Mission

The Department of English introduces students to significant works of the literary imagination, guides their development in language and composition, and encourages them to read attentively, reflect deeply, write cogently, and express themselves creatively, all to glorify God and serve others.

Program Overview

The M.A. in English provides professional preparation and personal enrichment to students in the field of literary studies, broadly conceived to include literature, cultural/film studies, and creative and/or professional writing. In keeping with the mission of Azusa Pacific, this program encourages an active conversation between Christianity and literature, preparing scholars, writers, and teachers for cultural engagement from a Christian perspective through the development of analytical and creative writing skills enriched by a theologically informed approach to reading, writing, teaching, and thinking about literary and other cultural texts.

4+1 B.A./M.A. Program

For undergraduate students, a fifth-year option allows recent graduates to complete the master’s degree in just one additional academic year. Exceptionally promising APU English majors may apply in their junior year for admission to the 4+1 B.A./M.A. degree program. Once admitted, these students would complete up to 6 units of 500 level graduate coursework during their senior year and complete the remaining 24 units over the next academic year (fall, spring, and summer terms; e.g., 9 units in the fall term, 9 units in the spring term, 6 units in the summer term). For more information about the 4+1 B.A./M.A. in English program, students should contact the department chair at (626) 815-3079 or consult program information in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Career Opportunities

The Master of Arts in English equips students for careers in higher education, secondary school teaching, community college teaching, writing, business, government, and nonprofit organizations. The program also develops students’ ability to think critically, write persuasively, and solve problems creatively—strengths that are desirable in many career fields.

- Master of Arts in English

ENGL 500, The Christian Imagination, 3 Units

Students in this course will explore the history of Christian Aesthetics, especially as it applies to the reading and writing of literature. They will engage with thinkers representing a broad range of historical periods, geographic locations, and faith traditions, seeking to understand various ways that Christians have understood the role of the arts in church and culture. After surveying this variety of approaches, students will begin refining their own convictions about the relationship between literature and faith and begin articulating their own sense of vocation as writers, readers, scholars, critics, and teachers. Students will respond to the extensive reading in this class by writing a scholarly paper.

ENGL 510, Literature and the Bible, 3 Units

Students in this course will develop critical strategies for using the Bible as a tool for literary study. They will learn various ways the Bible has been read “as literature” as well as the special challenges of reading the Bible as a “sacred text.” They will gain expertise in bringing the Bible into conversation with “secular” literature and culture in ways that open rather than shut down dialogue. They will examine biblical imagery, symbols, archetypes, and other story-telling devices in literary and other texts, making applications to genres pertinent to their concentration, for example, poetry and the Bible, parables in film and literature, or critical analysis of biblical archetypes in the work of a particular author or group of authors.

ENGL 520, Literature and Theology, 3 Units

Students in this course will read, discuss, and critically analyze literary texts that deal directly or implicitly with religious themes. The main goal will be to integrate the study of literary texts with insights gleaned from Christian theology and the Bible. To that end, students will familiarize themselves with basic Christian doctrines (creation, fall, redemption) and bring these doctrines into conversation with the literature assigned for the course, as well as literary texts they will select for further research. The culminating project will be a publishable (or conference worthy) critical paper that examines one or several literary texts from a theologically informed Christian perspective.

ENGL 530, British Literature Seminar, 3 Units

This course studies various special topics in British literature and culture, including but not limited to authors, genres, movements, periods, and methodologies in British literary studies. Students will study a range of authors and texts as well as relevant secondary sources.

ENGL 540, American Literature Seminar, 3 Units

This course studies various special topics in American literature and culture, including but not limited to authors, genres, movements, periods, and methodologies in American literary studies. Students will study a range of authors and texts as well as relevant secondary sources.
ENGL 550, World Literature Seminar, 3 Units
This course studies various special topics in world literature and culture, including but not limited to authors, genres, movements, periods, and methodologies in comparative literature and literary studies. Students will study a range of authors and texts as well as relevant secondary sources.

ENGL 560, Creative Writing Seminar, 3 Units
The creative writing workshop will enable students to create original texts in a creative genre (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, playwriting, screenwriting, or hybrid genres) by studying existing texts in that genre, exploring writing craft, and working through revision techniques.

ENGL 568, Writing for Religious Audiences, 3 Units
Millions of readers across the world enjoy works written specifically for a Christian audience. The daily devotional magazine The Upper Room, for example, has a worldwide readership of 2 million. Charles Stanley's In Touch magazine has a readership of 1 million for the print and online versions of the publication. Students in this course will learn to write for this large Christian audience and how to market their work to editors and agents. They will focus on the types of articles that are particularly open to freelance writers, such as book reviews, personal experience articles, and personal profiles. They will also learn and practice the process of writing a book proposal and sample chapters for a non-fiction book targeted to the Christian market. Students will participate in an off-campus professional writers conference where they will pitch their article or book ideas to editors and agents.

