

## **Frequently Asked Questions – English MA Program**

Compiled Fall 2014

### **What is a candidacy form, and when is it due?**

- Candidacy forms list all the courses that a student has taken or plans to take in completion of degree requirements. The items listed on the sheet include transfer credits and the proposed deadline for completing the comps exam.
- Find the link to the candidacy form here:  
<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/sites/graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/Documents/candidacy/ma.ah.eng2013.pdf>
- Candidacy forms should be filled out and submitted after 12 credit hours have been completed. Students must meet with the MA coordinator to complete the form.

### **What if the student takes courses not listed on the candidacy form?**

- Fill out the Request for Change in Approved Candidacy form:  
<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/sites/graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/changeapproveddegree.pdf>
- The student must meet with the MA coordinator again to complete this form.

### **How do transfer credits show up on a graduate transcript?**

- The Graduate School inputs transfer credits when the candidacy form is submitted.
- Students should submit the candidacy form as soon as possible so that their Degree Works transcript reflects an accurate number of credit hours earned.
- A maximum of 12 graduate-level credit hours of transfer work from an approved regionally or nationally accredited institution may be applied to a degree program or certificate of advanced study upon departmental/adviser approval. To be accepted, transfer credits must have been completed within the 6-year period preceding the date of graduation, and the student must have received a grade of B or higher.

### **Must all students take the MA comps exam?**

- All English MA students must pass the comps exam in order to receive the degree.
- The comps exam is given on the first or second Saturday (depending on holidays) of June, September, and February, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. in Ketchum 302 (the computer lab).
- Students must choose 18 texts in three different areas (four primary and two secondary from British Lit, American Lit, and World Lit or Critical Theory) as their reading list for the exam. The comprehensive list is available from the MA coordinator or on the English MA webpage.
- The comps exam is non-credit-bearing and can be retaken twice if the student fails.

### **Must all students write a thesis?**

- No. The thesis is a self-designed writing project that a student pursues with the guidance of two faculty members. See the Thesis Guidelines handout (available from the MA coordinator or on the English MA webpage) for more details.
- The thesis class, ENG 695, is worth 6 credits. The credits are assigned only after the student completes and submits the thesis.

- If a student opts not to write a thesis, he/she will need to take two more electives in order to earn those 6 credits.

### **How does a student register for the thesis class, ENG 695?**

- Contact the MA coordinator to receive permission to register.
- This course meets twice a semester—in the first week, and about halfway through the semester—to discuss departmental policies and strategies for writing the thesis.
- If a student does not finish the thesis in this semester (which is normal), he/she will receive an IP (in progress) grade. This grade will be changed once the finished thesis has been submitted.

### **What if a student takes more than one semester to complete the thesis?**

- The student will then need to register for the Thesis Continuation, ENG 721, with his/her thesis director. Find the form here:  
<http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/sites/graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/Documents/indstudy2012.pdf>.
- The student can register for 721 for four semesters free of charge.
- After those four semesters, the student must register for ENG 722, the Thesis Extension, which will be billed at one credit hour per semester, using the same form.
- The student's thesis director is responsible for submitting a grade on Banner every semester he/she is registered for 721 or 722.

### **What if a student decides not to finish the thesis?**

- The student will need to petition to retroactively withdraw from ENG 695 by completing and filing a petition with Academic Standards.
- Find the link to the petition here: <http://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu/how-file>.
- Without completing a petition, the student cannot graduate, since ENG 695 will continue to show up as an unfulfilled requirement on the transcript.

### **What should a student do to prepare for graduation?**

- Meet with the MA coordinator early in the semester in which he/she plans to graduate.
- File a Graduation Application, found at <http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/graduation-forms>.
- Graduation Applications are due October 1 for fall graduation, February 1 for spring graduation, and June 1 for summer graduation.