requirements

Ongoing professional development (PD) is a requirement of your TAship. This professional development pays off, as English TAs have a strong track record of receiving campus-wide teaching awards and other honors. As a TA, your PD requirements include...

- **Yearly participation in TA Orientation:** Every August during your TAship, you must participate in our TA Orientation (“Comp Camp”). New TAs begin on the Monday before fall classes begin, returning TAs the Wednesday before classes.
- **Taking English 598 in your first semester as a new TA:** English 598, Composition Teaching Practicum, is a one-credit course that provides sustained professional development for first-semester teaching assistants. In English 598, TAs will develop lesson plans together, review current and upcoming English 101 modules, practice giving feedback on student work, and learn best practices for teaching first-year writing. While it would be unusual, it is possible to fail this course. If you fail the Composition Teaching Practicum, your teaching assistantship will be terminated at the end of the semester. Even if you have been a TA at another institution, you are still required to take English 598.
- **Taking English 523 in your second semester as a new TA:** English 523, Composition Theory, is a three-credit graduate seminar. Students will study foundational and contemporary research in composition studies and then use that research to strengthen their teaching in the University of Idaho First-Year Writing Program.
- **Yearly teaching observations:** Once per academic year, your teaching will be observed by the Director or the Associate Director of Composition. These class visits provide an opportunity to receive formative feedback on your pedagogy and are also used to nominate eligible TAs for teaching awards.

## Process for Scheduling Teaching Assignments

TAs are assigned teaching slots based on course schedules and other factors. To ensure that teaching assignments are transparent and equitable, we use the following scheduling process:

- 1) First, you will receive an email from the Associate Director of Composition with an online teaching preference form and scheduling instructions.
  - **For new TAs:** you will receive this email the summer before your first semester.
  - **For returning TAs:** you will receive this email during the registration period for next semester.
- 2) Once the deadline has passed, the Associate Director will use data from the online form, alongside departmental and university needs, to schedule TAs to teach sections of English 101, English 101P, or English 102. (**New TAs will only be scheduled to teach two sections of English 101 their first semester.**) To simplify your workload, you will receive either a M/W/F or Tu/Th teaching schedule.
  - **Note:** Because English 101P is a 4-credit course, you can earn a course release for teaching 101P three times. See “Teaching Load and Course Releases for English 101P,” above.
- 3) Next, the draft schedule will be sent via email to TAs along with instructions and a deadline for requesting a different schedule.
- 4) Lastly, the Associate Director of Composition will email the finalized schedule. Please note that your name won’t show up on the online Class Schedule for a while—don't panic!

## Teaching FAQs

### Q: What should I do before the first day of class?

- Complete your course syllabus. See the template syllabus provided by the First-Year Writing Program for the required components your syllabus should include.
- Publish your course Canvas site. See [this webpage from CETL](#) about what your Canvas site should include. If you are using the template provided by the First-Year Writing Program, you will only need to upload your syllabus, edit project deadlines, and make other light adjustments. If you have issues with Canvas, please refer to CETL’s [Canvas Support page](#).
- Create an office hours sign for your office door.
- Complete any necessary FERPA training in [MyUI](#).
- **For English 102 instructors only:** make sure that you’ve replied to the Library's email about scheduling library week.

### Q: What should I do on my first day of class?

- As close to the start time of your first class as possible, print a copy of your course roster from [MyUI](#). This roster will be more current than your roster on Canvas.

- Take attendance via Canvas → Attendance.
  - If you do not see the Attendance tool, you may need to activate it under Settings → Navigation. Make sure to click the yellow “Save” button at the bottom of the screen.
- Go over the syllabus and your Canvas course page. In particular, review the major projects, your grading system, how you’ll use Canvas, and how students will access the textbook.
- **Recommended:** do an activity to introduce students to each other, which helps build a sense of community. You might, for example, pair up students to introduce themselves and share some facts (e.g., name, hometown, major, hobby or interest, etc.) about themselves. Then ask students to introduce the peer they just met to the class.
- Do not allow students on the waitlist or not currently enrolled to stay in your class. Please send them to talk to Tyler Easterbrook in Brink 214 or to Bryan Soderquist in Brink 200.
- Do not sign any add/drop slips. Send students to Bryan to process add/drop slips.

