University of Iowa
English PhD Graduate
Student Handbook

Updated fall 2012
COMMENCING STUDY

The Iowa doctoral program emphasizes individual initiative, careful choice, and creativity. With the exception of the Introduction to Graduate Study course for M.A. and Ph.D students, no specific course or sequence of courses is required. Instead, all students are encouraged to design a program that combines enough breadth to ensure responsible judgment with enough focus to make scholarly contributions to your field, even before the completion of the degree. In planning your course of study, it is important to remember that in the past decade economic constraints have led many colleges and universities to seek broadly trained, critically informed job candidates, candidates prepared to teach and publish in amply defined fields of study. The Iowa Ph.D program's distribution, seminar, and foreign language requirements are intended to equip you for the current academic job market.

In an initial conference with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), you will fill out a "Course Record" form that identifies the historical and critical areas in which you have completed academic work, as well as your preparation for foreign languages and any previous graduate courses that will transfer. (The maximum number of transfer credits accepted from other institutions is 18 semester hours). If you haven't already done so in undergraduate or graduate study completed elsewhere, you will be encouraged to sample advanced course work in most historical areas, in criticism, and in theory before committing to a specific field of concentration. The goals of this initial conference are three: to identify areas in which substantial course work has been completed and areas which still need exploration, to review your preparation in foreign languages, and to make tentative long-term plans in view of your specific professional goals. This initial conference should also prepare the Director of Graduate Studies to be of help to you through your first semesters at Iowa.

Much of the success of the PhD program at Iowa derives from interactions with faculty members in the student's field of concentration. When you are ready to identify one or another area as your field of concentration, it will be time to ask a faculty member in that area to serve as your interim adviser. This adviser will help you plan the rest of your course work, prepare for Admission to Candidacy, and begin preparation for your Comprehensive Examination. Although the timing varies, most students are ready to ask a faculty member to serve as their interim adviser sometime between the end of the second semester and the middle of the fourth semester of doctoral study. Availability of individual faculty members depends on research interests, teaching schedules, and current advising load, but you are most likely to find a successful match with a professor from whom you have taken at least one course. After a faculty member has agreed to serve as your adviser, you should register this commitment with the Graduate Program Assistant. Because academic interests and career goals shift for students and faculty alike, this commitment is an "interim" one: the faculty member who helps you make the professional choices that shape the middle years of doctoral study may or may not continue to guide you through your dissertation. The "Course Record" form in your file will help you make course choices in relation to your professional objectives and will help the Director of Graduate Studies understand your progress toward the degree. As you approach the Comprehensive Examination, introductory graduate survey courses will yield to more advanced work in your field of concentration, and, in at least three cases, to seminars.

Each student needs to create a coherent individual plan of study. There is no department blueprint, though it is imperative that you design a course of study which can feasibly be completed within your funded years. While students who have had broad undergraduate and/or M.A. training in the literatures of various periods and in criticism and theory will be ready to begin to develop their field of concentration early, students who have had little training in literature and literary theory should sample a broad selection of courses before they commit to a particular field of concentration. In the first year of course...
work, students are advised to select courses both to fill gaps in their training and to develop their major interests.

200-level (readings courses): Courses at this level provide coverage of a period, movement, theme, foundational figure, or other component of a broad-based understanding of the discipline. Some offerings satisfy historical distribution requirements; others introduce students to a related body of primary texts, criticism, and/or theory serving as groundwork for more specialized study at the 400-level. Writing assignments are varied, limited in scope (adding up to about 3000-5000 words), and may include types of professional performance such as annotated bibliographies, short conference papers, book reviews, project proposals, etc.

400-level (seminars): Courses at this level are designated as "seminars" and offer the most specialized work available in the curriculum. Whether they address periods, topics, authors, genres, issues, or theories, seminars always engage the most important and recent developments in a field of study. It is useful for students to have taken lower-level work in the same or a related area. Enrollment is limited and students participate actively through oral presentations and other ways of sharing new expertise. To prepare students to make original contributions of their own, seminars provide training and experience in the skills needed for scholarly research and writing. Course work culminates in a 25-30-page paper (7500-9000 words) aimed at publication and potentially leading toward the dissertation.

Independent studies: PhD students should not enroll in independent studies prior to beginning preparation for the comprehensive exam except during the summer term; any exceptions during the regular academic year must be preapproved by the DGS on a case-by-case basis.

100-level (undergraduate): In most cases, PhD students should not enroll in 100-level English courses, which rarely offer the same level of training or group interaction as is found in graduate courses. On rare occasions, PhD students may receive permission to take 100-level English courses in order to work with a faculty member with whom they would otherwise be unable to study, or to work in an area that is not covered in the graduate curriculum. Since English faculty currently offer graduate courses on a fairly frequent rotation, it is unlikely that an English PhD student would find it necessary to enroll in a 100-level course in English. Students may take 100-level courses in other departments in order to fill in gaps in their preparation and to develop relationships with faculty members outside the department who have expertise in their field of study. For all 100-level courses, PhD students should negotiate a separate set of course requirements that is appropriate to graduate-level study. Students who wish to take a 100-level course in English or another department must complete a form in order to receive approval for the course, with the exception of those courses taken in fulfillment of the language requirement. The form should be signed by the course instructor, the faculty adviser, and the DGS by the end of the first week of the semester in which the student takes a 100-level course. Copies of this form are available in the Graduate Program Assistant’s office.

PhD students must complete 54 semester hours in graded courses at the 100-level or above. Of those, at least 30 semester hours in English courses at the 200-level or above prior to coming up for comps. (That leaves the possibility of 24 additional semester hours in graded courses at the 100-level or above which may be taken in other departments or in English.)

The field of English is characterized by a lively debate that has, in recent years, challenged many of the traditional assumptions of literary studies. What is "literary" about a "literary period"? What is the
relationship between definitions of "literariness" and issues of class, gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity? How can literary critics address writings not traditionally considered "literary"—for example, diaries, sermons, historical and legal documents, slogans, or songs? What principles govern the act of literary interpretation? What constitutes "meaning" in literature? Questions as fundamental as these indicate that graduate studies is not simply a time to master a required body of knowledge but also a time to explore issues under intense professional scrutiny.

A coherent individual course of study can take many forms. The following possibilities are meant to suggest rather than to limit inquiry:

**Study of a historical period:** The concentration of longest standing at Iowa is the study of the intellectual backgrounds, formal strategies, traditions, and interconnections of writings from a specific period of English and/or American literature.

**Special area study:** It is also possible to concentrate in areas that cross or elude historical periods, such as the study of a genre, a body of literary theory, or the literature(s) of a particular region or ethnicity.

**Cultural study & analysis:** At Iowa, much of what we teach could be called cultural studies. Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field that combines literary study with sociological analysis. It is based on the assumption that forms of cultural production like arts, ideologies, and institutions must be examined in relation to one another and in relation to social and historical structures. If you are interested, say, in popular culture media or in the relations between literature and material production, you may want to choose for your course of study cultural studies.

**Nonfiction studies:** Iowa's special commitment to nonfiction writing (which includes an MFA degree in the writing of nonfiction) also provides opportunities for doctoral study of literary nonfiction. Work in nonfiction for a special area may focus on a wide range of topics and subtopics, such as stylistics, or theories of the essay, or the twentieth-century American essay, or the nature of self-representation in autobiography and memoir, or the politics of confession in contemporary nonfiction.

**Composition studies:** At Iowa, the study of composition is grounded in a view of writing as a social and cultural phenomenon and assumes the interrelatedness of reading and writing, of literature and other forms of discourse. Specialized work in this area may involve rhetorical theory, theories of literacy, genres of the essay, observational studies of life in classrooms, the reading and writing of ethnographic texts, or approaches to the teaching of writing.

**Foreign language study:** Work beyond the departmental requirements in the literatures of languages other than English can supplement other concentrations by providing familiarity with literary texts, critical theories, and linguistic principles from ancient classics to contemporary writings. While the department encourages such study, it also cautions that students ensure that the acquisition of additional languages not impede their progress through the program.

