

**2021-2022**

**MA English  
MFA Creative Writing  
Dual MA English / MFA Creative Writing**

**Program Handbook**

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## Your Chapman Community: A History

In 2021, Chapman University celebrates the 160th anniversary of our opening. In 1861, just 11 years after California became the 31st state, Hesperian College opened in the Northern California town of Woodland. Leaders of the group intentionally timed the college's opening so that its first classes would be held on the morning of Abraham Lincoln's inauguration. The school was ahead of its time: open to women as well as men and students of all races. While that school eventually closed, the assets were soon put to good use by a new venture gaining traction in Los Angeles.

Wilkinson College, in which your graduate program is housed, was founded in 1991 as part of the Chapman College transformation into Chapman University (as well as physically moving several buildings from Los Angeles here to Orange, buildings that still stand today). During the last decade alone, new schools, colleges and programs have been added. The University has achieved prestigious Phi Beta Kappa status and R2 designation as a Doctoral University with high research activity, and moved into the U.S. News National Universities category, joining the nation's most well-known institutions.

Today, Chapman University is made up of 10 schools and colleges. Harmon Wilkinson, Wilkinson College's namesake, and his wife Nadine Wilkinson helped to shape the Chapman value-centered liberal arts experience, providing funding for the chapel, student scholarships, and special events. Harmon said in his 1982 address at the Fall Faculty Conference of then Chapman College that to him Chapman "has a soul—has character and purpose." Hence Wilkinson College's tagline as "The Heart and Soul of Chapman University."

Wilkinson's distinguished faculty is composed of active scholars and writers who are renowned nationally and internationally for their academic excellence and contribution to knowledge. But just as important, they are also enthusiastic teachers who take seriously their responsibility of ensuring that our students, whether majors, minors, or graduate students, are prepared for the intellectual, ethical, and professional challenges that a rapidly changing world is going to present.

Dr. Jennifer Keene, Dean of Wilkinson College, writes, "the phrase "heart and soul of Chapman University" has several meanings for me. First, Wilkinson College is the historic liberal arts core of the university from which all subsequent growth originated. Second, Wilkinson College plays a unique role in the educational journey of every Chapman student due to the centrality of the college in the General Education curriculum. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the phrase evokes the vital importance and ongoing relevance of the arts, humanities, and social sciences to understanding our world – how we got here, who we are, and where we are going as a society."

## Welcome, a Message from Dr. Mark Axelrod-Sokolov & Dr. Joanna Levin

Welcome! Bienvenidos! Yokoso! You have been accepted to the MA Program in English at Chapman University. You have worked hard to get here, and we are here to assist you in your quest to complete your MA or Dual Degree.

The English Department is part of the Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, where our faculty and students are committed to engaging the world and studying our passions. Our MA program offers a wide range of small seminars in literature, rhetoric and composition, cultural studies and digital humanities. We feature literary events that bring national/international authors to campus and literature to life. Whether you are studying contemporary Latinx literature, the novels of Jane Austen, the theory and practice of writing center tutoring, or feminist rhetorics, our courses span multiple genres, critical approaches, and literary and rhetorical traditions.

Beginning with a course in Literary Theory and Critical Practice, your program of study will culminate in the writing of an MA Thesis. Throughout your studies, we encourage you to be attuned to the texts, critical/theoretical debates, and research questions that most excite you. A comment generated in response to a discussion post or a scholarly text that you discover in an endnote might just lead you toward new areas of inquiry and research discoveries. The MA Thesis can build on the scholarly research and projects that you conduct in your coursework; alternatively, if you wish to write a thesis on a topic that is not addressed in your regular coursework, you should plan on taking ENG 599: Individual Study with an appropriate faculty member during one of the semesters before you enroll in ENG 597B: MA Thesis.

We encourage you to read widely and deeply, to write boldly and thoughtfully, and to engage in innovative, interdisciplinary scholarship. We enthusiastically welcome you into the Chapman and English Department community and wish you the very best in your literary and rhetorical studies.

Dr. Mark Axelrod-Sokolov  
Director, MA in English  
Director, John Fowles Center for Creative Writing

Dr. Joanna Levin  
Director, Dual MA English / MFA Creative Writing  
Chair, Department of English

## Welcome, a Message from Dr. Anna Leahy

Welcome to the Chapman University MFA in Creative Writing community, where we write boldly, read thoughtfully, and live vibrantly. Together, our students and faculty are here to bring big ideas to life in words and to engage those words with the world. Your professors and your peers will challenge you, and we expect you to challenge yourself too.

In conjunction with the Graduate Catalog and the Graduate Student Handbook, this handbook for students in the English graduate programs is designed to help guide you through the journey to your degree. MFA students begin with ENG 587: Aspects of a Writer, which lays the strong foundation for your writing over a lifetime.

While students must adhere to university policies, the MFA in Creative Writing program is designed to be agile and to encourage you to discover and build your individual strengths. You may arrive here focused on one genre, for instance, but as you work your way through the semesters, you can explore the variety of genres, aesthetics, and faculty expertise represented across the department's coursework. Stay curious. Try new things. Write something you didn't think you could write.

Your work in the program culminates in an ambitious thesis project under the direction of a faculty mentor. Defending this book-in-progress serves as an end for your academic journey, but the thesis process is also the beginning of the next stage of your creative life. I encourage you to use your time during this MFA program to establish a trajectory that will get you where you want to go, whether that future is as a publishing author, a professor, a cultural entrepreneur, a grant writer for a nonprofit, or another goal that depends on your creativity, way with words, and critical thinking.

I want to emphasize that, while writing is most often done in isolation, with you at the laptop or pen to paper, an MFA program provides the sort of community in which creativity can flourish. Writers tend to be more productive when they spend time with other creative people who encourage novel ways of thinking and who value creative work. The coursework, thesis, event programming, and other opportunities here at Chapman are designed to create a vibrant environment for you as a writer. Whether creativity thrives here also depends upon you. Share your ideas and your writing. Offer meaningful critique, and cheer each other on. Be open to serendipity. And of course, reach out to me or to the Graduate Programs Coordinator when you have questions or concerns that aren't addressed in this handbook.

Onward,

Dr. Anna Leahy  
Director, MFA in Creative Writing  
Director, Tabula Poetica: The Center for Poetry

## Graduate Student Handbooks and the Graduate Catalog

This program handbook is intended as a resource guide for graduate students in the MA in English, MFA in Creative Writing, and Dual MA English / MFA Creative programs, where you will find helpful information and answers to frequently asked questions.

However, the [Graduate Catalog](#) is considered the official representation of program requirements for all graduate programs at Chapman University. If a conflict between the information in this handbook and the Graduate Catalog arises, the information in the Graduate Catalog prevails.

The [Chapman University Graduate Student Handbook](#) is the location for graduate student academic policies, expectations, and helpful information as well as non-academic information, resources, and support. Important information will not be repeated here, and graduate students should refer to both handbooks.

In addition to their program handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and the Graduate Student Handbook, all Wilkinson College graduate students are expected to adhere to [The Student Code of Conduct](#).

