The Department of English offers graduate-level education in all areas of English studies. Our graduates pursue information-intensive careers in business and education, including those demanding intensive writing and editing, as well as secondary or community college teaching in composition or literature. Many also complete further graduate study in the humanities.

**Distinctive Features**

We offer individualized programs that encourage students to choose courses and projects tailored to their interests and career goals. While some students focus on literary studies, others work with literature and emerging new media, film, popular culture, professional editing, composition, and writing studies. All students take one required introductory course and consult with faculty to choose elective courses, consider independent work such as internships, and select an exit option.

Many students earn credits with internships in teaching, professional writing, library science, and other fields, gaining hands-on experience and making valuable professional connections. In addition to the MA, we offer three post-baccalaureate certificates: Literary Studies, Professional Writing, and Teaching Writing. These certificates offer students a chance to earn credentials as they complete their degrees.

Our graduate students run the English Graduate Organization (EGO). Together, they plan the annual EGO Conference, presenting papers on exciting and emerging fields of study with scholars from around the country and the world. Additionally, EGO students attend regional and national conferences, and plan local picnics, softball games, and more.

**Career Opportunities**

We emphasize professional development, with workshops offered every semester. The MA program has successfully supported many students seeking professional development funding from the School of Graduate Studies.

Graduates of the MA program are highly skilled speakers, writers, and readers. Recent graduates have made careers in editing, technical writing, management, and public relations. Many of our graduates also teach in community colleges or teach English overseas. Students have also gone on to further graduate study in prestigious schools around the country, including programs leading to the Master of Library Science and the PhD in English Studies.

**Scholarships, Awards, and Assistantships**

The program offers several fellowships that allow students to conduct independent research, scholarships that provide summer support, and awards that recognize student writing.

Assistantships provide strong educational and professional advantages, offering hands-on experience and close mentoring from faculty. Teaching Assistants teach composition classes and work as consultants in the University Writing Center in Macomb, gaining valuable experience in teaching writing and interpersonal communication. *All assistantships include a stipend and tuition waiver.*

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.

**Faculty Expertise**

The English Graduate Faculty offer cutting-edge courses in every area of English Studies and publish innovative scholarship in traditional and emerging fields, including textual studies, writing studies, new media, film, literary studies, and popular culture. Visit our website for more information about faculty teaching and research interests.

**Admission Requirements**

All candidates must meet the general admission requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and must have a grade point average of 3.0 in English courses taken beyond the required composition courses.

To apply, students are required to submit the following:

- The Graduate School application form available at wiu.edu/grad
- One official transcript for each college or university previously attended sent directly to the School of Graduate Studies
One- to two-page personal statement articulating your larger purposes and career goals, and how an MA in English will further those goals

Three confidential letters of recommendation (may also be used for the assistantship application, if applicable)

Ten- to 15-page scholarly writing sample such as an essay from an upper-division English course (please direct questions about this requirement to the program director)

International students: Evidence of an overall TOEFL score of at least 100 (IBT), overall IELTS score of at least 7.5, or satisfactory completion of the WESL program

Students should review the guidelines for the preparation of application materials on our webpage before submitting applications.

Degree Requirements

Students working toward the MA in English work with their faculty supervisory committee to develop individualized plans of study. All students must satisfy three requirements totaling 30 semester hours (sh):

1. One core course, ENG 500, Theory and the Practice of English Studies (3 sh)
2. Seven elective courses (21 sh)
3. Two-course equivalent exit option (6 sh), culminating in a thesis, examination, or applied project

For recent course offerings, specifics about exit options, recently completed theses, and the English Graduate Student Handbook, visit wiu.edu/English.

Post-Baccalaureate Certificates

The Department of English offers certificates in Literary Studies, Professional Writing, and Teaching Writing. For more information, visit wiu.edu/English. For Gainful Employment Disclosure, visit wiu.edu/grad/gainfulemployment.

Featured Alumna

The English graduate program at Western Illinois University was a perfect fit for my personal and professional goals. The coursework and faculty challenged me academically and supported my creative pursuit as I blended my art background with English studies. I gained an equal balance of thoughtful classroom discussion from a wide variety of courses WIU had to offer as well as valuable teaching experience through my assistantship.

– Kristyne Bradford, MA, 2014

Contact Information

For admissions process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact Marjorie Allison, Professor, Director of Graduate Studies in English, Department of English, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1322, MC-Allison@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/English.

“The English graduate program offers many opportunities to its students that one might not find at a larger institution. Because of the program’s relatively small constituency, students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with faculty members, develop and focus their areas of scholarly interest alongside established scholars, and have many opportunities for professional development.”

— John Degregorio, MA, 2013
 PhD Student, University of Iowa