These rough categories are meant to encourage you to extend your field(s) of concentration beyond the traditional and still very important historical periods. Course work toward the PhD taken outside the English Department is an important part of graduate work at Iowa. Your adviser will be able to recommend relevant courses in other departments. Consult with the Director of Graduate Studies if you have doubts about whether courses outside English and its related programs can be accepted toward the doctorate. In all cases where the educational relevance to an individual program is clear, they will receive serious consideration.
The PhD in English Literary Studies is designed to have students complete the degree in approximately six years, for those entering with a B.A., and five years for those entering with an M.A. in English. A full-time course load is 9 semester hours (usually three courses), although a registration of 6 semester hours is permitted if you currently hold at least a one-third time appointment as a teaching or research assistant.

To remain eligible for financial aid, students who have not yet taken the Comprehensive Examination must complete a minimum of 15 semester hours per academic year (the tally may include a summer of your choosing on either side). If you are receiving loans through the University's Office of Student Financial Aid or if you are a foreign student with "full-time" status requirements for your visa, you should be aware of relevant external standards for "normal progress" toward the degree. Departmental financial aid for students in good standing normally lasts for six years for those incoming with a B.A. and five years for those incoming with an M.A.

In order to be in good academic standing, the Graduate College requires that all doctoral students maintain a GPA above a 3.0. In addition, the English Department has its own requirements for the maintenance of satisfactory progress. In order to maintain satisfactory progress through the program, doctoral students must:

1) Apply for qualification by their fourth semester in the program (see the section below on "Qualification").

2) Take their comprehensive exam within five semesters of reaching 24 sh of total graduate credit (see the section below on "Comprehensive Exams").

3) Submit a dissertation prospectus to their committee in the semester after taking their comprehensive exam (see the section below on the "Dissertation").

4) Complete and defend their dissertation within their expected time to degree (6 years for those entering with a BA; 5 years for those entering with an MA or with fellowship support as indicated in the initial offer letter).

Any student who is not making satisfactory progress will be reviewed by the Graduate Steering Committee at the end of the academic year. The Steering Committee will produce a plan, to be signed by the student, the student's advisor, and the DGS, outlining the requirements the student must fulfill to return to good standing in the following academic year. If students fail to fulfill these requirements they will be reviewed one more time. If, after the second review, they still have not met the requirements of the Graduate Steering Committee, they will be obligated to leave the program.

When applying annually for financial aid, students will be required to note their progress; unsatisfactory progress may result in lower standing for financial support or denial of aid.
DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT

In order to ensure knowledge of a broad historical range of literatures in English, all doctoral students are required to take at least one graduate English course in any four of the following historical periods:

- Literature and culture before 1500
- Literature and culture 1500-1660
- Literature and culture 1660-1800
- Literature and culture 1800-1900
- Literature and culture from 1900 to present

Courses may be in British, American, or other Anglophone literatures, depending on the student’s individual needs and interests. However, each student must enroll in at least one course in American literature and one course in British literature after 1660. Students must receive a grade of B+ or higher in courses that satisfy a distribution requirement. Graduate courses taken at other universities may count towards fulfillment of the requirement. When it is unclear which historical period a course falls into, or if transfer courses will count towards the requirement, students should consult the Director of Graduate Studies for advice. Students must complete the distribution requirement before being eligible to take the Comprehensive Exam.
SEMINAR REQUIREMENT

All doctoral students must take, here at Iowa, at least three seminars in their prospective field(s) of concentration, and preferably more.

Numbered at or above the 400-level, seminars are the most highly focused and specialized courses the department offers, and offer practice in the skills necessary for researching and writing the dissertation. Normally these courses assume prior related work (or its equivalent) in at least two courses at a lower level and culminate in a major research project aimed at publication. It is a good idea to begin taking seminars as soon as you begin to focus your field of concentration.

Seminars in other departments or in the Writers Workshop do not count toward the English Department seminar requirement.

Students must receive a grade of B+ or higher in courses that satisfy a seminar requirement. The seminar requirement must be completed before students are eligible to take the comprehensive examination.

Possibility for Substituting One Seminar

Department regulations include a requirement for all English PhD students to take three seminars in the English Department. The advanced-level work represented by seminars is viewed by the department as crucial for developing the expertise to write a dissertation, while taking a number of seminars within the department provides the opportunity to become acquainted with a range of faculty necessary for exam committees along with a range of approaches. However, in view of the department’s sometimes streamlined graduate course offerings, some students find that it is hard to take three seminars useful to their field within the time that they are taking courses. Such students can approach the Director of Graduate Studies requesting that they be allowed to take a 200-level course for seminar credit (i.e. as a 400-level course). The point of the present clarification is to standardize a policy for dealing with such requests.

The Graduate Steering Committee proposes that such substitutions, which need to be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, should be granted only in the following circumstances:

- the instructor of the course agrees to the request;
- the topic is peculiarly appropriate to a student’s planned studies and no seminar in or close to that field is currently on offer;
- the student writes a seminar paper for the course, along with any other special arrangement agreed with the instructor.

Only one such substitution may be counted towards the English Department’s requirement for three seminars.

To make such a substitution, the student should discuss the case with the course instructor and the DGS. The student should write a very brief statement about the arrangement, outlining how he or she will undertake seminar-equivalent work in the course, and the statement should be signed by the instructor and by the DGS and lodged in the student’s file during the semester in which the course is taken. Such a statement will then be treated as evidence of the seminar-status of that course by the Qualifications Committee in assessing the student’s progress through the program, by the Qualifications Committee in
considering a student for candidacy, and by the DGS in assessing a student’s readiness for the comprehensive exam.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Work toward the foreign language requirement should begin in the first year at Iowa. Students may choose either of the two options below. Since the aim of this requirement is to assure mastery in one foreign language, courses in translation are not applicable. The foreign language requirement must be completed before students are eligible to take the Comprehensive Examination.

1. Students must demonstrate mastery of one foreign language by earning a grade of B or above in one upper-level literature or theory class taught in the language. Normally this would comprise the fifth semester of language study, after students have taken two semesters of introductory and two semesters of intermediate language training. For languages in which one is usually not ready to read literature by the fifth semester of study or in which Iowa does not offer the opportunity for literary study, the requirement may be fulfilled by taking a fifth semester of language training. "Upper-level" courses, traditionally numbered at or above the 100-level, are open to advanced undergraduates and graduate students and are understood by the offering department to require competence in the relevant language. All applicable advanced courses taken at another college or university must have been completed within five years prior to the first semester of doctoral study at Iowa to be eligible to fulfill the language requirement.

2. Students may also fulfill the foreign language requirement by completing a four-course sequence with grades of B or above in Elementary Old English, Beowulf, any course taught in Middle English, and a pre-1500 seminar. The courses may be taken in any sequence. These courses in Old and Middle English provide knowledge of the development of the English language sufficient to constitute the equivalent of learning a foreign language.

Some frequent questions are addressed by the following clarifications:

Although they may help students prepare for the "upper-level" literature course they must eventually take, basic language courses numbered below 100 taken after entry into the graduate program do not count toward the 72 semester hours of graduate credit required for the doctorate. Most foreign language departments at Iowa, however, do offer some beginning courses numbered 100-or-above, and these courses do count toward the required 72 semester hours of graduate credit.

Some foreign language departments offer a sequence of graduate-level courses for non-majors labeled "Reading/Research," "Intensive," or "Accelerated" language study. In some cases, the foreign language department considers the third course in this series to be the equivalent of the fourth semester of undergraduate work. These courses will not fulfill the language requirement, but in some cases may help students reach the level of skill needed to take a literature course in the language. Consult with the DGS before enrolling in such courses.

"Independent study" courses must receive prior written approval by the Director of Graduate Studies in order to fulfill any part of the foreign language requirement. Students interested in pursuing the study of languages not taught at Iowa should consult with the Director of Graduate Study about how to proceed.
OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. Graduate College

1. A minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate work (in courses numbered 100 or above) is required for the doctorate. These hours may include allowable transfer credit from other graduate institutions.