If you have questions or need information that is not addressed in this handbook, you can seek guidance from the following individuals:

### **Graduate Programs Coordinator**

David Krausman

(714) 516-7116

[krausman@chapman.edu](mailto:krausman@chapman.edu)

### **MA in English Program Director**

Dr. Mark Axelrod

(714) 997-6586

[axelrod@chapman.edu](mailto:axelrod@chapman.edu)

### **MFA in Creative Writing Program Director**

Dr. Anna Leahy

(714) 628-7389

[leahy@chapman.edu](mailto:leahy@chapman.edu)

### **Chair, Department of English**

Dr. Joanna Levin

(714) 997-6534

[jlevin@chapman.edu](mailto:jlevin@chapman.edu)

## Conditions of Accuracy

The information within this handbook is accurate as of the time of publication. Students are responsible for informing themselves of and satisfactorily meeting all requirements pertinent to their relationship with the University. Students and others who use this handbook should be aware that the information changes from time to time at the sole discretion of Chapman University and that these changes may alter information contained in this handbook. More current and complete information may be obtained in the appropriate department, school, or administrative offices. The University reserves the right, at any time and without notice, to make any changes to all rules, policies, procedures, and any other information that pertains to students or to the institution including, but not limited to, admission, registration, tuition and fees, attendance, curriculum requirements, conduct, academic standing, candidacy, and graduation. This handbook does not constitute a contract or terms or conditions of a contract between the student and Chapman University.

### IN CASES OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE HANDBOOK AND GRADUATE CATALOG

The Graduate Catalog is considered the official representation of program requirements for all graduate programs at Chapman University. If a conflict between the information in this handbook and the Graduate Catalog arises, the information in the Graduate Catalog prevails.

## Institutional Policies

**CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES** may be found on the Institutional Policies at Chapman webpage, <https://www.chapman.edu/campus-services/legal-affairs/policy/index.aspx>. They include:

- [Graduate Catalogs »](#)
- [Discrimination and Title IX »](#)
- [Religious Accommodations Policy »](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct, Sex Based/Gender Discrimination and Title IX »](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct »](#)
- [Student Complaint Procedures »](#)
- [Integrity in Research Policy »](#)
- [Inventions and Patents Policy »](#)
- [Accessibility Policy \(Web and Electronic Resources\) »](#)
- [Administering Online Surveys Involving Students, Faculty and Staff »](#)
- [Computer and Acceptable Use Policy »](#)
- [Copyrighted Works Policy »](#)
- [Records Retention and Destruction Policy »](#)
- [Reporting Misconduct »](#)
- [Smoking Policy »](#)
- [Student Privacy Policies \(FERPA\) »](#)
- [Electronic Records Accessibility Policy »](#)
- [Privacy Policy »](#)
- [Personal Computer Support Policy »](#)

**ACADEMIC and ENROLLMENT POLICIES** can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#) and include the following university policies:

- Academic Integrity
- Add/Drop/Withdrawal
- Degree Conferral and Commencement
- Grades/GPA/Incompletes
- Grade Reviews
- Individual Study
- Leave of Absence
- Petitions and Appeals
- Probation and Dismissal
- Repeating Courses/Course Audits
- Thesis/Dissertation Committee and Comprehensive Exams
- Transfer Credits/Residency Requirements

## Helpful Links & Tutorials

### General Information

- [Canvas.chapman.edu](https://canvas.chapman.edu)
  - All of the information in this handbook and more is available virtually in our “Program Den” via the web-based learning management system Canvas. You can log into Canvas using your Chapman University credentials. By downloading Canvas to your smart devices, you can have access to this handbook and your Program Den at the touch of a finger.
  - If you do not already have access to the program den, please email the Graduate Programs Coordinator from your CU email address requesting access.
- [Graduate Student Orientation Videos and Tutorials](#)
  - The Vice Provost for Graduate Education hosts a wealth of quick, informative videos designed especially for graduate students. Topics range from **Parking at Chapman, Off-Campus Housing Support, Disability Services, Graduate Student Health Services** (including Health Insurance information), **Graduate Student Psychological and Counseling Services, Getting Involved as a Graduate Student**, as well as **How to Use Your Program Evaluation and Student Center** (my.chapman.edu) Tutorials.

### Course Information

- [The Graduate Catalog](#)
  - The Graduate Catalog is considered the official representation of program requirements for all graduate programs at Chapman University. One should enroll for courses by comparing the required courses listed on the Graduate Catalog page of their program with the offerings for the semester.
- [How to Register for Classes](#)

### Student Resources

- [Campus Map](#)
- [Chapman Food Pantry](#)
  - Chapman University has two food pantries to support students who identify as food insecure. Food insecurity is commonly defined as the inability to have two meals a day and have access to healthy food. Request access to the Orange Campus food pantry by filling out the access form online.
- [Frances Smith Center for Individual and Family Counseling](#)

- The Frances Smith Center for Individual and Family Therapy is offering free counseling to all Chapman graduate students. These services include those suffering from anxiety, depression, relationship issues, family problems, and other mental health issues. To be eligible for services, you must be physically located in the state of California at the time of your session appointment. To access care, call the Center's mainline (714-997-6746), press "1" for intake line, and following the instructions.
- [Leatherby Libraries](#)
  - The Leatherby Libraries at Chapman University is a unifying presence on the Chapman campus that provides personalized services and relevant collections in support of the curricular, creative, and scholarly needs of students, faculty, staff and community. Whether you are seeking sources for a final paper in a literature or rhetoric course, want to take advantage of article databases, are looking for summer reading while you are writing your novel, or need to format your thesis, librarians and library staff are available to guide you. Graduate students can book study rooms in the library for up to six hours.
- [Software](#)
  - Chapman students have free access to an array of software through IS&T. Software that may be particularly useful for graduate students in English include Adobe Creative Cloud, Endnote, Grammarly Premium, and [Microsoft Office 365](#).
- [Wilkinson College Career Resources](#)
  - Chapman University and the Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Career Resources offer comprehensive personalized career services for graduate students and alumni. Wilkinson's Career Advisor is available for one-on-one advising appointments and can provide you with program-specific career support.

## Graduate Programs Core Faculty

**Mark Axelrod**

Fiction writing, screenwriting, 19th-century French literature, 20th-century Latin American literature

**Ian Barnard**

Rhetoric and composition, queer theory

**Richard Bausch**

Fiction writing

**James Blaylock**

Fiction writing, creative nonfiction writing

**Patrick Fuery**

Literary and cultural theory, film and visual studies, creative and cultural industries

**Alicia Kozameh**

Fiction writing, creative nonfiction writing, writing in Spanish

**Anna Leahy**

Poetry writing, creative nonfiction writing, creative writing pedagogy, gender studies

**Kent Lehnhof**

Early modern literature, Shakespeare, Milton, feminist theory

**Martin Nakell**

Poetry writing, fiction writing, experimental literature and film, jazz

**Nora Rivera**

Rhetoric and composition, rhetorics of indigenous interpreting practices

**Richard Ruppel**

Early modernism, especially the work of Joseph Conrad; British colonial literature; queer theory

**Tom Zoellner**

Journalism, creative nonfiction writing

**Brian Glaser**

Environmental literature and writing, lyric poetry, psychoanalytic theory

**Renee Hudson**

Latinx revolutionary unconscious in contemporary literature, American and Haitian revolutions, legacy of Latin American independence movements of the nineteenth-century

**Lynda A. Hall**

Areas of Specialization: 18th- and 19th-century British literature, 19th-century American literature

**Joanna Levin**

American literature and culture, literary theory and criticism, gender studies

**Mildred Lewis**

Screenwriting, Caribbean literature, playwriting

**Rei Magosaki**

20th-century US literature and culture, US multicultural literatures, Asian-American literature, contemporary women's writing, theories of modernity and globalization

**Jan Osborn**

Rhetoric and composition, sociolinguistics, critical literacies

**Morgan Read-Davidson**

Rhetorical theory, new media theory, composition pedagogy

**Sarah Robblee**

Technical communication and rhetoric

**Justine Van Meter**

Comparative literature, modern and contemporary Irish literature, postcolonial theory and literature, cultural theory

## Graduate Programs Overview & Sample Timeline

Students generally take three courses (9 units) in the Fall and Spring semesters. Students in the MA or MFA typically finish in two years, or 36 units of coursework over four semesters. Students in the Dual program typically finish in three years, or 54 units of coursework over six semesters.

