

English

The Berkeley English Department offers a wide-ranging PhD program, engaging in all historical periods of British and American literature, Anglophone literature, and critical and cultural theory. The program aims to assure that students gain a broad knowledge of literature in English as well as the highly-developed skills in scholarship and criticism necessary to do solid and innovative work in their chosen specialized fields.

Please note that the department does not offer a master's degree program or a degree program in Creative Writing. Students can, however, petition for an MA in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing upon completion of the PhD course requirements (one of which must be a graduate writing workshop) and submission of a body of creative work.

Students interested in combining a PhD in English with studies in another discipline may pursue Designated Emphases or Concurrent Degrees in a number of different fields.

Admission to the University

Applying for Graduate Admission

Thank you for considering UC Berkeley for graduate study! UC Berkeley offers more than 120 graduate programs representing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The Graduate Division hosts a complete list (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/choosing-your-program/list/>) of graduate academic programs, departments, degrees offered, and application deadlines can be found on the Graduate Division website.

Prospective students must submit an online application to be considered for admission, in addition to any supplemental materials specific to the program for which they are applying. The online application and steps to take to apply can be found on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/>).

Admission Requirements

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale; and
3. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field.

For a list of requirements to complete your graduate application, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions Requirements page (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/>). It is also important to check with the program or department of interest, as they may have additional requirements specific to their program of study and degree. Department contact information can be found here (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2024-25/graduate/degree-programs/>).

Where to apply?

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

The doctoral degree requires satisfactory completion of the following five requirements:

- 1) Thirteen courses undertaken in graduate status at Berkeley;
- 2) Course work in a broad range of fields of English and American literature;
- 3) Demonstration of competence in two foreign languages, or advanced knowledge of one, relevant to the student's research interests;
- 4) An oral qualifying examination;
- 5) A prospectus and dissertation.

Normative time to complete the program is six years. The first two years are devoted to fulfilling the course and language requirements. The third year is spent preparing for and taking the Ph.D. oral qualifying examination. The fourth through sixth years are devoted to researching and writing the prospectus and dissertation.

Courses

The general goal of the first two years is to assure that the students have a broad and varied knowledge of the fields of British and American literature in their historical dimensions, and are also familiar with a wide range of literary forms, critical approaches, and scholarly methods. Students will complete twelve courses distributed as follows:

- 1) English 200, "Problems in the Study of Literature"
- 2) Medieval through 16th-Century
- 3) 17th- through 18th-Century
- 4) 19th-Century
- 5) 20th-Century
- 6) a course organized in terms other than chronological coverage.
- 7-12) Elective courses.

(A thirteenth required course in pedagogy can be taken later.) *Students who have done prior graduate course work may transfer up to three courses for credit toward the 12-course requirement.* Up to five of the 12 courses may be taken in other departments.

Languages

Students must demonstrate either proficiency in two foreign languages or advanced knowledge in one foreign language before the qualifying examination. There are no "canonical languages" in the department. Rather, each specifies which languages are to count, how they relate to the student's intellectual interests, and on which level knowledge is to be demonstrated. "Proficiency" is understood as the ability to translate (with a dictionary) a passage of about 300 words into idiomatic English prose in ninety minutes. The proficiency requirement may also be satisfied by completing one upper-division or graduate literature course in a foreign language. The advanced knowledge requirement is satisfied by completing two or three literature courses in the language with a grade of "B" or better.

At the end of the second year each student's record is reviewed in its entirety to determine whether or not he or she is able and ready to proceed to the qualifying exam and the more specialized phase of the program.

The Qualifying Examination

Students are expected to take the qualifying examination within one year after completing course and language requirements. The qualifying exam is oral and is conducted by a committee of five faculty members. The exam lasts approximately two hours and consists of three parts: two comprehensive historical fields and a third field which explores a topic in preparation for the dissertation. The exam is meant both as a culmination of course work and as a test of readiness for the dissertation.

The Prospectus and Dissertation

The prospectus consists of an essay and bibliography setting forth the nature of the research project, its relation to existing scholarship and criticism on the subject, and its anticipated value. Each candidate must have a prospectus conference with the members of their committee and the Graduate Chair to discuss the issues outlined in the proposal and to give final approval to the project. The prospectus should be approved within one or two semesters following the qualifying exam.

The dissertation is the culmination of the student's graduate career and is expected to be a substantial and original work of scholarship or criticism. Students within normative time complete the dissertation in their fourth through sixth years.