2. *The Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College* (21st revised edition) states the following residency requirement: "The doctorate is granted primarily on the basis of achievement rather than on the accumulation of semester hours of credit; however, the candidate is expected to have completed at least three years of residence in a graduate college. At least part of this residence must be spent in full-time involvement in one's discipline, at this University, beyond the first 24 semester hours of graduate work; this requirement can be met either by: (1) enrollment as a full-time student (9 semester hours minimum) in each of two semesters, or (2) enrollment for a minimum of 6 semester hours in each of three semesters during which the student holds at least a one-third-time assistantship certified by the department as contributing to the student's doctoral program. (For purposes of record and assessment of fees, student registration should reflect accurately the amount and kind of work undertaken in the Graduate College. All doctoral programs, including acceptable transfer credit, will contain a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate work.)."

Note that mere physical presence does not satisfy the residence requirement, nor does registration for fewer hours than stated in the rules above.

B. English Department

1. Of the 72 hours required by the Graduate College, at least 30 must be earned in residence at Iowa.

2. Of the 30 hours in residence required by the English Department, at least 24 must be in organized courses exclusive of dissertation credit and independent study. Independent study courses are meant to supplement rather than substitute for departmental courses; for this reason, they are most appropriate for advanced graduate students pursuing their field(s) of concentration in preparation for their comprehensive examinations and/or dissertations.

3. Because most PhD candidates plan to pursue careers in teaching, the department strongly advises all doctoral candidates to gain experience in teaching, whether through college-level teaching done elsewhere or through teaching assistantships in Iowa’s Rhetoric Department and/or General Education Program. Training and experience in teaching significantly strengthen a student’s position in today’s job market.
QUALIFICATION FOR DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

Overview
At the time of admission to the PhD program, you become a "doctoral student." After about a year’s work in the department (see below for details about timing), you will be invited to apply for Qualification as a "doctoral candidate." For this process, the Graduate Steering Committee reviews your progress to date through the program, your skills as a critical writer, and your progress in planning for the Comprehensive Examination. After its review, the Graduate Steering Committee makes one of two decisions: to admit you to candidacy for the degree or to deny admission to candidacy. After admission to candidacy, you become a "doctoral candidate" and begin formal preparation for the Comprehensive Examination. If your application is denied, you may re-apply one more time in the following academic semester (effective fall 2011).

Detailed Account

A. Choosing an Adviser
If a student has not already done so, Qualification is the moment to specify a field of concentration and select an interim adviser. The adviser will confer with you about your academic record, including future plans within the program and any academic problems perceived by the student or the adviser. At the time of Qualification, the adviser needs to approve and sign the completed Application for Candidacy. After Qualification, students may change advisers if they wish. Such changes should be registered with the Program Assistant.

B. Timing of Qualification
Students will be invited to apply for Qualification after 12-15 semester hours of work in literature and/or criticism at or above the 200-level (12 semester hours for students holding an M.A., 15 semester hours for students holding a B.A.). Because this tally does not include language courses, course work in other departments, courses taken at the 100-level, and independent studies, this point will vary, but for most students it will occur during the third or fourth semester of graduate study. There may occasionally be reasons for a student to delay an application for candidacy beyond this point, which may be done by a request to the Director of Graduate Studies. Because it is vital that students maintain an active commitment to finishing the degree expeditiously, however, if application for Qualification is not made in the semester after a student has completed 21 semester hours of work in literature and/or criticism at or above the 200-level, the student must switch from the PhD program to the M.A. program or, if the student already has an M.A. in English - Literary Studies, resign from the doctoral program.

C. Process of Qualification
The department requires that a student fill out an Application for Candidacy (see Appendix). This provides an opportunity to reflect upon progress so far through the degree program. The form should be typed and on it you should indicate your progress towards the language, distribution, and seminar requirements and explain how you plan to complete these requirements. This is also an opportunity for you to formulate your plans for the Comprehensive Examination. While plans may be tentative at this stage, students must include the names of at least two faculty members, including one designated as “interim adviser,” with whom they have discussed the Comprehensive Exam and who have expressed provisional agreement to work with them.

Students must also submit a sample paper of 15 + pages, written in an English course at the 200-level or above. The sample paper may be revised, based on the professor’s comments at the time of the course, as long as the original graded paper with the professor’s comments accompanies it. Revision is an option,
however, not a requirement. We do not intend to encourage students to polish an already strong paper but, rather, to address certain challenges that may arise regarding the essay requirement. As examples, the following two circumstances might render revision an attractive option:

a) The student's strongest work was written for a readings course and is shorter than fifteen pages. The student can use the revision option to lengthen the essay.

b) The student's best work meets the page requirement for qualifications and has potential, but also has substantial problems. The student can use the revision option to address some of those problem areas.

The sample paper need not concern your expected area of expertise. However, it should demonstrate promise regarding such literary critical skills as: pursuing a lucid argument, drawing upon sustained research, providing nuanced and careful readings, engaging with theoretical methodologies, and contributing to ongoing scholarly debates.

You will be evaluated on your progress through the PhD program as indicated by your course grades (candidates should have a GPA of 3.67 [A-] or above in graduate English literary studies courses with no outstanding incompletes), by your progress through the requirements, by the feasibility of your plan for future work, and by faculty evaluations of your course work, added to your file after each course. Your abilities at PhD-level research and writing will be assessed through faculty evaluations of course work and through the sample paper.

The Graduate Steering Committee—comprised of the directors of admissions, qualifications, the M.A. Program, finances, the Nonfiction Writing Program, placement, and the director of graduate studies—judges the applications for candidacy. It renders one of two decisions: pass or deny. If passed, the student turns his or her attention to further coursework and preparation for comprehensive exams. If denied, a student must reapply the next semester in order to remain in the doctoral program. A student who has been denied should meet with the Director of Qualifications and the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss the committee’s assessment and recommendations, and to plan strategies for strengthening the student’s case for reapplication. If a student is denied a second and final time, the student is dismissed from the doctoral program. She or he does retain funding through the current one-year funding cycle. The M.A. option remains open to students denied doctoral candidacy, providing they do not already hold an M.A. in English – Literary Studies.

D. After Qualification

Formal admission to candidacy marks the department's intention to see a student through the Comprehensive Examination and the completion of a dissertation. Regardless of the semester in which you qualify, you must take your Comprehensive Exam within five semesters from the semester in which you reach 24 sh. If at the time of Qualification you have fewer than 24 semester hours of total graduate credit at Iowa, you will have five semesters after the 24th semester hour within which to take the Comprehensive Examination. If this deadline is exceeded, you must re-apply to the Graduate Steering Committee for admission to candidacy. Where progress toward the degree has been sustained, the department may grant an appropriate extension (normally of one calendar year) for completing the Comprehensive Examination.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

While preparation for the Comprehensive Examination may begin as early as admission to candidacy, serious work on it should take place at the start of the semester before you plan to sit for comps. You should begin by meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss your plans and to get advice on your reading lists and committee. At this stage, you should identify the five faculty members who will serve as your Comprehensive committee and decide on your Comprehensive Areas, while also beginning to revise the paper you intend to submit as part of the Portfolio.

Once a student has accumulated 54 s.h. in graded courses above the 100-level and has received the DGS go-ahead to begin preparing for comps, he or she should enroll in three 2 s.h. independent studies (selecting appropriate courses from the 500-level series), one with each of his or her comprehensive exam area directors; please note that the department does not offer independent study credit for reading groups. Enrollment in these independent studies may be concurrent or staggered over semesters, provided that the student hits the 60 s.h. mark by the end of the semester in which he or she takes the comprehensive exam. Students should discuss expectations for exam preparation with their area directors, and these expectations should be summarized on the independent study approval form, which should be signed by the exam director and DGS in the first weeks of the semester; this form is available in the Graduate Program Assistant’s office. Students often prefer to assemble various components of the portfolio concurrently and over the summer months, when they may not be enrolled—the six independent study credits may thus be regarded as a tally of work completed toward comps.

Reading for the Examination and crafting of the Portfolio (which includes writing the introduction, developing the two course syllabi, drafting the five questions, writing the review essay and annotated bibliography, and final revision of the Article) will usually take about six months. No later than three weeks before the date of the oral exam, the completed Portfolio, including the signed and approved reading lists and Article and the two completed checklists, should be turned in to the Program Assistant for final approval by the Director of Graduate Studies; at this time you should also contact the Program Assistant to schedule your oral examination. The department will provide free photocopying of five copies of the Portfolio for all students who meet the three-week deadline.

