

English

Bachelor of Arts Degree

Contact

Naomi Jacobs, Chair
 Department of English
 5752 Neville Hall, Room 304A
 Orono, ME 04469-5752
 naomi_jacobs@umit.maine.edu
 207-581-3822
 fax: 207-581-3886
umaine.edu/english

Admission Requirements

(In years as established by the college)

A high school diploma with the following specific courses:

- 4 English
- 2 Algebra I & II
- 1 Geometry
- 2 Lab Science (including biology)
- 2 History/Social Studies
- 2 Foreign Language
(same language or two years of American Sign Language)
- Academic electives (to equal at least 17 credits)

To ensure current mathematical skills, students should take a mathematics course during their senior year of high school.

Did You Know?

- Recent graduates of our program have found jobs with the New York Public Library, the FBI, and Teach for America.
- About 10 percent of students who complete an honors thesis at the University of Maine each year are English majors.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Program Description

The Department of English offers its students the creative and critical insights that come from intensive study of literature and advanced training in writing. We offer literature courses ranging from historical surveys in traditional areas of English and American literature to intense explorations of a single author; from classic texts to popular culture; from close reading and appreciation of a writer's craft to theoretical issues within broadly based cultural studies.

Our regular offerings include women's literature, multicultural literature and film, as well as courses related to faculty specialties, such as Literature of the Sea or Nature and Literature. Faculty strengths in 20th- and 21st-century literature and critical theory lead to a curriculum particularly rich in those areas. Recent topics courses have included such titles as *The Graphic Novel*, *Avant-Garde Women's Narrative*, *American Fiction and Film Noir*, and *Writers of the Beat Generation*.

We firmly believe that one can't write well without reading well, and vice versa. Every English major completes a concentration in creative writing, professional writing, or critical writing. The writing curriculum ranges from workshops in poetry, fiction or creative nonfiction, to courses in grant writing or technical editing, to advanced work in textual analysis. Recent topics courses in writing have included such titles as *Playwriting*, *Altered Texts*, and *Writing as Design*.

Specialized Information

The department is a welcoming place, with the Ulrich Wicks Reading Room available as a comfortable study space for students. The Writers' Studio is a workspace reserved for professional writing students and the editors of the department's literary magazines. The Writing Center is home to a select group of undergraduate peer tutors.

Small classes (20-25 in literature classes and 15-20 for writing classes) allow for friendly interaction with peers and close attention from faculty.

The Writing Center is nationally recognized as a model for collaborative learning. Of the more than 350 undergraduates who have trained as peer tutors since 1981, more than 100 have presented at regional and national conferences on peer tutoring and more than 50 percent have gone on to graduate school.

The department sponsors a lively roster of visiting writers and scholars. The New Writing Series features 15–20 contemporary poets and fiction writers every year for free public readings. The Maine Writers Series hosts authors from Maine's own active literary scene. Guest writers visit classes and meet with students for informal conversations about their craft.

The department is home to the National Poetry Foundation (NPF), a scholarly publisher known for its journals and books on 20th century poetry. NPF's international conferences attract hundreds of well-known scholars and poets to campus every four years.

Through tutoring in the Writing Center, editorial work on the literary magazines or field experience as professional writers, students gain valuable experience that strengthens their applications for employment or graduate programs. Professional writing students have interned with campus entities as well as with community organizations.

Representative Courses

ENG 131 The Nature of Story
ENG 205 Introduction to Creative Writing
ENG 229 Dark Humor in American Fiction
ENG 244 Writers of Maine
ENG 271 The Act of Interpretation
ENG 307 Writing Fiction
ENG 308 Writing Poetry
ENG 309 Writing Creative Nonfiction

ENG 402 Topics in Writing and Research
ENG 415 Writing Reports and Proposals
ENG 442 Native American Literature
ENG 446 Contemporary American Poetry
ENG 453 Shakespeare
ENG 455 Literature of the Enlightenment
ENG 459 British Modernism
ENG 471 Gender Theory and Literature

Associated Honor Societies and Student Organizations

The English Students Advisory Board sponsors poetry slams, open advising sessions, a departmental coffee hour and a book club. Students participate as editors and contributors to *The Maine Review*, *Stolen Island Review* and *Puckerbrush Review*. Student writers compete for such awards as the Clarine Coffin Grenfell Prizes for Poetry, Steve Grady Awards in Creative Writing, Robert C. Hamlet Prize for the Best Original Play, Henry L. Griffin Prize in Composition and Albert Morton Turner Prizes for the Critical Essay. Special recognition includes membership in Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honor society, as well as the Abby Sargent Neese Kelly scholarships in creative writing, Hill and Houghton Scholarships for outstanding juniors and Ellis Prize for an outstanding senior. The Edna St. Vincent Millay Poetry Prize is awarded annually to a current or former graduate student in the program.

Comments from Students and Alumni

“I would not be who I am today without the guidance and support of this wonderful community. The smaller class sizes allowed me to become friends with my professors and peers.”

“At the end of five years, I am reading Proust, enjoying poetry readings, completing a biochemistry capstone and preparing for life after college. I have already been approached by several graduate programs.”

“The English Department has the most down to Earth, creative, and individualistically unique professors that any student could ever want.”

Career and Graduate Opportunities

The abilities to think in complex and subtle ways and to communicate effectively are valued in every realm of society. Training in English is excellent preparation for law school, as well as for graduate study in English, education or the humanities. Our alumni are employed in many areas of business, education, and social services. Some are teachers or educational administrators; some are professional or technical writers, journalists or editors; some have gone into finance, management, the law, library science, Web design or publishing. Others work with nonprofits or own their own businesses, including restaurants and consulting services. As one of our alumni put it, “If you can learn to read Chaucer in the Middle English, you can learn to read the tax code.”

UMaine Graduate Programs

Master of Arts in English with optional concentrations in creative writing, composition and pedagogy, gender and literature, and poetry and poetics

The five-year Bachelor of Arts in English/Master of Business Administration allows students to earn a B.A. while simultaneously completing preliminary coursework for a one-year M.B.A.

How do I apply?

Visit go.umaine.edu for an application, as well as information about academics and life at UMaine. Equal opportunity information also is available online (umaine.edu/eo)



Academic Programs 2011–12

The latest versions of the UMaine fact sheets are online (factsheets.umaine.edu). This fact sheet is intended for informational purposes only and is subject to change.

