

Goals of the Master's in Writing

The Master's in Writing includes four sequences, so the list of goals below is subdivided into common objectives and objectives pertaining to four sequences within the degree.

1. Common Objectives

Students in the program will:

- a. Achieve a thorough grasp of recent research in: 1) Composition, 2) Rhetorical Theory, 3) Linguistics, 4) The Relationship between Reading and Writing
- b. Achieve an advanced proficiency in producing written discourse.

2. Objectives of Various Sequences

Students in the Secondary Teaching sequence will:

- a. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition;
- b. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
- c. Understand some basic principles of learning theory, especially as they apply to reading and writing;
- d. Through the supervised experience in tutoring students in the University Writing Center or as a supervised teaching intern, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach writing, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate students in their study of writing.

Students in the Community College Teaching sequences will:

- a. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition;
- b. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition to students who lack entry-level college writing skills;
- c. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
- d. Understand some basic principles of learning theory, especially as they apply to reading and writing;
- e. Understand the social structure of the community college;
- f. Through teaching, as an intern and under supervision, usually in a community college, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach writing, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate students in their study of writing.

Students in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) sequence will:

- a. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition to non-native speakers;

- b. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
- c. Understand how language functions (i.e., will understand levels of usage, dialectology, and the cultural implications of each);
- d. Know the history of the English language and at least two of its grammars;
- e. Be able to apply the knowledge of language to the teaching of English as a Second Language;
- f. Through assisting a professional teacher of English as a Second Language or teaching under that professional's supervision, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach English to non-native speakers, to select and adapt materials for the varying interests, maturity levels, and relative language skills of non-native speakers, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate non-native speakers in their study of English.

Students in the Professional Writing sequence, Technical Writing Emphasis, will:

- a. Master the knowledge of style appropriate to the aims of a particular discourse;
- b. Achieve proficiency in producing written discourse that is professional in quality;
- c. Through a professionally supervised work experience, become aware of the relationships between the theory and practice of writing developed in the classroom and the communications and decision-making skills required by the business and professional world.

Students in the Professional Writing sequence, Creative Writing Emphasis, will:

- a. Master the knowledge of style appropriate to the aims of a particular discourse;
- b. Achieve proficiency in producing written discourse that is professional in quality;
- c. In a supervised writing practicum, apply the skills and knowledge developed in the classroom toward the completion of a major writing project or an individual writing portfolio.

Department of English Assessment System for the Master's in Writing

The Master's in Writing includes four sequences, so the list of goals below is subdivided into common objectives and objectives pertaining to four sequences within the degree.

A. Common Objectives

Students in the program will:

1. Achieve a thorough grasp of recent research in: a. Composition b. Rhetorical Theory c. Linguistics d. The Relationship between Reading and Writing
2. Achieve an advanced proficiency in producing written discourse.
3. Find appropriate employment or placement in Ph.D. programs upon graduation.

B. Objectives of Various Sequences

Students in the Secondary Teaching sequence will:

1. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition;

2. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
3. Understand some basic principles of learning theory, especially as they apply to reading and writing.
4. Through the supervised experience in tutoring students in the University Writing Center or as a supervised teaching intern, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach writing, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate students in their study of writing.

Students in the Community College Teaching sequence will:

1. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition;
2. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition to students who lack entry-level college writing skills;
3. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
4. Understand some basic principles of learning theory, especially as they apply to reading and writing.
5. Understand the social structure of the community college;
6. Through teaching, as an intern and under supervision, usually in a community college, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach writing, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate students in their study of writing.

Students in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) sequence will:

1. Master the pragmatic and theoretical bases for teaching composition to non-native speakers;
2. Be able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses of student writing and to communicate the analysis effectively;
3. Understand how language functions (i.e., will understand levels of usage, dialectology, and the cultural implications of each);
4. Know the history of the English language and at least two of its grammars;
5. Be able to apply the knowledge of language to the teaching of English as a Second Language;
6. Through assisting a professional teacher of English as a Second Language or teaching under that professional's supervision, acquire a basic knowledge of ways to teach English to non-native speakers, to select and adapt materials for the varying interests, maturity levels, and relative language skills of non-native speakers, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate non-native speakers in their study of English.

Students in the Professional Writing sequence, Technical Writing Emphasis, will:

1. Master the knowledge of style appropriate to the aims of a particular discourse;
2. Achieve proficiency in producing written discourse that is professional in quality;
3. Through a professionally supervised work experience, become aware of the relationships between the theory and practice of writing developed in the classroom and the communications and decision-making skills required by the business and professional world.

Students in the Professional Writing sequence, Creative Writing Emphasis, will:

1. Master the Knowledge of style appropriate to the aims of a particular discourse;
2. Achieve proficiency in producing written discourse that is professional in quality;
3. In a supervised writing practicum, apply the skills and knowledge developed in the classroom toward the completion of a major writing project or an individual writing portfolio.

Means of Assessment for the Master's in English and the Master's in Writing:

Comprehensive Exam, Part I: Textual Analysis

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e and 1f.

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 2a, 2b and 2d.

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 3a and 3c.

Comprehensive Exam, Part II: Synthesis of Special Field

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e and 1f.

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 2a, 2b and 2d.

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d.

Assesses students' achievement in some or all areas 4a and 4b.

Outcomes:

Between March 1996 and March 2002 223 students took MA Comprehensive Parts I and II. 162 students passed both exams on the first try. Twenty-seven students passed both exams on the second try, and one student passed on the third try, for a total of 190 students passing both exams. Thirty-three students did not attempt a re-take of the exam, and subsequently dropped out of the program without taking a degree.

Master's Thesis

Demonstrates students' achievement in some or all areas 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e and 1f.

Demonstrates students' achievement in some or all areas 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d.

Demonstrates students' achievement in some or all areas 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d.

Demonstrates students' achievement in one or both areas 4a and 4b.

Outcomes:

Not all students in all of our degree programs are required to write a thesis. Approximately ten students per year choose the thesis option. English MA students won the University Outstanding Thesis Award in 1999 and 2001.