Approximate Timetable for the Comprehensive Exam

Six months in advance of oral exam:

- meet with Director of Graduate Studies to discuss comprehensive areas, preliminary reading lists, and composition of your committee
- meet with Graduate Program Assistant (Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp, 323A EPB) to discuss Short Hours Form and future course registration
- choose three faculty members to supervise the portfolio:
  - 1 member--historical period (becomes the exam director)
  - 1 member--special area
  - 1 member--article
- begin work on the portfolio
- begin reading, writing annotations, and revising the paper to be submitted as part of the portfolio (accomplished by enrolling in three 2-s.h. independent study courses, one with each area director)
Three months in advance:

- choose two at-large members of the Exam committee
- continue working on the Portfolio
- **Notice**: If applying for an MA en passant, please contact the Program Assistant (Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp, 323A EPB or 335-0440) at the beginning of the examination semester to discuss the
  - Graduate College deadlines,
  - Application for Graduate College Degree and
  - PhD Comprehensive Examination Planning Form.

Three weeks in advance:

- turn in Eligibility and Portfolio checklists to the Director of Graduate Studies
- submit completed Portfolio for approval by Director of Graduate Studies (be sure the Portfolio includes signed and approved reading lists and Article)
- contact Program Assistant to file paperwork ("Request for Examination" and "Plan of Study" forms) with Graduate College, to photocopy five copies of the portfolio and to schedule a time and place for the Oral Exam.

Two weeks in advance:

- distribute copies of the Portfolio to all five committee members, preferably in electronic form. Please see Program Assistant (Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp) for photocopy code (308 EPB, copy machines), if committee members prefer hard copies.

**Comprehensive Portfolio and Examination**

**Overview**

A. The Comprehensive Examination is taken after a student has completed the foreign language, seminar, and distribution requirements, and no later than five semesters after admission to candidacy (although if a student has fewer than 24 semester hours of total graduate credit at the end of the semester of qualification, he or she is allowed five semesters after the completion of 24 semester hours). Students are eligible to take the examination during the semester in which they will have completed 60 semester hours of work, at least 54 of which should be in regular graded courses (i.e., no more than six of the 60 semester hours should be in Independent Study or S/U courses). In most cases, 58 semester hours should have been completed in the semester before the student sits for comps.

B. Preparation for the Comprehensive Examination may begin soon after admission to candidacy, with serious work starting six months before the proposed date of the oral exam.

1. **Coverage**: The Comprehensive Examination contains three parts, each under the supervision of one of three principal members of the committee. These parts carry equal weight and represent the culmination of work done over a period of time in different courses as well as independent work done especially to prepare for the examination. The three parts of the examination are as follows:
a. **Historical period:** This part of the examination requires broad knowledge of writings in at least three different genres from a clearly defined historical period. Although other periods of at least 100 years may be approved by petition to the Director of Graduate Studies, the standard historical periods for this part of the examination are the following:

- British literature before 1500
- British literature 1500-1660
- British literature 1660-1800
- British literature 1800-1914
- American literature to 1914
- British and/or American literature, 1914-present

b. **Special area:** This part of the examination requires specific knowledge of the literature, criticism, and/or theory that constitute a particular field of study. This area, which must be demonstrably distinct from the Historical Period and Article, may be a second historical period, a literary genre, a body of theory, a major author or group of authors, a theme or topic, writing theory and/or pedagogy, or an interdisciplinary subject. Like the Historical Period, the Special Area allows candidates to develop and demonstrate their grasp of a field in which they hope to write and teach.

c. **Article:** This part of the examination is a 25-35 page essay of publishable quality written in consultation with a faculty member, approved by that faculty member and submitted as part of the Portfolio. The article might start from scratch or begin with a paper written for a previous course, but in its final form it should elaborate a sophisticated critical position with respect to a literary theme, issue, author, period, text, or group of texts.

The file cabinets in the Graduate Studies office suite (329 EPB) contain portfolios from past comprehensive exams for student review. Below are four examples of Comprehensive Portfolio areas, offered for the purposes of illustration:

- American literature to 1914
- Feminist theories of criticism
- "Feminist Perspectives on Emily Dickinson"
- Medieval literature
- Victorian visual culture
- "Pre-Raphaelism and Victorian Culture"
- Modern British & American literature
- 19th- & 20th-century British political essays
- "The Rhetoric of Homage to Catalonia"
- American literature 1850-1950
- Representations of ethnicity in the era of immigration (1875-1925)
- "Constructing White America"

2. **The Committee:** The Comprehensive Examination committee consists of five tenure-track faculty members, at least two of whom must be tenured faculty. In addition to the directors of the three principal
areas of the examination, who form the core of this committee, each candidate asks two additional faculty members to serve as at-large examiners. Students whose doctoral programs include substantial interdisciplinary work should consider asking a faculty member from a related department to serve as a fifth member of their committee.

3. Reading Lists: In consultation with the directors of the Historical Period and Special Area, students will prepare two lists of readings for the examination. The Historical Period list should consist of 70-100 items covering 100 years and at least three different genres; a small number of the items (usually no more than ten) should be key historical or critical works for the period. The Special Area reading list should include 35-40 items, and is typically heavier on critical and theoretical texts.

Portfolio

The Portfolio consists of five sections: a five to seven page Introduction, a 25-35 page article of publishable quality, five substantial questions based on the Historical Period list, a ten to fifteen page review essay discussing seven to ten texts accompanied by an annotated bibliography of each one of the remaining items from the Special Area list, and two course syllabi. A detailed description of these five sections follows.

Introduction: The Introduction to the Portfolio is designed to provide a five to seven page overview of the comprehensive materials that follow, showing the relations among them. Because the Introduction represents the candidate's own sense of the interconnections among the various parts of the Portfolio, it does not require prior approval by the faculty members serving on the candidate's committee, although the candidate is free to seek their advice while drafting the Introduction.

Historical Period Questions: The Historical Period list should cover 70 to 100 texts. As a way of coming to terms with the fundamental issues animating the chosen historical period, the candidate should formulate five broadly conceived questions written in consultation with the area's director. Formal approval of the questions is not required; only the area's list needs to be approved and signed by the director. Fifty minutes of the oral examination will be set aside to examine the Historical Period beginning with one or more of the five questions that the candidate has written, before the period's list and the proposed survey course are opened to general consideration. Should the candidate elect to pursue two Historical Periods, at least seventy-five minutes of the oral examination would be spent on the Historical periods, with less time on the remainder of the Portfolio, which would include no review essay or annotated bibliography.

Special Area Review Essay and Annotated Bibliography: The Special Area is examined via a ten to fifteen page review essay, which delineates the area through key primary and/or secondary texts. The essay should examine seven to ten texts from the reading list of thirty-five to forty items. Each one of the remaining texts from the Special Area list should be annotated separately in a full paragraph (250-300 words or so); following standard bibliographic form (i.e., citing author, title, and publication information for each item). The purpose of the review essay is to allow the candidate to articulate important issues or patterns linking the texts in the Special Area, and should result in a working document that might be the basis for future investigations, including the dissertation. The purpose of the annotated bibliography is to provide a detailed synopsis of texts that can then be referred to in writing the dissertation or in preparing for job interviews. The Special Area list, review essay, and annotated bibliography are written by the candidate in consultation with the area director. The area director's signature on the Special Area list indicates that the review essay and annotated bibliography are ready to go forward for defense at the oral exam.
**Article:** The Article should develop a sophisticated and original argument with respect to a literary theme, issue, author, period, text, or groups of texts in twenty-five to thirty-five pages. It should be of publishable quality and follow an acceptable format (e.g., MLA or Chicago) for citation of sources. The Article may represent new work, but more often develops out of a paper originally written for a course and subsequently revised under the guidance of its director, who is usually a faculty member for whom the paper was first written. With the help of comments and advice offered by the committee during the oral exam, the candidate should plan to submit a revised version of the article to a scholarly journal for consideration. The Article must be signed and approved by the area's director before inclusion in the portfolio. Ideally, the Article should form the basis of the student’s dissertation, though this is not required.