Further information can be found on the department website (<https://english.berkeley.edu/graduate/phd-program/>).

English

ENGLISH 200 Problems in the Study of Literature 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

Approaches to literary study, including textual analysis, scholarly methodology and bibliography, critical theory and practice.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Open only to students in the English Ph.D. program

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 201A Topics in the Structure of the English Language 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2007

Studies in the structure of the English language, varying by semester.

Possible topics include phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, either separately or in relation to literature, culture, and society.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 201B Topics in the History of the English Language 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2009

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 203 Graduate Readings 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Graduate lecture courses surveying broad areas and periods of literary history, and directing students in wide reading. Offerings vary from semester to semester. Students should consult the department's "Announcement of Classes" for offerings well before the beginning of the semester.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Open to advanced undergraduates, with the consent of the instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 205A Old English 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2013, Fall 2011

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Open to undergraduates with the consent of the instructor

Credit Restrictions: Offered for 4 units in fall and in spring, 3 units in summer.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 205B Old English 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2017, Spring 2016, Spring 2014

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Open to undergraduates with the consent of the instructor

Credit Restrictions: Offered for 4 units in fall and in spring, 3 units in summer.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 211 Chaucer 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

Discussion of Chaucer's major works.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 212 Readings in Middle English 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2016, Spring 2012

Rapid reading of selections in Middle English, from the twelfth century through the fifteenth.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 217 Shakespeare 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2016, Fall 2014

Discussion of selected works of Shakespeare.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 218 Milton 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Spring 2019

Discussion of Milton's major works.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 243A Fiction Writing Workshop 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2023, Fall 2021

A writing workshop in fiction for graduate students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor, normally based on prior writings submitted

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 243B Poetry Writing Workshop 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

A writing workshop in poetry for graduate students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor, normally based on prior writings submitted

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 243N Prose Nonfiction Writing Workshop 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

A writing workshop in prose nonfiction for graduate students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor, normally based on prior writings submitted

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246C Graduate Proseminars: Renaissance: Sixteenth century (not prominently featuring Shakespeare) 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2017

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246D Graduate Proseminars: Renaissance: Seventeenth century through Milton 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2021, Fall 2017, Spring 2015

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246E Graduate Proseminars: Restoration and early 18th century 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2014, Fall 2010, Fall 2008

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246F Graduate Proseminars: Later 18th century 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2022, Fall 2019, Spring 2016

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246G Graduate Proseminars: Romantic 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2020, Fall 2017

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246H Graduate Proseminars: Victorian 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2020

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246I Graduate Proseminars: American to 1855 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2015, Fall 2012, Fall 2011

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246J Graduate Proseminars: American 1855 to 1900 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2020, Spring 2014

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246K Graduate Proseminars: Literature in English 1900 to 1945 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2014

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 246L Graduate Proseminars: Literature in English 1945 to Present 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2014, Fall 2007

Proseminars in the major chronological fields of English and American literature providing graduate instruction in scholarly and critical approaches appropriate to each field.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 250 Research Seminars 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Required of all Ph.D. students. Advanced study in various fields, leading to a substantial piece of writing. Offerings vary from semester to semester. Students should consult the department's "Announcement of Classes" for offerings well before the beginning of the semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 298 Special Studies 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2022

Directed research. Open to qualified graduate students wishing to pursue special topics. If taken to satisfy degree requirements, must be taken for four units and a letter grade.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-12 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 299 Special Study 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Summer 2025, Spring 2025

Normally reserved for students directly engaged upon the doctoral dissertation.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-12 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 2.5-30 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 2-23 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

ENGLISH N299 Special Study 1 - 6 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2012 10 Week Session, Summer 2010 10 Week Session, Summer 2009 10 Week Session

Primarily for students engaged in preliminary exploration of a restricted field, involving research and the writing of a report. May not be substituted for available seminars.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

ENGLISH 375 The Teaching of Composition and Literature 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

Discussion of course aims, instructional methods, grading standards, and special problems in the teaching of composition and literature, with practice in handling sample essays. When given for graduate student instructors in the English R1A-R1B Program or the English 45 series, the course will include class visitation.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Formerly known as: English 302

ENGLISH 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2016, Fall 2015, Spring 2015

Individual study in consultation with the major field adviser, intended to provide an opportunity for qualified students to prepare themselves for the various examinations required of candidates for the Ph.D. May not be used for unit or residence requirements for the doctoral degree.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: English/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.