All graduate students must prepare and defend, under the direction of an individual faculty member, a thesis project of distinction in order to complete their degree(s).

### Sample Timeline

This sample timeline is based on a typical student who matriculates in the Fall semester and maintains full-time status, usually 9 credits per semester for four semesters.

#### First Semester Year 1 (Fall)

- Enroll in the introductory course(s) to your program. For the MA in English this would be ENG 556: *Literary Theory and Critical Practice 1920 – Present*. For the MFA in Creative Writing this would be ENG 587: *Aspects of a Writer*. Dual students should enroll in both courses. These classes include an overview of the thesis process and an introduction to graduate faculty who can direct a Thesis.

#### Second Semester Year 1 (Spring)

- Comparing the course offerings with your program requirements, take any combination of required courses.
- MFA students submit their Thesis Proposal by April 20. Changes to the Thesis Proposal (genre, project, potential director, etc.) can be made as the student drafts the Thesis. The thesis Director may provide a reading list to guide the student during the drafting of the thesis. MA and Dual Degree students that wish to enroll in ENG 597B: MA Thesis should also submit their Thesis Proposals by April 20. MA students who wish to write a thesis on a topic that is not addressed in the student's regular coursework must enroll in ENG 599: Independent Study with an appropriate faculty member before enrolling in ENG 597B. Such a preparatory course should be taken before and not concurrently with ENG 597B: MA Thesis. Summers and Interterms are also good times for engaging in the reading and research that will culminate in the MA Thesis.

#### Third Semester Year 2 (Fall)

- Continue taking required coursework.
- MA and Dual Degree students that wish to enroll in ENG 597B in their fourth semester should submit their Thesis Proposals. Changes to MFA Thesis Proposal (genre, project, potential director, etc.) can be made as the student drafts the Thesis. The thesis Director may provide a reading list to guide the student during the drafting of the thesis.

### Fourth Semester Year 2 (Spring)

- Enroll in the required thesis course with your Thesis Director. Complete the Thesis Committee Form. Complete the Thesis, including the Thesis Defense. Submit the Thesis to Leatherby Libraries.

### Year 3 & Beyond

Students in the Dual program typically finish their remaining coursework and second degree by the spring of their third year.

Sometimes, students take fewer than the average 9-unit course load and spread their remaining classes and/or thesis over multiple years. Students should talk with the Graduate Programs Coordinator or Program Director about these plans. Students have seven years from their admitted term to complete their program.

## Program Requirements

Current requirements for the MA, MFA, and Dual degree programs, as well as all courses offered, are included in the [Graduate Catalog](#); this information is not duplicated here in this handbook. Students use the catalog year of their year of admission into the program. The student's individual Program Evaluation in the Learning Management System is designed to help the student understand degree requirements and track progress toward the degree.

Tutorials on how to use the Program Evaluation can be found in the Helpful Links and Tutorials section of this handbook as well as the online Program Dens.

Log into the Learning Management System at [my.chapman.edu](http://my.chapman.edu)

## The Master's Thesis

What is a master's thesis?

A thesis is a document submitted in support of candidature for an academic degree or professional qualification presenting the author's scholarly research and findings or the author's creative work.

A master's degree thesis in the MA program is related to the type of research paper that one might have completed during college. You are expected to build on the research of others and provide your own analysis and discoveries. It demonstrates your level of critical and analytical thinking and defines the subject that you are pursuing within your field.

A student who wishes to write an MA thesis on a topic that is not addressed in the student's regular coursework must enroll in ENG 599: Independent Study with an appropriate faculty member. Such a preparatory course should be taken before and not concurrently with ENG 597B: MA Thesis. Summers and Interterms are also good times for engaging in the reading and research that will culminate in the MA Thesis.

A master's degree thesis in the MFA program is a significant body of work accompanied by the author's critical statement. Fiction writers can write a novel, novella, or a collection of short stories. Poetry students will write a collection of poetry. Nonfiction writers may write a memoir or collection of personal essays. With the approval of the Thesis Director, a multigenre thesis, a thesis that includes a digital component, or a screenwriting thesis is possible.

Usually the thesis is the capstone project to the program and occurs in the final term of enrollment.

## The Thesis Proposal

The role of the Thesis Proposal is to provide a clear, specific idea of your project that will serve as a guide to the reader. A proposal should be an overview of the planned project and should provide specific elements that go beyond a simple project statement. The proposal serves as the foundation of your project and will support the subsequent writing throughout the thesis drafting and revision process.

Each program has their own proposal requirements, outlined below.

All graduate students must have an approved thesis proposal prior to enrolling in the thesis course.

### **Proposal Approval**

By the end of the semester, the Department of English should notify the student in writing that the Thesis Proposal is approved or indicate what revisions are needed before resubmitting. The Thesis Director is assigned when the proposal is approved.

### **Thesis Reading List**

At the discretion of the Thesis Director, a required or suggested reading list may be given to the student. When readings are assigned, those texts can be used as reference during the thesis course and the defense.

## The Thesis Proposal: MA in English

The proposal must include the following components:

- A 250-500 word statement of purpose that outlines the thesis project
- A working bibliography

The MA Thesis Proposal must be submitted to the potential Thesis Director. For advice on how to identify a potential thesis director, see the following section: *Identifying Potential Thesis Directors*.

Approved proposals are accepted via the online submission form: <https://forms.gle/rSsbuorcBrDhqDau8>

- **For the MA Degree**, the Thesis Proposal is due the semester before the student plans to enroll in the thesis course. For example, a student who wants to defend their thesis in the Spring term of their second year would submit the proposal in the Fall of their second year. Please note: MA students that wish to write a thesis on a topic that is not addressed in the student's regular coursework must enroll in ENG 599: Independent Study with an appropriate faculty member before enrolling in ENG 597B. Such a preparatory course should be taken before and not concurrently with ENG 597B: MA Thesis. Summers and Interterms are also good times for engaging in the reading and research that will culminate in the MA Thesis.

**The deadline for MA Thesis Proposals is April 20 for defenses in the following Fall term, or November 20 for the following Spring term, regardless of the day of the week the date falls on.**

An example proposal can be found in the Program Den.

## The Thesis Proposal: MFA in Creative Writing

The proposal must include the following components:

- A list of five possible thesis directors, ordered by preference.
- Project Statement: A 1-page, double-spaced statement that outlines the thesis project.
- Sample of Work: A complete short story, first chapter of a novel, a complete essay, a first chapter of a nonfiction book, first 30 pages of a screenplay, or ten pages of poetry. This sample must be intended to be part of the thesis.

Proposals are accepted via the online submission form: <https://forms.gle/keagBYJ791RVhDCb7>

**For the MFA Degree**, the Thesis Proposal is due in the Spring semester before the academic year that student plans to enroll in the thesis course. For example, a first-year student who wants to defend their thesis in the Spring term of their second year would submit the proposal in the Spring of their first year.