**Syllabi:** The pedagogical component of the Comprehensive Portfolio is demonstrated by two course syllabi designed for courses the candidate might teach, each course drawing upon one of the main areas of the exam and distributed with materials for that area. Out of the Historical Period's focus on a broad range of texts, the candidate should design a lower-level survey course for undergraduate majors. For the Special Area the candidate should create a syllabus for an upper-level undergraduate course. Because constructing the syllabi for these courses indicates the candidate's ability to synthesize research with teaching, the pedagogical section should not be undertaken with close supervision by a committee member, but instead offer testimony to the candidate's independence.

**Organization of the Portfolio:** In order to help your committee locate items in your Portfolio, it is useful to paginate continuously and to provide a Table of Contents at the beginning. In most cases, the Portfolio should assemble its items in this order:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Historical Area List (signed by its director)
- Five Questions
- Lower-level Survey Course Syllabus
- Special Area List (signed by its director)
- Review Essay
- Annotated Bibliography
- Upper-level Specialized Course Syllabus
- Article (signed by its director)

Sample Portfolios are available for consultation; see the Program Assistant in 323A EPB.

**Oral Exam:** The Portfolio should be given to the Comprehensive Examination committee at least two weeks before the two-hour oral exam. Some fifty minutes of the oral will be devoted to an examination of the Historical Period, and another fifty minutes will review the Portfolio's additional sections, which have been prepared in advance. Although each examiner may raise questions about any portion of the Portfolio and reading lists, a typical Oral Exam might begin by asking the candidate to respond to one of the five prepared questions; thereafter, any of the remaining four questions, as well as all the items on the Historical Period list and the proposed survey course would be open to discussion. Similarly, discussion of the Special Area's essay might begin with the Portfolio, as the committee inquires about the texts chosen for review, those annotated from the list of thirty-five to forty entries, and those contributing to the advanced course proposed from the area. Finally, the discussion of the Article could
productively lead to advice on publication. Students are strongly advised not to read from notes during the oral exam.

At the conclusion of the oral examination, each member of the committee votes "satisfactory," "satisfactory with reservations," or "unsatisfactory." The Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations states, "In the event of a report with two or more votes of 'satisfactory with reservations,' the exact stipulations of the committee should be recorded with the report form. The statement must specify the time allowed for satisfying the stipulations, and must be specific in defining the area if further examination in a particular area is required, or in describing any additional courses or other procedures that are required." Two "unsatisfactory" votes constitute a failure of the examination. At the option of the department, a student may repeat the examination once, but only once, and not within the same term. By regulation of the Graduate College, a student has five years, following successful completion of the comprehensive exam, in which to finish all substantive requirements for the PhD degree. Please note, too, that the Graduate College does not permit the comprehensive examination and the defense of the dissertation to be scheduled in the same semester.
DISserTATION

By regulation of the Graduate College, a student has five years, following successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, in which to finish all substantive requirements for the PhD. However, if a student has not completed and defended the dissertation within their funded years, their progress will be reviewed annually by the Graduate Steering Committee, which will provide specific requirements for the student to remain in good academic standing.

Registration after the Comprehensive Exam: After a student has passed comps and is engaged in the preparation of the prospectus or doctoral thesis (at around 60 s.h.), for each spring and fall semester until graduation, he or she should enroll in 8:595 (PhD Thesis) for 2 s.h. under the director’s section number. Continuous enrollment in this course should bring the student to 72 s.h. at the time of graduation. If the dissertation defense examination is completed during the summer semester, the student must register for summer hours. Students should file an independent study form for each semester of post-comps registration. The form should state work toward the prospectus or dissertation to be completed during the semester, and it should be signed by the thesis director and DGS; this form is available in the Graduate Program Assistant’s office.

For financial aid, a “short hours” form must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office (1 Jessup Hall) to be considered as a fulltime student. This form is available in the Graduate Program Assistant’s office.

The Dissertation Committee: This five-member committee consists of a dissertation director, three other full or joint-appointed English Department faculty members, and an “outside” member from the U of I, but not on the English faculty. The Graduate College must approve any requests for a member from another institution or for an additional committee member. A student may apply to the DGS to have all five committee members from the English Department in cases where this is particularly appropriate. These committee members share with the director an active role in the formation of the dissertation. The nature of responsibilities for reading and responding to chapters will be decided at the meeting to approve the prospectus.

B. The topic: In most cases, the Article prepared for the Comprehensive Examination provides a point of departure for the dissertation, but the questioning that produces a successful dissertation begins early in your course work. A dissertation topic may emerge from the materials of a specific course or from a conjunction of texts, themes, and theories encountered in several courses; often it receives its first formulation in a seminar paper. Because topics are constituted through the critical discourse that surrounds them, all topics are tied to a scholarly community. The aim of the dissertation is to enter this community in a way that is fresh, individual, and productive.

C. The prospectus: After passing the comprehensive examination, you must present a dissertation prospectus to a committee composed of the dissertation director and at least three secondary readers from the dissertation committee. In the semester following the comprehensive examination, this committee must meet with you and determine whether the prospectus is acceptable. Please note that you must turn in a copy of the prospectus to each member of the dissertation committee at least one week prior to the prospectus meeting. If the prospectus is not approved at the prospectus meeting, a second meeting must be held by the end of the following semester. Although the prospectus should be precise enough to give your committee a clear sense of your proposed topic, argument, and aims, it is a working proposal, not a legal contract. Two general guidelines may be useful:
a. A prospectus is a typed, double-spaced document from 6-8 pages in length. In addition to stating the main thesis, it should provide the most pertinent critical context for the argument, and some idea of how the thesis will be developed chapter by chapter. In the end, the prospectus should be useful not only for launching research for and writing of the dissertation but also as an abstract to submit for possible internal or external fellowship support. In this regard, it is helpful to consult guidelines for the Ballard/Seashore Fellowship described in the Funding section of the English PhD website. In addition, forming a prospectus-writing workshop with other students may prove valuable.

b. A working bibliography of primary and secondary sources should accompany the prospectus.

A copy of the prospectus, signed by the dissertation director, must be submitted for approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Dissertation

Writing a book-length dissertation is the most sustained and demanding intellectual labor confronting a graduate student. Although research and writing are part of doctoral training from the start, the dissertation is the evidence on which academic employers will judge a candidate’s potential as a publishing scholar. A student who has completed a dissertation has a claim to be not just an author but an "authority": someone who has addressed a significant topic with learning and thoroughness, someone whose arguments have weight and consequence, someone who has made a contribution to ongoing scholarly discourse. A successful dissertation combines a project worth doing, the preparation necessary to do it well, and the hard work and insight that can lead to a fresh and urgent argument.

Because the forms that a successful dissertation can assume are various and because a new topic may call for an unprecedented form, no canonical description of a dissertation is possible. Specific questions of form and content must be decided in consultation with the dissertation director and committee. However, regardless of the form of your argument, it is strongly recommended that your dissertation not exceed four chapters or 250 pages, and that you choose a topic that is attuned to the opportunities and constraints of the current academic marketplace.

Successful completion of a dissertation requires careful planning and active consultation with the director and committee members. Because very few manuscripts reach publication without alteration from the criticism of colleagues and peers, suggestions from readers connected with a press, and the intervention of one or more editors, you might consider your dissertation committee to be your first--and most streamlined--band of editorial advisers.

While the form and content of acceptable dissertations cannot be effectively defined here, the duties and responsibilities of all persons concerned can be made clear. The director has major responsibility for the supervision of the planning and writing and for detailed commentary on the chapters in progress. The obligation to provide commentary also extends to the other readers, whose role as critics and advisers should be active. They and the director are responsible for returning drafts of individual chapters no later than one month after receiving them. You, in turn, are responsible for observing all required procedures and deadlines that relate to the dissertation and its defense. In particular, you must be certain that all members of the committee possess a full draft of the dissertation no later than three weeks prior to the defense. Any committee member may refuse to read the dissertation if this deadline is not met, and the defense will have to be rescheduled.
Defense of the Dissertation

A. Doctoral candidates, having completed the dissertation, must pass a final oral examination called the “Thesis Defense,” “Defense of the Dissertation,” or “Final Examination.” This examination will be conducted by the dissertation director and the dissertation committee, with questions from the public as they are recognized by the dissertation director, who chairs the examination. There are two aspects of the defense of the dissertation that require clarification: the procedures that govern the defense and the nature of the examination itself.