**Q: What should I do during my first week of teaching?**

- Keep close track of attendance. If there are students on your roster who do not attend any classes in the first week, consider completing a [“Drop for Non-Attendance Form.”](#) This form must be submitted to the Registrar **no later than the sixth business day of the semester.**
- Consider emailing the [Writing Center](#) to schedule a presentation in your class. **Do not** take your students to the Writing Center without first reaching out to the Writing Center Director; they have a small staff and cannot accommodate unplanned visits.
- If you are holding on to student work from a previous semester, email those students and ask them to come and pick up their work.

**Q: What should I do if I need to cancel class?**

As a TA, you are expected to hold your classes at their scheduled times; class cancellations should be kept to a minimum. However, things do come up sometimes, so when you need to cancel class due to illness or another reason, do one of the following (as applicable):

- **Create a virtual asynchronous activity in Canvas:** Our LMS, Canvas, provides a variety of tools for virtual asynchronous classwork. Send students a Canvas announcement with instructions for the session and use Discussions or another Canvas feature for virtual asynchronous tasks. You could ask students to complete a drafting activity (e.g., brainstorming), asynchronous peer review, a reading response, etc.
- **Find a substitute teacher:** With enough notice (e.g., for conference travel), you should consider finding a substitute teacher for your class. Provide the sub with a lesson plan, context for what students did last class, and instructions for any work you’d like the sub to collect from students.

**Q: I have a student-athlete in my class. What are my responsibilities?**

You will need to submit progress reports for your student-athletes. You will get an email with instructions for how to do these and reminders of when they are due. If you have a concern about a student-athlete, you can contact [Student-Athlete Support Services](#).

**Q: One of my students has plagiarized their assignment. What should I do?**

The First-Year Writing Program has an official policy on plagiarism included on the template syllabus and on your Canvas page. Our policy aligns with UP's academic integrity policy in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

- If you suspect a student has plagiarized (including using AI text generation tools without instructor permission and clear documentation), you should first meet with that student to discuss your concerns and explain the academic integrity issues involved. Plagiarism can be a teachable moment, an opportunity for students to revise and resubmit their work. For first-time plagiarism issues, the First-Year Writing Program discourages taking a highly punitive approach.
  - **Note:** norms around plagiarism and academic integrity are *culturally specific*, not universal. International students from countries with different academic integrity norms may not realize that they have plagiarized; approach your conversations with that in mind.
- For repeated plagiarism issues, you should report the academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students via a [VandalCare report](#). Also, send a brief email to the Director of First-Year Composition to explain the situation.

**Q: I am concerned about a student in my class. What should I do?**

Adjusting to college can be a difficult experience for students, and because our first-year writing courses are small and close-knit, you may notice issues before other instructors do. If you have concerns, you are always welcome to contact Tyler Easterbrook ([tylere@uidaho.edu](mailto:tylere@uidaho.edu)) for advice. Based on the circumstances, you also might do one of the following:

- **Submit a VandalCare report:** For many concerns, your best option is to submit a [VandalCare report](#). Submitting this report will notify the Dean of Students and other relevant offices on campus about the issue you are seeing.
  - **Important:** As a TA, you are a “mandatory reporter” for Title IX violations ([see here for more about Title IX](#)). **If a student discloses a Title IX violation, you are legally required to report it to the university.** Click “Sexual Misconduct Report” on the [VandalCare report page](#) to initiate the reporting process.
- **Get students in touch with a relevant office on campus:** U of I has many offices on campus dedicated to student support. As applicable, you may want to direct students to...
  - [Dean of Students Office](#) (for general student support)
  - [Academic Support Programs](#) (for academic support)
  - [Center for Disability Access and Resources \(CDAR\)](#) (for accessibility concerns)
  - [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#) (for mental health concerns)



- [Office of Multicultural Affairs](#) (for supporting students of color)
- [International Programs Office](#) (for supporting international students)
- [LGBTQA Office](#) (for supporting LGBTQA students)

**Q: I received a Notification of Accommodations email from CDAR. What should I do?**

As an instructor, you are legally required to provide accommodations for students as specified in the Notification of Accommodations email. CDAR has an [“Accommodations Resources” page for faculty](#) that explains what accommodations are and answers many common questions you might have. (For example, see [this “Flexible Attendance Guidelines” page](#) for how to navigate accommodations for flexibility in attendance.) If you have additional questions about accommodations, you can contact CDAR at [cdar@uidaho.edu](mailto:cdar@uidaho.edu).