**The deadline for MFA Thesis Proposals in the following Fall or Spring Term is April 20, regardless of the day of the week the date falls on.**

An example proposal can be found in the Program Den.

## The Thesis Proposal: Dual MA in English / MFA in Creative Writing

Students in the Dual program typically defend one thesis of their choosing in the spring of their second year, followed by the final thesis in the spring of their third year. Dual students follow the same proposal and enrollment processes outlined above.

## Identifying Potential Thesis Directors

Once you've identified the broad subject area you are interested in exploring, you should think about who might serve as an appropriate Thesis Director. The list of graduate faculty members that may serve as Thesis Directors are listed below and can also be found on the Thesis Proposal submission form.

There are several ways to go about considering a potential Thesis Director. One strategy is to consider professors in whose courses you have been or are enrolled. A second strategy is to look at our core faculty and their research interests to see whose expertise your project relates to at least loosely. That said, you need not have taken a class with the faculty you list in the Thesis Proposal, and many faculty work in more than one area. If you'd like additional guidance, you can talk with the Program Director to brainstorm about who a suitable Thesis Director might be.

**For MFA theses**, the Thesis Director should come from the full-time creative writing faculty:

Axelrod, Bausch, Blaylock, Glaser, Kozameh, Leahy, Lewis, Zoellner

The Department of English will assign students to a particular Thesis Director based upon faculty time commitments, expertise, and the consent of the Department Chair, in addition to the student's preferences. While you are encouraged to talk with faculty about your planned thesis project as you are developing your Thesis Proposal, individual faculty cannot commit to direct a given thesis.

**For MA theses**, the thesis director should come from graduate full-time literature or rhetoric faculty:

Axelrod, Barnard, Dressel, Glaser, Hall, Hudson, Lehnhof, Levin, Magosaki, Osborn, Read-Davidson, Rivera, Robblee, Ruppel, Van Meter

## Enrolling in the Thesis Course

Only after the successful submission and approval of a Thesis Proposal, the Department of English will contact the student via their Chapman University email with instructions on how to register for in ENG 597B: MA Thesis or ENG 597A: MFA Thesis.

Each thesis student receives their own section of a thesis course for enrollment. These sections are created specifically for each student only after an approved Thesis Proposal.

## Thesis Requirements & Formatting

Questions about the thesis guidelines should be addressed to the Program Director or to the Chair of the Department of English. Questions about an individual thesis-in-process should be addressed to the Thesis Director.

### MA Thesis Requirements

- **Enrollment in ENG 597B: MA Thesis.** During the semester in which the student intends to complete and defend the Thesis (usually the last semester of study), the student must enroll in ENG 597B: MA Thesis with their individual Thesis Director. During registration, students should consult the instructions emailed to them by the Department of English Senior Administrative Assistant in order to enroll.
- **The thesis should be between 6,000 and 14,000 words**, not including endnotes and bibliography. The appropriate length will be determined in consultation with the Thesis Director.

**Additionally**, the Thesis must demonstrate the following MA Program Learning Outcomes:

- The ability to situate the projects within broader historical, critical, social, cultural, and/or philosophical contexts.
- A writing style free of major mechanical errors that enables the presentation of ideas and evidence at a high scholarly level.
- An in-depth knowledge of key critical and/or theoretical debates relevant to the topic.
- Attention to relevant literary movements and genres if writing about literary texts.

The [MA Thesis Assessment Rubric](#) will be used to evaluate all thesis projects according to these learning outcomes as part of program assessment.

With the permission of the Chair of the Department of English and the MA Director, students can develop alternative Thesis Projects, including Digital Humanities Projects.

### Thesis Format

Short Link: <https://chapman.libguides.com/dissertations>

The thesis formatting guidelines are available at Leatherby Libraries as the [MA/MS Thesis Checklist](#). **Adherence to the library's formatting guidelines is mandatory.** However, for an MA Thesis some guidelines are optional; check with the library's Dissertations and Theses Librarian with any specific questions about formatting.

## MFA Thesis Requirements

- **Enrollment in ENG 597A: MFA Thesis.** During the semester in which the student intends to complete and defend the Thesis (usually the last semester of study), the student must enroll in ENG 597A: MFA Thesis with their individual Thesis Director. During registration, students should consult the instructions emailed to them by the Department of English Senior Administrative Assistant in order to enroll.
- **Creative Work & Page Ranges:**
  - Fiction: A collection of short stories, novella(s), or a novel-in-progress of 150-250 pages.
  - Nonfiction: A collection of essays or a nonfiction book-in-progress of 150-250 pages.
  - Poetry: A collection of poems no fewer than 48 pages and no more than 80 pages.
  - Screenplay or Stage Play: A screenplay or stage play of 90-120 pages.
- **Critical Statement:** 7-10 pages at the end of the document. This statement should contextualize the creative work, examine the aesthetic approach, and/or discuss thematic or formal aspects of the work. Assigned or suggested reading may inform this statement.

If the Thesis is a novel or nonfiction book for which the total pages represent a partial draft, the Thesis should include an outline for the remaining portion of the project; such an outline is in addition to the existing page ranges for the genre. Collections of stories, poems, or essays should be complete.

The MFA Student Learning Objectives will be used to assess the MFA program based on thesis projects. Students may find it helpful to keep these outcomes in mind while writing and revising the thesis, but they are not grading criteria. A learning outcomes rubric is completed by the Thesis Committee at the conclusion of the defense.

### Thesis Format

Short Link: <https://chapman.libguides.com/dissertations>

The thesis formatting guidelines are available at Leatherby Libraries as the [MFA Thesis Checklist](#). **Adherence to the library's formatting guidelines is mandatory.** However, for an MFA Thesis some guidelines are optional; check with the library's Dissertations and Theses Librarian with any specific questions about formatting.

## Expectations & Responsibilities: Thesis Student, Director, & Reader

### **The student's responsibilities include the following:**

Good mentoring practice entails responsibilities not only of the Thesis Director but also of the student. When a student enters a master's program, that student commits time and energy necessary for a thesis or thesis project that makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge. It is the responsibility of the student to conform to University and program requirements and procedures. Although it is the duty of the director to be reasonably available for consultation, the primary responsibility for keeping in touch rests with the student. The student's responsibilities include the following:

- Become familiar with and adhere to the rules, policies, and procedures in place in the graduate program and the University as outlined in available resources such as graduate student handbooks, web resources (Canvas), catalog, and other University policies.
- Know and follow the rules and policies of the University, including all deadlines regarding registration, leaves of absence, limitations on time, thesis submission, and graduation.
- Select and plan an original scholarly or creative project that can be successfully completed within the expected time frame for the degree program.
- Prepare a work plan and timetable in consultation with the director as a basis for your remaining time in the program, including any proposed reading or other preparation.
- Learn and adhere to responsible standards for your field and University standards.
- Meet with the director when requested and report regularly on progress.
- Begin the thesis semester with a complete or near-complete draft of your thesis so that your focus can be on revision.
- Keep the director informed on any significant changes that may affect your progress.
- Establish a thesis committee, in consultation with the director, early in the thesis semester.
- Schedule the Thesis Defense, after coordinating with all committee members.
- Keep the thesis committee Readers informed of the progress of the thesis, and with the approval of the director, circulate a final or near-to-final draft no fewer than two weeks prior to the thesis defense.
- Submit the Thesis to the library.