ENGL 570, Graduate Research Methods in English, 3 Units
The goal of this class is to help students make the intellectual and emotional transition from undergraduate to graduate work, empower students with the key skills they will need during their graduate work, and prepare them for work and/or further study beyond the MA. The course will introduce students to graduate level standards for doing and presenting research in English and its related disciplines. It will enlarge and deepen students' repertoire of skills in effectively using available research tools, including library databases, WorldCat, Link+, etc. Students will build on the skills acquired as undergraduates in finding, critically evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources in order to make a contribution to the existing scholarly discourse. Students will learn to recognize how and where their individual interests and worldview intersect with, challenge, and speak to the larger academic community. Students will also learn to formulate, deepen, and pursue graduate level questions of scholarly interest over a sustained period of time. This class will prepare students for their other graduate level classes in the MA program and equip students to function as independent scholars outside the umbrella of a professor's guidance. Students who intend to pursue doctoral work, the legal field, or other careers involving research are strongly encouraged to take this class. Students who have been away from study for more than a year are also strongly encouraged to take this class.

ENGL 580, Critical Theory Seminar, 3 Units
This course introduces students to critical theory in the context of a specific theme, theoretical movement, or literary topic. Students will examine and practice models of critique and cultural analysis, considering how literature and language develops in particular social and material conditions. Topics will cover both major theoretical movements in critical theory, such as post-structuralism, reader-response, queer theory, hermeneutics, and post-colonial studies, as well as emerging theoretical approaches, such as affect studies, critical race studies, eco-criticism, historical phenomenology, new formalism, and transnational studies. Course assignments are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills required to do interdisciplinary work in literary studies.

ENGL 590, Writing Center Pedagogy and Practice, 3 Units
In this course, students will explore the pedagogical theory behind writing centers and, at a basic level, composition courses. Students will also learn to apply the theory in their own interactions with students, potentially in Azusa Pacific University's Writing Center while enrolled in the Master's program, and/or in their future careers. In addition, students will come to better understand the complexities of writing processes, what successful writing processes look like, process and post-process theory, and how to improve their own processes.

ENGL 591, Literature Pedagogy for Adult Audiences, 3 Units
In this course, students will deepen their work of developing the literary mind as they apply their knowledge of literature to processes of planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on lessons, materials (including media), and curricula for adolescent and adult learners. To accomplish these competencies, students will read, discuss, and critically analyze texts and media that deal directly or implicitly with the study of literature, learning theory (e.g., environment, transactional theory of the literary work, formalism), and the Common Core State Standards. They will practice research-based teaching pedagogy that addresses the needs of diverse learners (e.g., generational, cultural, linguistic, teaching styles, learning needs) at the secondary or college level. Observation of, and interviews with, expert teachers, coupled with curricular (lesson and syllabus) planning, teaching, research, discussion, application, and assessment will provide students with a practical foundation for teaching from a theologically-informed Christian perspective.

ENGL 592, Introduction to Composition Studies, 3 Units
This course provides an introduction to the rich, diverse field that is Composition studies today. The focus in the course is on learning about pedagogy that encourages effective writing, though some reading in theory is recommended to deepen awareness of how unexamined theory can lead to ineffective classroom practices. Topics of focus will include teaching process, understanding discourse models, using assessment for effective learning, studying composition historiographies, understanding how social, expressivist, and cognitive approaches to writing and language are important to pedagogies, understanding post-process theories of rhetoric, and learning new and various ways to assess writing.
ENGL 598, Thesis/Portfolio, 3 Units
Students in this seminar will write a forty to sixty page thesis that examines a well-focused question or problem through an informed context that is critical, theoretical, and/or historical. Students focusing on creative or professional writing may choose to develop a portfolio consisting of various original works of fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, or material formatted for presentation on the stage or screen. To this portfolio of original creative efforts students will append a brief (five to ten page) commentary or critical paper discussing the aesthetic, philosophical, psychological, and/or theological dimensions of their work.
Prerequisite: Sixty percent of course work to MA completed before taking 598.

ENGL 599, Independent Study, 1-3 Units
In this course students pursue a program of individual study with a supervising faculty member on a subject or interest not covered in regular course offerings, which is developed in consultation with the faculty member and approved by the department chair.

Faculty
Department Chair
Windy Petrie (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/wpetrie), Ph.D.

Director of Graduate Studies
Mark Eaton (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/meaton), Ph.D.

Professor
Joseph Bentz (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/jbentz), Ph.D.
Andrea Ivanov Craig (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/aivanovcraig), Ph.D.
Eric Drewry (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/edrewry), Ph.D.
Mark Eaton (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/meaton), Ph.D.
David Esselstrom (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/desselstrom), Ph.D.
Emily Griesinger (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/egriesinger), Ph.D.
Carole Lambert (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/clambert), Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Sarah Adams (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/sadams), Ph.D.
Thomas Allbaugh (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/tallbaugh), Ph.D.
Patricia Andujo (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/pandujo), Ph.D.
Michael Clark (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/mclark), Ph.D.
Caleb Spencer (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/cspencer), Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Kristen Sipper (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/ksipper), Ph.D.
Matthew Smith (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/mjsmith), Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus
Nancy Brashear (http://www.apu.edu/clas/faculty/nbrashear), Ph.D.