B. The procedures covering the defense are complex, partly because of official deadlines and partly because the Graduate College must approve the dissertation before its final defense can occur. It is your responsibility to assure that all deadlines and requirements are satisfied. The following timetable should be observed:

1. The defense must occur no later than five years following successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination. In unusual circumstances, an extension may be granted by the Graduate College.


3. You must file an application for receiving the degree before the deadline specified each semester by the Graduate College. Failure to meet this deadline means that awarding of the PhD will be postponed for a semester.

4. Following consultation with all five members of your committee, the next step is to make a formal request through the Program Assistant for a specific examination date. If a member of the examination committee is on leave, a substitute examiner must be requested at this time through the Director of Graduate Studies. The request of an examination date must be made with the Program Assistant no later than six weeks prior to the defense.

5. No later than three weeks prior to the defense, every faculty member on the committee must be given a paper copy of the full dissertation. The completed draft of the dissertation distributed to the committee at this time need not be final, but it should be very close. Major rewriting in the three weeks before the defense is unacceptable.

6. The “first deposit” should be submitted electronically according to the Graduate College Guidelines (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/deadlines). Please follow the “Theses and Dissertation” electronic format guide (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations). The only textual changes permitted after the “first deposit” are those required by the Graduate College or by the examining committee.

7. On the date assigned, the defense of the dissertation takes place. A report of the examination is signed by all committee members and returned to the Program Assistant who forwards it to the Director of Graduate Studies for signature and then to the Graduate College. On this report, each committee member evaluates the Final Examination as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Two unsatisfactory votes will make the committee report unsatisfactory. In case of a report of unsatisfactory in the Final Examination, the candidate may not be reexaminied until the next
semester. At the time of the defense, the paper copy of the title page must be signed by the committee members. The dissertation abstract page and embargo letter must be signed by the committee director. The examination may be repeated only once, at the option of the department.

8. Following a successful defense of the dissertation, the student must make any corrections specified by the Graduate College and/or the examining committee and submit the corrected final paper copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College by the deadline for the “final deposit”, submit the abstract page, title page and embargo letter. (An embargo letter prevents your dissertation from being electronically circulated on the internet through the University Main Library).

C. The nature of the defense will vary with the composition of the examining committee and the nature of the dissertation. To some degree, the members of the dissertation committee serve a different function as examiners than they did as advisers. They confront in the finished dissertation not individual pieces of work-in-progress, which is usually what they see as advisers, but a complete work implicitly asking recognition from a larger world of scholars, publishers and readers. In approving the dissertation, the committee certifies that the student's completed act of literary interpretation, criticism, and/or scholarship is worthy to be made public not only inside but outside the University of Iowa.
AFTER THE PHD

Most PhDs in English seek employment at colleges and universities. Although the Department of English cannot guarantee such employment, it can promise vigorous and wholehearted assistance. Whatever the market situation may be at a given time, there are some practical steps that can increase your opportunities for academic employment. Probably the most important advantages are to have the dissertation close to completion when seeking employment and to build a record that includes presentation of papers at conferences, publication of essays and reviews, and evidence of distinction in teaching and scholarship. It is crucial to cultivate expertise in a broadly defined historical and/or critical field as well as in the narrower area(s) of your dissertation. Experience in different kinds of teaching—Rhetoric, General Education, writing and reading labs—is also extremely helpful. The best general advice is to begin well before the final year of study to develop the skills and qualities that will make you attractive to potential employers. Strong course work will ensure strong letters of recommendation; wise planning will create coherence and definition for your program; and, an excellent dissertation will be read by academic employers as representing both your achievement and your promise.

A few general remarks about timing might be useful if they are not misconstrued as requirements. Recent experience shows that most students at Iowa who receive job offers have completed the dissertation at the time the offer is made. Because employers are hesitant to hire persons whose dissertations are incomplete, students should aim to complete the dissertation between December and mid-spring of the academic year in which they seek a job. It is important, then, to predict your rate of progress from the Comprehensive Examination through the completion of the dissertation, to hold a prospectus meeting promptly, and to allow sufficient time for the writing of the dissertation. Because there is no certainty that all PhDs in English will find continuing academic employment, it is crucial to remain open to the opportunity of jobs outside the profession of teaching. A number of Ph.Ds are now finding employment in academic administration, business, or government. The MLA Guide for Job Candidates contains a helpful discussion of Alternatives to Teaching, offering advice about how to find and/or create for yourself challenging work in academic administration or publishing or in a nonacademic setting.
FELLOWSHIPS FOR ENROLLED STUDENTS

Early in spring semester, the Graduate Steering Committee invites applications for the Ballard/Seashore and Seely, and Dietz dissertation-year fellowships as well as for the five departmental research support awards and the Best Essay Award. Although students are urged to apply in all relevant categories, a student may hold only one award in a given year, with the exception of the Best Essay Award. Ballard/Seashore Fellows, who are usually named in late spring, will not be eligible for subsequent awards. All awards except for the Piper require the applicant to have completed comprehensive exams and the dissertation prospectus meeting by February of the awards competition year. The Piper Memorial Fellowship is open to female PhD and MFA students as outlined below.

Please note that if a student receives a Seashore/Ballard, Seely, or Dietz fellowship, the fellowship year replaces one year of financial aid support according to the student’s initial funding commitment (5 years for incomings with MA, starting with students admitted in Fall 2008; 6 for those without). These fellowships are designed to fund a student’s final year in the program. To be eligible, students must apply in the year before their final year of funding; thus the target applicant pool consists of current fourth- and fifth-year doctoral candidates.

One application, which follows the guidelines specified below, should be submitted for all of the fellowships or awards for which you wish to be considered (use the application cover sheet, available in the Graduate Studies Office, to indicate for which awards you are applying). The following additional materials must be submitted for specific awards:

• the Seely and Dietz Fellowships require submission of a syllabus
• the Sherman Paul/Prairie Lights, McDowell, Malone, and Lagorio awards require submission of a one-paragraph description of how the research money will be spent
• the Piper Award should include a statement of the applicant’s financial need and social aspirations

Application materials:
A brief abstract (limited to six double-spaced pages) of the candidate’s proposed dissertation, prepared with the following guidelines in mind:

a. The proposal is to be written so that it can be understood by people who are not in the student’s field of specialization.

b. The proposal should clearly outline the timetable for completion of the dissertation.

A letter from the student, to include a brief statement of the significance of the proposed work to his/her professional objectives. In addition, the student should submit a one-page cv, which lists educational and professional experience, honors and awards, and publications. Two letters of support, including one from the candidate’s dissertation director indicating the candidate’s accomplishments in research and scholarship. The director’s letter should also state:

• how long the student has been working on the PhD
• how much work has already been accomplished on the dissertation
• the value of the research topic to the specific field
• the student’s qualifications for carrying out this particular project
• the prospect that the degree will be completed by the end of spring or summer session of the award year
Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Year Fellowships
The fellowship provides $18,000 for the academic year (as of 2012). This final-year fellowship also provides two credit hours of tuition per semester (but not mandatory fees) and a health/dental insurance allowance. The Graduate Steering Committee reviews and nominates applications to the Graduate College. For more information see www.grad.uiowa.edu/students/FinancialSupport/Fellowships

Eligibility: The applicant must be a PhD student who has completed the comprehensive examination, a dissertation prospectus meeting, and all other doctoral requirements except the dissertation by the time of application. Students in any field are eligible, except those who have already won the Seely or Dietz Fellowships.

Applications: Applicants should submit the same materials as for other dissertation-year awards (see below).

Deadline: The internal departmental deadline is in early spring semester; please check with the Director of Graduate Studies for details.

Frederick F. Seely and Elizabeth Dietz Distinguished Dissertation Fellowships
Source: The Seely fellowship has been established in honor of Frederick F. Seely, who inspired his students by his example as a human being and as a professional. Above all, he was a reader who taught and who thus carried into his teaching the joy of discovery that this award seeks to perpetuate. The Dietz Fellowship has been established by the English Department in honor of Elizabeth Dietz, Iowa MFA and PhD and Rice University professor, whose short life was devoted to literature and its teaching.