**The Thesis Director's responsibilities include the following:**

Within the context of the role as Thesis Director, a faculty member's primary task is to guide and inspire students to reach their scholarly and/or creative potential. At the same time, each director must try to ensure that each student is following the rules and policies of the University. Students registering for graduate thesis credits pursue a project under the direction of a thesis or project director. The director should promote conditions conducive to a student's research, intellectual, and creative growth and provide appropriate guidance on the process and the standards expected. The director (who is instructor of record for thesis credits) should meet with the student a minimum of five times, inclusive of the thesis defense. Additionally, the Thesis Director's responsibilities include the following:

- Establish a meeting pattern or regular conversations to mentor the student and meet the University's credit requirement. Meetings might include but need not be confined to discussion of the thesis process and guidelines, assigned readings, planned research or writing, challenges the student faces, feedback on drafted pages, and the student's career plans.
- Guide the student in planning a thesis project that can be successfully completed within the expected timeframe for the program.
- Establish with the student a realistic timetable and work plan for completion of various phases of research, writing, revising, and defending.
- Provide advice and feedback, including a realistic timeframe for receiving feedback. Feedback should be professional and constructive and provide concrete guidance for improvement.
- Ensure that students have an understanding of relevant theories and methodological and technical skills necessary for completing the project, including standards and ethical practices for your field.
- Establish with the student a thesis committee early on in the thesis semester.
- Make arrangements to ensure continuity of student supervision during a leave or an extended period of absence.
- Help maintain a learning environment that is safe, equitable, and free from harassment and discrimination.
- Remain attuned to academic needs and concerns that may arise for international students, students from underrepresented groups, students with disabilities, and students with family responsibilities.
- Communicate in a timely manner if the student's academic performance is not meeting expectations. Provide an outline and timeline for what actions need to be taken in order to meet expectations. While dealing with inadequate academic performance can be difficult, it is in no one's best interests to prolong a program of study if success is unlikely.
- Complete or sign necessary forms, including the assessment rubric and the library's formatting checklist, both of which should be done at the end of the defense.

- Serve as an advocate for the student in navigating University policies and work with the Graduate Programs Coordinator in supporting student success.

Students sometimes experience personal difficulties. These can include family difficulties, problems in personal relationships, cultural adjustments, financial pressures, medical issues, and problems associated with employment. The importance of these various problems should not be under-emphasized. Thesis Directors should not act in a counseling capacity with their students, nor should they intrude into the personal lives of their students with unwanted advice. However, directors should try to ensure that their relationships with students are such that students will be comfortable telling their director when they are having significant personal difficulties so that timetables can be rearranged and referrals made to appropriate campus resources.

**The Thesis Reader's responsibilities include the following:**

The Thesis Director often recommends a specific colleague to serve as the Second and/or Third Reader based on the topic or prior working relationship with that colleague; however, it remains the student's ultimate responsibility to approach the Second and Third Readers. Readers should consult with the Thesis Director to ensure common understanding of project length, criteria for assessment, and other conditions and assumptions informing the project.

The responsibilities of the Second and Third Readers include:

- Read and comment on a final or near-to-final draft of the thesis.
- Participate actively in the students' thesis defense.
- Advise the thesis director concerning assignment of final grade for project, if input is requested by the Thesis Director
- Participate in program assessment, when requested.

## The Thesis Committee

After an approved Thesis Proposal and enrollment in ENG 597B: MA Thesis or ENG 597A: MFA Thesis, the Thesis Committee Form must be submitted to the online submission form within the first two weeks of the semester during which the student is enrolled in thesis.

**Online Submission Form:** <https://forms.gle/1uBgjHcwPr52Npp6>

In consultation with the Thesis Director, Department Chair, and/or Program Director, the student should request two additional faculty members to serve on their thesis committee. All three committee members must sign the form agreeing to serve on the Thesis Committee. The committee will consist of the Thesis Director, the Second Reader, and the Third Reader.

An MA Thesis Director should come from the full-time literature or rhetoric faculty. An MFA Thesis Director should come from the full-time creative writing faculty.

The Second Reader and Third Reader may be any member of the full-time English faculty or, with permission of the Thesis Director and the Chair of English, a full-time faculty member of another department. No faculty member should serve as a member on more than six committees in a single semester.

## The Thesis Defense

After the student has confirmed three committee members and submitted the Thesis Committee Form, the student should email all members of the committee to set an agreed-upon date and time for the Thesis Defense. The student should then ask the Senior Administrative Assistant in the Department of English to reserve a room for two hours for the defense.

The complete thesis must be submitted to all members of the committee at least two weeks prior the defense, unless all committee members negotiate a different time frame. Faculty on multiple committees may need additional time to prepare for closely scheduled defenses.

The Thesis Defense provides an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of the thesis, the research or craft decision-making that went into the thesis, and how the thesis relates to the scholarly or literary context in which it is situated.

The Thesis Director and committee members are each expected to prepare no fewer than three questions related to the work (the questions will not be given to the student in advance of the defense), plus a written commentary or marginal notes about the work that the candidate can retain. One of the primary purposes of the defense is to provide students with feedback on the thesis.

The Thesis Director must also complete the required assessment rubric and work with the student to complete the required Thesis Submission Checklist for library submission.

As time allows, the student may make changes to the defended thesis based on the committee's suggestions. Some committees might require changes after the defense before approving the final thesis. The Thesis Director must send an email to the Chair of the Department of English and the Graduate Programs Coordinator indicating the name and of the student who completes the defense successfully.

If the Thesis Director, committee members, and/or student determine that the thesis is not yet ready for the defense, the student can enroll in a one-unit continuous enrollment class and defend the thesis during a subsequent semester. For more information, see the What If I Need More Time in the FAQ.

## Submitting the Thesis

After a successful thesis defense, students are responsible for collecting their director and readers' approval signatures for final submission. The thesis must be submitted to Leatherby Libraries, for the Chapman University Digital Commons. **Students are required for degree conferral to submit an electronic copy of the thesis for inclusion in the Digital Commons.**

You may find the instructions for submission, the required checklists, and the Deadlines for Completion of Library Requirements on the Library's web page for thesis submission guidelines.

<https://chapman.libguides.com/dissertations>

The Dissertations and Theses Librarian supports all graduate students in the submission of their theses to Leatherby Libraries. You may contact the librarian in-person at Leatherby Libraries or via email with questions or for help.

Students submitting an MFA thesis are encouraged to restrict access to their thesis in Digital Commons and should consult Chapman University's Digital Commons FAQ.

## Thesis Deadlines

While enrolled in your thesis course and writing, drafting, and revising your thesis and scheduling the Thesis Defense, it is imperative to keep in mind two important university deadlines.

These deadlines can be found each term on the Vice Provost for Graduate Education's website:

<https://www.chapman.edu/academics/graduate-education/current-students/index.aspx>

### **Deadline 1: Thesis Defense**

MFA in Creative Writing: **November 20** for Fall term Defenses, **April 20** for Spring term Defenses  
MA in English: Students should adhere to the [Vice Provost for Graduate Education's deadline for Defenses](#).

As per Graduate Catalog policy, students must successfully defend their thesis prior to commencement to participate in May commencement ceremonies.