**Q: I have a student whose work is exceptional. How can I recognize their achievements?**

Consider nominating them for a Banks Award! The Banks Award was established in 1976 to recognize “outstanding student writing” in a range of categories, including rhetoric and composition, literary essays, and creative writing in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

Instructors are invited to nominate their best student work (one student per course) each semester. Winners receive a cash award as well as publication of their work on the English department website. Information about how to nominate a student for a Banks Award is sent out each semester.

## **Ways to Get Involved**

Being active in our community is an important way you can make a difference with your time at the University of Idaho and garner experiences that will make the difference on your CV. Taking on leadership roles is a significant way to contribute to the vitality of our programs and puts you in an excellent position to stand out as an engaged member of the department.

### **English Graduate Association (EGA)**

- Provides a centralized “voice” for graduate students to share concerns and advocate for grad student interests in the department.
- It provides a locus for grad student community among all three graduate programs, among TAs and non-TAs, etc. by organizing events, workshops, and other things of interest to grad students.
- It also provides a voice to advocate to the larger university committee (via GPSA).
- It serves as a professionalization opportunity (it looks good on a CV).
- Structure –
  - President, in charge of scheduling meetings, setting the agenda, helping with event planning and fundraising),
  - VP (in charge of coordinating communications, helping to plan events and fundraise),
  - Recording secretary (who takes meeting minutes and communicates with the wider English grad community via email and Facebook),
  - Treasurer.



- Members-at-large (should represent each graduate program in the department)

### **University of Idaho Graduate English Conference (UIGEC)**

Contact Erin James—Second-year MA English students organize this conference

- Provides professional development opportunities for fellow students
- Serves as a professionalization opportunity (it looks good on a CV to have been active in such an organization)

### **Peer Mentoring (in your second and third year)**

Erin coordinates MA students; Alexandra and Mike coordinate MFA students.

- Help welcome incoming students
- Be a resource for first-year students as they grow accustomed to the program

### **Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference (AWP)**

Contact Alexandra Teague or Michael McGriff for more information—*Fugue* organizes a yearly contingent for this conference.

- Provides professional development opportunities for creative writers
- Serves as a professionalization opportunity (it looks good on a CV to have been active in the wider literary community)

### **Rhetoric and Composition Conferences**

Periodically, major rhetoric and composition conferences are held in the Pacific Northwest (e.g., the [Conference on College Composition and Communication](#) was held in Spokane, WA, in April 2024). These events are great professional development opportunities. Contact Tyler Easterbrook ([tylere@uidaho.edu](mailto:tylere@uidaho.edu)) if you would be interested in attending one of these conferences.

### **University Resources and Emergency Contacts**

[Career Services](#)

[Explore Possible Careers](#)

[Free Career Assessments](#)

[Search Jobs & Internships](#)

[Resumes & Cover Letters](#)

[Interview Tips](#)

[College of Graduate Studies](#)

[ISUB Copy and Print Center](#)

[Library](#)

[Dean of Students Office](#)

[Counseling and Testing Services](#)

[Center for Disability Access and Resources](#)

College Assistance Migrant Program

LGBTQA Office

Native American Student Center

Office of Multicultural Affairs

Women's Center

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program

Civil Rights and Investigations

Title IX (contact Erin Agidius)

Academic Support Programs

(Tutoring, TRIO, and Student Athlete Support Services)

Food Pantries and Other Resources

**Emergency contacts** (For immediate on-campus emergencies of any kind, dial 911)

Moscow Police (Non-Emergency)

208-882-2677

Campus Security (24/7)

208-885-7054

Gritman Hospital

208-882-4511

24-Hour Crisis Hotline

208-885-6716

Domestic Violence 24 Hour Hotline

208-883-4357

Facilities (Office Hours)

208-885-6246

Facilities (After Hours)

208-885-6271

Campus Security may be contacted for escorts or other situations. They serve the campus community through regular patrol, campus info, Safe Walk, vehicle jumpstarts, loaner gas can aid, and assistance with after-hour building and office lockouts.

The Counseling and Testing Center is available to all students, including graduate students. If you are worried about one of your students or you need to talk to someone yourself, do not hesitate to reach out to CTC. ([ctc@uidaho.edu](mailto:ctc@uidaho.edu))