Eligibility: The recipients, to be designated “The Frederick F. Seely Fellow” or "Elizabeth Dietz Fellow" must be a PhD student who has completed the comprehensive examination, a dissertation prospectus meeting, and all other doctoral requirements except the dissertation by the time of application. Students in any field are eligible, except those who have already won the Ballard or Seashore, Seely or Dietz Fellowships.

Terms of the Award: This award carries with it a research stipend for one semester, plus the responsibility for teaching one undergraduate English majors course in another semester. In addition, the recipient must teach one Saturday and evening course during either of those two semesters. The amount of the award is approximately $18,972, which is distributed in ten installments over the academic year (as of 2012).

Applications: Applicants should submit the same materials as for other dissertation-year awards (see above). In addition, applicants should include a course description and syllabus for the proposed course to be taught in spring semester.

Deadline: early spring semester; check with Director of Graduate Studies for details.
Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul, Frederick P.W. McDowell, Freda Dixon Malone and Valerie Lagorio Dissertation Scholarships

Source: These awards are made from the proceeds of funds established through the generosity of Prairie Lights Bookstore; by the students of Professors Emeritus Frederick P.W. McDowell and Valerie Lagorio; and by the sister of Freda Dixon Malone, who received her M.A. in English from the University of Iowa in 1929.

Eligibility: Applicants must have completed the comprehensive examination, a dissertation prospectus meeting, and all other requirements for the PhD except the dissertation at the time of application. Doctoral candidates with a concentration in contemporary (post-1950) literature and theory from any region are eligible for the Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul Award. Doctoral candidates with a concentration in British and/or American literature from 1850 to 1950 are eligible for the McDowell Award; those with a concentration in British literature from 1500 to 1850 are eligible for the Malone Award; and, those with a concentration in British literature before 1500 are eligible for the Lagorio Award. In the event that no dissertation-stage medievalist successfully applies for the Lagorio Award, one to two smaller traveling fellowships will be made to nurture medievalists at earlier stages of their careers.

Terms of awards: These awards of approximately $1000 each (as of 2012), subject to confirmation, are to be used to defray research costs related to the completion of the dissertation. The stipends may support travel to libraries in connection with the award-holder’s research, on-line computer expenses, childcare expenses, or the cost of books, computer equipment, or other materials associated with the dissertation. English forwards a nominee for these four awards to the UI Office of Student Financial Aid, which administers the award. In some cases, the award is applied directly to the recipient’s financial aid package. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid if you have questions regarding the distribution of the award. The awards will be made at the end of March and will go into effect for the following twelve months. The designees will be called “The Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul Scholar,” “The Frederick P.W. McDowell Scholar, “The Freda Dixon Malone Scholar,” and “The Valerie Lagorio Scholar” or “The Valerie Lagorio Traveling Fellow,” respectively.

Applications: In addition to the standard materials submitted for the dissertation awards (see above), applicants for the research awards should also include a one-paragraph statement indicating how the research money will be spent.

Deadline: early spring semester; check with Director of Graduate Studies for details.

Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholarship

Eligibility: The recipient must be a female graduate student, enrolled full-time in the English Department during the academic year. PhD students and MFA students in Nonfiction Writing may apply for this award. Each applicant must be a native-born American citizen who is currently self-supporting, must demonstrate “above average competence in her chosen field,” and must have aspirations to help the cause of women. Although not a determining factor, financial need is a criterion for consideration.

Terms of the Award: The designee will be called “The Edwin Ford Piper Scholar.” English forwards a nominee for the Piper to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which administers the award. Please contact the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences if you have questions regarding the distribution of the award.
**Application:** In addition to the materials submitted for the other awards, applicants for the Piper Scholarship should also include in their cover letter a statement of the applicant’s financial need and social aspirations.

**English Department Best Essay Prize**
In order to recognize and honor the excellent scholarly work of its graduate students, the English Department annually awards a prize for the best essay published by an English Department PhD student. The amount of the prize is $250 (as of 2012), subject to confirmation.

**Eligibility:** PhD students who have held a successful prospectus meeting by the time of application are eligible to submit essays that have been accepted for publication or have already been published in refereed journals or collections. For the spring prize, the essay must have been accepted or published between January two years’ prior and December one year prior to the award year. Although the applicant must be at the post-prospectus stage, the essay itself may have been written earlier. Applicants are invited to resubmit the same essay, if it is still eligible, the following year. Applicants may only submit one essay per year. Previous winners are not eligible to compete a second time.

**Submissions:** Students should submit one copy of the essay, along with a brief cover letter stating the date of the prospectus meeting and the course and instructor for which the essay was originally written. In the case of forthcoming essays, also include proof of acceptance and projected publication date.

**Deadline:** Early spring semester; check with Director of Graduate Studies for details.

**Evaluation:** The essays will be judged by the Faculty Members of the Graduate Steering Committee.

**Dietz Poetry Essay Prize**
Elizabeth Dietz (1964-2005) was a poet and professor of Renaissance Literature at Rice University. A graduate of both the Writers Workshop and the University of Iowa’s doctoral program in English, Elizabeth specialized in the lyric poetry of sixteenth and seventeenth-century England and was equally interested in poetic theory and practice. She was also a gifted teacher of poetry.

The Dietz Essay Prize is awarded annually, on alternating years, for the best essay on poetry written by an undergraduate and a graduate student. In honor of Elizabeth's broad and eclectic interests, essays on all kinds of poetry -- epic, lyric, narrative, dramatic, and experimental -- as well as on poetics, are welcome.

**Other Fellowships**
In addition to the Dissertation Fellowships, Departmental Awards, and Best Essay Prize, the Graduate College administers specialized fellowship programs for international dissertation research, summer research, travel, and external grant enhancement. For more details see [www.grad.uiowa.edu/students/FinancialSupport/Fellowships/](http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/students/FinancialSupport/Fellowships/)

The Division of Sponsored Programs also invites graduate students to utilize its resources in identifying appropriate external grants. For more information see [research.uiowa.edu/dsp/](http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/)

UI International Programs also sponsors graduate funding programs for a variety of international research and language learning. For more information see [intl-programs.uiowa.edu/ipresearch/](http://intl-programs.uiowa.edu/ipresearch/)
DEPARTMENT TRAVEL FUNDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The English Department offers support to graduate students for conference and research travel.

Travel to conferences and to archives
(effective 8/1/2010)

The Department will fund travel to conferences or archives in the amount of $200 per trip per fiscal year (July 1st - June 30th) with a maximum of three trips for PhD and MFA students. This funding may not be used for meal expenses. (For students working simultaneously on MFA and PhD degrees, the maximum number of trips shall be three.)

Eligibility and application procedures:

- PhD students are eligible for conference travel support after they have been admitted to PhD candidacy and for travel to archives after they have held a successful prospectus meeting. In order to apply for travel support, PhD students should submit to Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp, Graduate Program Assistant (GPA), the name and date of the conference, the title of their paper or a brief description of the proposed research trip as well as the number of conference trips already supported from departmental travel funds via e-mail (cherie-rieskamp@uiowa.edu). The GPA will forward the request to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for approval. Once funds are approved, the (GPA) will introduce students to the university's on-line travel reimbursement procedure.

- NWP students are eligible for travel support to conduct research, participate in the Overseas Writing Workshop (or another approved workshop), attend AWP, and/or present a paper at a conference. Research trips must be made prior to the thesis first deposit.

In order to apply for travel support, MFA students should submit to Natalie Brown, Graduate Program Assistant (GPA), a one-page travel funds request outlining the nature of the proposed trip to as well as the number of conference trips already supported from departmental travel funds via e-mail (natalie-brown@uiowa.edu). The (GPA) will forward the request to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for approval. Once funds are approved, the (GPA) will introduce students to the university's on-line travel reimbursement procedure.

When the student receives the letter from the (DGS) approving the reimbursement along with the funding number (MFK), s/he should go on ISIS, Employee Self Service >> FO Application >> ProTrav >>Travel >> Create New Trip and follow instructions for creating a trip. The trip will then be approved by the department. After the trip has been taken, the student should return to Pro Trav to create a voucher (TEV), in which s/he lists the expenses and presents original receipts to accompany the voucher to the graduate program assistant. The graduate program assistant will forward the voucher to the travel department.