A thesis defense may occur after the Thesis Defense Deadline. However, note that delaying the defense may not allow enough time for any required revisions and submission to Leatherby Libraries by the Deadline for Library Submission. When university deadlines are not met, degree conferral can be delayed.

### **Deadline 2: Library Submission**

It is recommended that you submit well ahead of this deadline to allow for library processing times (approximately 2-5 business days) **and** in case any corrections need to be made to your manuscript. **Please note that this deadline is for completing all requirements in the correct format, and not just for the initial submission to the library.**

As per Graduate Catalog policy, students must successfully submit their thesis projects to the library in order to complete the degree requirements.

## Student Scholarly/Creative Grants and Conference Travel Grants

In line with Chapman University's commitment to the scholarly and creative activities of its graduate students, Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants and Conference Travel Grants are offered on a competitive basis to all current graduate students. Graduate Student Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants are intended to provide support for a variety of clearly defined scholarly or creative projects. Graduate Student Conference Travel Grants are intended to provide support for graduate students to travel to academic conferences or other professional venues for presenting one's original work.

The Graduate Student Grants process is managed by each College for the students in all that college's graduate programs. The funds are distributed competitively, and the maximum amount of each award is \$500.

Scholarly/Creative Activity Grants require a proposal, a budget, and a letter of support from the faculty who is mentoring the project. The deadline for submitting conference travel grant applications is rolling; applications can be submitted at any time prior to beginning the funded work. There is no per-student limit on the number of scholarly/creative projects Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences will fund as long as the awards do not exceed the \$500 yearly cap per student. However, given multiple strong proposals, priority will be given to applicants who have received the least prior funding.

Students planning to present at a conference or other professional venue should complete the Conference Travel Grant Application. The deadline for submitting conference travel grant applications is rolling; applications can be submitted at any time prior to the conference. However, funds are limited so students are encouraged to apply as early as possible and can apply before booking travel.

To apply for a Scholarly/Creative Activity Grant or Conference Travel Grant, or for more information about the Graduate Student Grant program, the expenditure of grant funds, and the submission of reimbursement requests, please contact the Wilkinson College Graduate Programs Coordinator.

## Graduate Student Employment Opportunities

### Graduate Student Course Assistantships

All currently enrolled graduate students in the English Department at Chapman University are eligible for consideration to work as paid Graduate Course Assistants (GCAs) in order to gain teaching experience. A GCA assists a faculty member in teaching a specific class. GCA responsibilities typically include helping the faculty member prepare materials for the course, assisting with classroom activities, assisting with grading, and conferencing with students. The GCA may also be asked to lead some class discussions. Graduate students who are interested in working as a GCA should contact a faculty member they are interested in working with to find out if the faculty member plans to hire a GCA. The faculty member should then contact the Chair of the Department of English to request approval for the GCA. GCA positions are dependent on budget, and a limited number are available each semester.

### Graduate Student Instructors

All graduate students in the English Department at Chapman University are eligible to apply to participate in the Department's popular and competitive Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) program. Selected graduate students develop valuable experience teaching composition in a theoretically informed and supportive environment, especially useful for those who wish to pursue teaching careers at community colleges or four-year universities and/or who wish to continue on to PhD programs.

GSIs commit to teaching one section of ENG 103: Seminar in Rhetoric and Writing for the fall semester and are paid instructors of record, developing their own curriculum, teaching the class on their own, and providing feedback and final grades to their students. All ENG 103 instructors have latitude to develop a course based on their talents and interests.

To be eligible for the GSI program, a student must have completed or be enrolled in ENG 580: Teaching Composition (offered Spring semester), apply at the end of Spring semester in response to the call for GSI applications, and be students in the English MA, MFA, or Dual programs during the Fall semester in which they teach.

Selected GSIs must enroll in ENG 582: Composition Pedagogy and Research Practicum concurrently with teaching; this seminar provides support for classroom instruction and shows GSIs how to engage in continued professional development as composition teachers.

For more information about the GSI program, contact Dr. Joanna Levin, Chair of the Department of English ([jlevin@chapman.edu](mailto:jlevin@chapman.edu)), Professor Morgan Read-Davidson, Director of Undergraduate Writing ([readdavi@chapman.edu](mailto:readdavi@chapman.edu)), or Dr. Ian Barnard, Professor of Rhetoric and Composition ([barnard@chapman.edu](mailto:barnard@chapman.edu)).

## Graduate Writing Assistantships

All graduate students in the Department of English at Chapman University are eligible to apply for the Graduate Writing Assistantship (GWA) program. GWAs commit to supporting graduate students across the university through individual and small-group tutoring sessions, both in person and virtually. Tutoring focuses on both the rhetorical and technical conventions of scholarly and creative writing in specific disciplines, across campuses; individual tutors will work within one or more disciplines based on their skills and additional training. Particular emphasis is on the conventions of form and genre in thesis- and dissertation-level writing. Tutors are required to participate in training workshops and are supervised by the Director of the Writing Center and the Vice Provost for Graduate Education.

GWAs are scheduled for 9–10 hours/week either for spring/summer/fall trimesters at the Rinker campus or for fall/spring semesters at the Orange campus. These appointments are on stipend for one semester, with possibility of reappointment based on available funding and performance. GWAs work in conjunction with the Writing Center and must complete training in writing coaching, which may include coursework.

For more information about the GWA program, contact Dr. Sarah Robblee, Director of the Writing Center and faculty supervisor for the GWA program ([sasmith@chapman.edu](mailto:sasmith@chapman.edu)).

## Graduate Program & Project Assistantships

Each semester, a limited number of Graduate Program or Project Assistantships are available. These positions are assigned to the MFA or MA program or to specific faculty members to support research projects, program administration, event series, or other work. Graduate Program and Project Assistants typically work 8-10 hours per week and are paid an hourly rate.

To be considered for these positions, students must complete an application. These positions are usually available at the start of the semester, but positions sometimes become available at other times. If interested, check for available positions by contacting the Program Director, the Chair of the Department of English, or the [online student jobs listing](#).

## Writing Center Tutors

Each semester Chapman's Writing Center hires graduate students to assist Chapman students with all aspects of the writing process. Writing Center tutors are paid at an hourly rate. Graduate students who have successfully completed ENG 581: The Theory and Practice of Writing Tutoring and Conferencing have priority in the application process. For more information, please contact Dr. Sarah Robblee, Director of the Writing Center ([sasmith@chapman.edu](mailto:sasmith@chapman.edu)).

## Additional Employment Opportunities

Additional hourly student work opportunities are posted online through the [student employment office website](#). Positions are typically posted a couple weeks before the start of each semester but may become available at other times.

## John Fowles Center for Creative Writing

The John Fowles Center for Creative Writing is the brainchild of Dr. Mark Axelrod, who serves as its director. Well into its second decade, the John Fowles Center for Creative Writing has not only become a Chapman University institution but has also gained regional, national, and international notoriety and has become a draw for students and community alike. The Fowles Center also collaborates with the Institute for Italian Culture, Los Angeles, to bring prominent Italian authors to Chapman on an annual basis.

More information on the John Fowles Center can be found on the [John Fowles Center for Creative Writing website](#).

### John Fowles Reading Series

Every spring, the John Fowles Center brings to campus distinguished writers from around the world to read their work and promote student writing. Some of the writers who have been brought to campus include John Ashbery, Willis Barnstone, Gioconda Belli, Charles Bernstein, Giuseppe Conte, Hiber Conteris, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Elizabeth George, Zulfikar Ghose, Steve Katz, Claudio Magris, Dacia Maraini, Larry McCaffery, Alicia Partnoy, Giorgio Pressburger, Salman Rushdie, Luisa Valenzuela, Karen Yamashita, and Raúl Zurita.

### *Mantissa: The Journal of the John Fowles Center for Creative Writing*

*Mantissa: The Journal of the John Fowles Center* is a multidisciplinary academic journal devoted to Fowles studies which includes, but is not limited to, fiction, creative nonfiction, and film. The primary goal of the journal is to bridge various branches of Fowles studies in a dynamic and intellectually creative environment. The editorial board hopes to stimulate dialogue among international schools of thought as well as to coordinate initiatives related to the field of Fowles studies.

### John Fowles Center Literary Arts Award

Each year the John Fowles Center for Creative Writing recognizes distinguished work by Chapman University MFA students. Any MFA student is eligible for consideration. To apply Students may submit one of the following by April 1:

- A completed chapter(s) from a novel (no more than 25 pages)
- A short story (no more than 25 pages)
- A selection of poems (no more than 15 pages)

Manuscripts should contain only the title of the work and should not contain the student's name anywhere on the manuscript. The manuscript should be preceded by a cover sheet containing the following information: Name, Phone Number, Email Address, Title of Work, and Page Length.

FICTION manuscripts should be submitted to Professor Jim Blaylock ([blaylock@chapman.edu](mailto:blaylock@chapman.edu))

POETRY manuscripts should be submitted to Dr. Martin Nakell ([nakell@chapman.edu](mailto:nakell@chapman.edu))

The Center reserves the right not to give the award if there are no manuscripts worthy of the award. Winners are announced in May at the Wilkinson College Annual Department Awards ceremony.

## Tabula Poetica: The Center for Poetry

Established in 2009, Tabula Poetica: The Center for Poetry at Chapman University is dedicated to celebrating poetry. Tabula Poetica fosters a culture of poetry appreciation by engaging and supporting the veteran writer, the novice poet, the student, and the general reader in an effort to share poems and conversation about this varied art form.

Tabula Poetica encompasses a reading and lecture series and houses *TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics*. Other Tabula Poetica projects include selecting finalists for the California Coastal Commission K-12 Poetry Contest, participation in Santa Ana's Boca de Oro, an interactive poetry and musical performance at the Hilbert Museum of California Art, and Chapman Poetry Week in April 2011. Tabula Poetica is a collaborative and evolving endeavor built on the interests and involvement of faculty, students, and the wider poetry community.

For more information, contact Dr. Anna Leahy ([leahy@chapman.edu](mailto:leahy@chapman.edu)) or visit the [Tabula Poetica website](#).

### Tabula Poetica Reading Series

Each fall, Tabula Poetica hosts a series of poetry talks and readings that's connected to Aspects of a Writer and poetry classes. This series has featured poets such as Rae Armantrout, Victoria Chang, Carolyn Forché, Allison Joseph, Ilya Kaminsky, Alan Shapiro, Lynne Thompson, and C. K. Williams, among others. The series concludes with the MFA Poetry Reading.

### *TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics*

*TAB: A Journal of Poetry & Poetics* is a national and international journal of poetry and writing about poetry. This journal's mission is to discover, support, and publish contemporary poetry and writing about poetry; to provide a forum in which the poetic tradition is practiced, extended, challenged, and discussed by emerging and established voices; and to encourage wide appreciation of poetry and expand the audience for poems and writing about poetry. This journal actively explores the poetry reading experience across print and digital media.

*Tab Journal* launched in January 2013 with a print issue featuring Tabula Poetica visiting writers. Innovatively designed print issues appear annually in January; free copies are available through the Department of English. Online issues appear during the rest of the year and include audio of poets reading their work. The two formats allow experimentation with design, materiality, and accessibility in this age in which print and electronic reading experiences coexist. Dr. Anna Leahy from the Department of English serves as Editor, Prof. Claudine Jaenichen from the Department of Art serves as Creative Director, and Dr. Brian Glaser from the Department of English is the Criticism Editor.

MFA students who have completed a poetry-writing course have opportunities to serve on the staff as book reviewers and readers of submissions as well as in other roles. While current MFA students cannot submit work other than assigned book reviews, alums, former faculty, or former staff are welcome to submit three years after completing their degree or any other affiliation with the university.

*Tab Journal* welcomes submissions of poems from established and emerging poets as well as critical essays, creative nonfiction, interviews, and reviews that focus on poetry. Recent contributors include Sandra Alcosser, Karen An-hwei Lee, Traci Brimhall, Lauren Camp, Oliver de la Paz, Allison Joseph, Shika Malaviya, January Gill O'Neill, C. K. Williams, and Cecilia Woloch. *Tab Journal* reaches an audience of poets, poetry readers and appreciators, poetry scholars and critics, and students of poetry.

For more information about *Tab Journal*, visit the [Tab Journal website](#) or contact Dr. Anna Leahy.

## Calliope

The student literary magazine of Chapman University welcomes submissions from graduate students and also participation in the editorial selection process. The magazine is published twice each year under the sponsorship of the English Department and is an entirely student-run publication. Applications for the editorial board are typically processed in April for the upcoming academic year. An open call for submissions is typically held in September and October for the fall issue and in February and March for the spring issue. *Calliope* publishes poetry, short fiction, and nonfiction exclusively from enrolled Chapman undergraduate and graduate students. Students interested in working on *Calliope* should contact Prof. Tom Zoellner ([zoellner@chapman.edu](mailto:zoellner@chapman.edu)).

## Iluminación Writing Program

The Iluminación Writing Program builds collaborative partnerships between Chapman University students and the community, including local area high school students. Through ongoing writing workshops, the program works to address the gap between high school and college writing, demystify the college experience, and connect Chapman University participants to our vibrant local communities through collaboration. Graduate students are given opportunities to design and teach writing workshops within the community. For more information, please contact the Director of Iluminación, Prof. Morgan Read-Davidson ([readdavi@chapman.edu](mailto:readdavi@chapman.edu)).

## Orange High School Literacies Program

MA, MFA, and Dual students are encouraged to work as writing mentors in the Chapman University-Orange High School Literacies Partnership. This collaboration, created by Dr. Jan Osborn, is an opportunity to work with high school students to develop their creative writing while also developing teaching skills that may be helpful after finishing a graduate degree. The program culminates with a celebratory reading in which the high school students read the work they've generated. Interested students should contact Dr. Jan Osborn ([josborn@chapman.edu](mailto:josborn@chapman.edu)).

## Sigma Tau Delta

Graduate students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher are eligible to become members of Alpha Zeta Iota, Chapman's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English honor society. Recent chapter activities have included creative writing workshops, meet-and-greet gatherings with the faculty, sponsorship of a campus visit by the screenwriter Andrew Davies, and a regional conference. Members are eligible to

apply for university funding to attend the society's annual national convention, and they may submit to the organization's critical journal (*Sigma Tau Delta Review*) and literary magazine (*The Rectangle*).

As noted on the national [Sigma Tau Delta webpage](#), the Society strives to:

- Confer distinction for high achievement in English language and literature in undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies.
- Provide, through its local chapters, cultural stimulation on college campuses and promote interest in literature and the English language in surrounding communities.
- Foster all aspects of the discipline of English, including literature, language, and writing.
- Promote exemplary character and good fellowship among its members.
- Exhibit high standards of academic excellence.
- Serve society by fostering literacy.

There is an induction dinner for new members each semester. For information about membership in Chapman's chapter, contact Prof. Mildred Lewis ([milewis@chapman.edu](mailto:milewis@chapman.edu)).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Where is the Department of English located, and when is it open?**

The Department of English is located in Smith Hall, Suite 204. The office is typically open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

### **If I need to drop something off for a faculty member, where are the faculty mail boxes?**

Faculty mail boxes are located in the Department of English office, Smith Hall 204.

### **I'm an international student. Are there academic policies specific to international students?**

The [International Student Services](#) office provides support to international students and visiting scholars in matters related to their non-immigrant status by complying with immigration rules and federal regulations. The office is located at 576 N. Glassell Street and can be reached at (714)744-2110.

### **What should I do to make sure I'm on track to graduate?**

Use the [Program Evaluation](#) on My Chapman Self Service Portal to plan your courses. Review your Program Evaluation on a regular basis. Prior to the semester in which you will complete your degree requirements, use My Chapman Self Service Portal to fill out and submit an [Application for Degree Conferral](#).

### **Who is my advisor?**

The Department Chair and Program Directors are the official advisors for graduate students. All other members of the [graduate core faculty](#) can provide additional mentoring on intellectual and professional pursuits. The Thesis Director also provides individualized guidance.

### **The course requirements have changed since I arrived. Which requirements do I need to fulfill?**

The set of requirements you need to fulfill is determined by the Graduate Catalog of the year you enrolled. Your My Chapman Self Service Portal Program Evaluation will indicate the appropriate catalog year when you view it as a PDF. The [graduate catalogs](#) can be accessed online.

### **May I switch to the requirements of a newer catalog?**

You may switch to a newer catalog by filling out the Change of Major form, available on the Office of the University Registrar website and submitting it to the Program Director for signature.

### **Why won't My Chapman Self Service Portal allow me to enroll in a course?**

My Chapman Self Service Portal blocks registration when a class has reached its enrollment limit, when prerequisites have not been met, when a business hold is in place, or when enrollment requires faculty

approval (e.g., thesis writing courses). Enrollment limits and prerequisites may be waived in specific situations, if the professor feels it is warranted. In these cases, you need to secure the professor's consent to enroll, and contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator. Business holds need to be resolved with the Student Business Services Office.

**I'm an accelerated student in the MA program. How do I register for graduate courses during my senior year of undergraduate studies?**

Please use the [Undergraduate Request to Register for Graduate Course Form](#).

**How do I add a course that has been closed in My Chapman Self Service Portal?**

Once the semester begins, My Chapman Self Service Portal blocks enrollment in all courses that have reached their enrollment caps, even if seats are subsequently freed up. To add a course that has been closed and in which space has become available, you will need to secure the professor's consent to enroll and contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

**How do I develop and register for an Individual Study course?**

If you wish to do an Individual Study course with a member of the graduate faculty, you should contact that faculty member directly to discuss the possibility. Once you and a faculty member have agreed on an Independent Study course, you and the instructor will need to fill out the [Individual Study and Research Form](#) and develop a course description, course learning outcomes, graded assignments, a proposed schedule of meetings, and a statement of how the course supports your thesis project. These materials must be submitted to the Chair of the English Department for approval. If the proposal is approved, you then submit the documents to the Office of the Registrar. The Department Course Subject is ENG, the course number 599.

**Is it possible to substitute another course for a required course?**

Substitutions are allowed only when there is a compelling reason why the required course cannot be taken, why the substituted course would be of greater benefit to the student, or how the course supports preparation for the thesis project. Substituted courses should be comparable in rigor and content to the required course. To request consideration of a substitution of one course for another, please contact the Chair of the Department of English.

**What is the policy for receiving an Incomplete?**

According to university policy, incompletes can be given only if extenuating circumstances prevent a student from completing a small portion of the assigned coursework. Please see the [Academic Policy for Grades/GPA/Incompletes](#) for more information.

**What if I need to take a leave of absence?**

A student can take a one-semester leave without making a formal request. The student should inform the Program Director and the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

If you need to interrupt progress toward your degree for more than one semester, a leave of absence may be granted. Leaves of absence can be granted for one year, with a possible renewal of one additional year. To apply for a leave of absence, the student must fill out and submit a [Graduate Petition form](#), as well as a written statement spelling out the reasons for the leave and bearing the signatures of the Program Director and an Associate Dean of Wilkinson College (which the Graduate Programs Coordinator can assist with). If interrupting enrollment before the end of the academic term, the student must also follow the steps to withdraw from courses. A leave of absence cannot be approved retroactively.

If a student leaves the university in good academic standing or on academic probation and is absent no more than four consecutive regular semesters (excluding interterm and summer sessions), the student will not need to re-apply and may enroll for classes at Chapman, and retain the right to elect either degree requirements in effect for that student at the time of leaving Chapman or the degree requirements in effect at the time of re-entrance.

If a student leaves the university in good standing and is gone more than four consecutive semesters, the student will not need to re-apply, may re-enroll for classes at Chapman, and will be assigned the catalog requirements in effect at the time the student returns to Chapman. Students may request to return to their original catalog, and that request will be reviewed and decided upon by the Department or School; decision by the departments or School is final.

Any graduate student who has broken enrollment for a period of more than one semester (interterm and summer sessions do not constitute a semester) without receiving an approved Leave of Absence is required to request re-enrollment through the Department. The student is held to the degree requirements in effect at the time of return unless approved for the original catalog year requirements by the Program Director or Associate Dean.

Note that graduate students must complete their degree requirements within seven years of first matriculating. Leaves of absence do not suspend or extend this seven-year clock.

For more information about interrupting enrollment, see the [Interrupted Enrollment guidelines](#).

### **Can I receive transfer credit for coursework taken during a leave of absence?**

In some cases, transfer credit may be awarded. To request transfer credit, you must provide transcripts to the Registrar's Office prior to re-enrollment. Please note unsatisfactory performance may nullify re-enrollment.

### **What if I need more time to complete my thesis after finishing my coursework?**

Students who need extra time to finish the thesis may continue working on their thesis by enrolling in ENG 597A (MA) or ENG 598A (MFA) Thesis II for 1 credit for each additional semester of thesis work. The continuous enrollment course allows students to remain in active status and retain access to university resources. Students electing not to enroll in the continuous enrollment course will lose active status, library privileges, and access to other university resources (including ongoing meetings with the Thesis Director) unless they make special arrangements with the Chair of the Department of English and

Associate Dean. Whether active or inactive, however, no student may take longer than seven years from the time of first enrollment to complete all the requirements for their degree.

**What if I file an Application for Degree Conferral but become unable to finish in time?**

If you have applied for your degree and will not be able to complete some aspect of your program (e.g., coursework, thesis), you need to send an email to [conferral@chapman.edu](mailto:conferral@chapman.edu) and request that your graduation date be moved to a later academic term.

**When are graduation exercises?**

The schedule of commencement ceremonies and events schedule is available online on the [graduation home page](#).

**How do I buy academic regalia for graduation?**

Once you submit your Application for Degree Conferral (via My Chapman Self Service Portal), you will be added to an email notification list that will advise you of the deadlines for walking in the graduation ceremony and the process for buying robes and hoods. If you have any questions, please contact the commencement team at (714) 997-6740 or [commencement@chapman.edu](mailto:commencement@chapman.edu).