Since travel support funds may, in any given fiscal year (July 1st - June 30th) be limited, students are encouraged to also seek travel support from other sources within the University, particularly the
Graduate Student Senate and International Programs. See appendix below for a list of additional funding sources.

Travel for job interviews

For PhD students who have job interviews at the MLA conference and for MFA students who have interviews at events approved by the director of the NWP, the Department will offer up to two awards of $300 to help cover travel expenses. This is in addition to the three supported trips to conferences, archives, or workshops described above.

Additional Travel Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students

Division of Sponsored Programs
http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/main/?get=gradprores
Provides help with all aspects of finding sources of external funding, from searches to grant applications.

Graduate Student Senate Travel Funds ($200 if within 300 miles; $300 if farther; $400 if outside N. America)
http://gss.grad.uiowa.edu/funding/gss-travel-funds-information
You have to be presenting at a conference to apply for this. Eligible to apply once per fiscal year (July 1st - June 30th). Multiple deadlines throughout the year.

ECGPS* Scholarly Presentation Awards and Research Grants (up to $1000)
http://www.uiowa.edu/~ecgps/awards.shtml
“… available for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to present and fund original research.” (Only funds projects that qualify as research.) Multiple deadlines per fiscal year.
*Executive Council of Graduate and Professional Students

Grad College Supplementary Travel Funding (typically $200-500)
http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/aid-you-can-apply-for-supplementary-travel-funding
For research, family emergencies, or attending a conference at which you are *not* presenting (shouldn’t be used if you are presenting). Requests reviewed on a rolling basis (no deadlines). Eligible to apply only once per fiscal year.

International Programs Graduate Student Conference Travel Awards (up to $500)
http://international.uiowa.edu/grants/students/funding/graduate/international-travel.asp
You have to be presenting at a conference—and it has to be outside the US—to apply for this. Deadlines in October, February, and April.

Stanley Graduate Awards for International Research ($2000)
http://international.uiowa.edu/grants/students/funding/graduate/stanley-awards.asp
For grad students who are proposing to conduct research abroad for their theses.

There are some other, more specific funding opportunities listed on the International Programs website:  http://international.uiowa.edu/grants/students/funding/graduate/default.asp
PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PhD STUDENTS

The English Department supports tuition and living expenses for PhD students to attend the summer institutes and seminars listed below. Priority will be given to applicants who are at a stage of graduate study in between the comprehensive exam and the sixth or final year of funding. A reminder to apply for departmental support will go out in the fall, followed by a call for proposals in December. The application for support consists of a one-page proposal and a letter of nomination from the faculty mentor. The Graduate Steering Committee will make a tentative commitment of funds in spring semester, to be confirmed once the student has been accepted into the program to which he or she has applied.

Cornell University School of Criticism and Theory
http://www.arts.cornell.edu/sochum/sct/

Dickens Universe
http://dickens.ucsc.edu/universe/universe.html
Profs. Boos, Mangum, and Stewart serve as ad hoc evaluation committee

Futures of American Studies Institute
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~futures/

American Antiquarian Society Summer Seminar
http://www.americanantiquarian.org/summersem.htm

Rare Book School, University of Virginia
http://www.rarebookschool.org/

Folger Institute Programs
http://www.folger.edu/Content/Folger-Institute/Program-Offerings/

Newberry Library
http://www.newberry.org/research/L3rscholarscontent.html
http://www.newberry.org/research/felshp/fellowshome.html

Mellon and NEH Summer Seminars
(multiple institutional locations; no central website)
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<tr>
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<td>Rasmussen, Mary Ann</td>
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Application for Candidacy
for PhD Qualification
Department of English, University of Iowa

Please note that this form must be typed.

Name: __________________________________________ Date: __________________
E-mail address: __________________________________________

Signature (after reviewing form): __________________________________________

GRADUATE COURSEWORK IN THE ENGLISH DEPT.:

GPA in graduate courses taken in English at Iowa: __________
Overall GPA: __________

1) Course number: _____ Course title: __________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: __________ Instructor: __________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: ______

2) Course number: _____ Course title: __________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: __________ Instructor: __________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: ______

3) Course number: _____ Course title: __________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: __________ Instructor: __________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: ______

4) Course number: _____ Course title: __________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: __________ Instructor: __________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: ______

5) Course number: __________________________ Course title: __________________________
Semester and Year taken: __________ Instructor: __________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: ______
6) Course number: _____ Course title: ____________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: ___________ Instructor: ________________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: _____

7) Course number: _____ Course title: ____________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: ___________ Instructor: ________________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: _____

8) Course number: _____ Course title: ____________________________________________
Semester and Year taken: ___________ Instructor: ________________________________
Evaluation in File? Yes No Grade: _____

TITLE OF PAPER SUBMITTED FOR QUALIFICATION:

Course for which paper was written: ____________________________________________

Revised? Yes No (If submitting a revised paper, include original with instructor’s comments and grade)

REQUIREMENTS:

Foreign Language:
(Students must demonstrate mastery of a foreign language by earning a grade of B or above in one upper-level literature or theory course taught in the foreign language OR in four designated courses in Old and Middle English language and literature)

1) Course number: ___________________________ Semester and Year taken: ___________
Course title: ___________________________________________ Instructor: ________________
Grade: __________________

2) Course number: ____________ Semester and Year taken: _________________________
Course title: ___________________________________________ Instructor: ________________
Grade: __________________
3) Course number:______________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:_________________________________________________________________
Instructor:_________________________  Grade:________________________

4) Course number:______________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:_________________________________________________________________
Instructor:_________________________  Grade:________________________

**Distribution:**
(Students must take at least one graduate English course in any four of the following historical periods:
Literature and Culture before 1500, Literature and culture 1500-1660, Literature and Culture 1660-1800,
Literature and Culture 1800-1900, Literature and Culture from 1900 to present)

1)  Course number:__________________________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:__________________________  Period Covered:__________________________

2)  Course number:__________________________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:__________________________  Period Covered:__________________________

3)  Course number:__________________________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:__________________________  Period Covered:__________________________

4)  Course number:__________________________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:__________________________  Period Covered:__________________________

5)  Course number:__________________________  Semester and Year taken:__________________
Course title:__________________________  Period Covered:__________________________
**Seminars:**
(Students must take at least three four-hundred-level seminars in the English Department)

1) Course number: ___________________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

2) Course number: _______________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

3) Course number: _______________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

4) Course number: _______________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

**INCOMPLETES:**

1) Course number: ___________________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

2) Course number: _______________ Semester and Year taken: ___________________
   Course title: ________________________
   Instructor: ___________________________ Grade: __________________

In the space below, please provide any information that may help the committee assess your coursework as it considers your candidacy for qualification. For example, you may provide additional information regarding incompletes or what courses you have not yet taken but plan to take to fulfill requirements.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAM PLANS:

After consulting with your academic advisor and relevant faculty, list below the three areas in which you expect to undertake your comprehensive portfolio and the faculty with whom you expect to work (keeping in mind that your plans may evolve after qualifications). You must list the names and signatures of at least two faculty members with whom you have consulted. See "Steps to the PhD" on the graduate website for more information on the comprehensive exam.

**Historical Period** (usually, student chooses from one of the following: British literature before 1500, British literature 1500-1660, British literature 1660-1800, British literature 1800-1914, American literature to 1914, British and/or American literature, 1914-present; other periods of at least 100 years may be approved by petition to the Director of Graduate Studies):

**Special Area**: (specific knowledge of the literature, criticism, and/or theory that constitute a particular field of study)

**Possible Article Topic**: (25-35 page essay of publishable quality written in consultation with a faculty member, elaborating a sophisticated critical position with respect to a literary theme, issue, author, period, text, or group of texts):
Faculty consulted (AT LEAST TWO MUST BE CONSULTED):

Interim Advisor: ____________________________ Signature: 
Name: __________________________________________ Signature: 
Name: ____________________________ Signature: 
Name: ____________________________ Signature: 

Any additional information you would like to provide the committee: