The Master of Arts in English is designed for students seeking continuing education, a foundation for doctoral work (PhD, EdD, JD) and/or a credential qualifying them to teach literature and composition courses at junior and community colleges. Full-time students complete the degree in two years. All graduate classes are offered in the late afternoon or evening.

Why the MA?

- A wide range of small seminars in literature, rhetoric and composition, cultural studies, and digital humanities.
- Literary events that bring national/international authors to campus and literature to life.
- Graduate Teaching Assistantships and innovative Graduate Assistantships for select students in the second year of study.
- Flexible Scheduling, with classes offered in late afternoon and evening and part-time options.
- Welcoming to in-service teachers seeking additional credentials as well as students interested in building a foundation for doctoral work or law school.
- Our MA alums find employment in the fields of teaching, marketing, and publishing and have gone on to pursue the PhD.

“We get to meet all of our faculty within the first few weeks. You know going into classes who they are.”

- David Krausman, Dual Degree Candidate

“We small seminars. Individual research. Great community and bohemian hijinks.”

- Joanna Levin
Admission Requirements

All applicants must provide the following materials:

- Official transcripts from ALL degree-granting (bachelor’s or master’s degrees) colleges and universities attended. An official transcript submitted in a sealed envelope which you have received from your college or university is acceptable.
- A graduate admission test may not be required if your bachelor’s degree cumulative GPA is 3.0 or above. If your GPA is between 2.5 and 2.99, you may be considered for admission by submitting a satisfactory Graduate Record Examination (GRE): a minimum score of 153 for the Verbal section and 4.5 on the Analytical Writing section.
- An essay expressing your reasons for wanting to join the particular academic program to which you are applying. What are your personal and career goals, and how will this particular degree from Chapman University help you reach those goals? Your essay should be double spaced, size 12 font, and 1-2 pages in length.
- Two letters of recommendation that speak to your academic preparation, intellectual ability, and aptitude for graduate study.
- A finished critical literary essay of 12-15 text pages that demonstrates your talent for scholarly writing and ability to handle texts of literary criticism relative to the subject matter. The essay should reflect a grasp of critical literary skills and ability to deal with theoretical texts in an effective and knowledgeable manner. The MA essay MUST be a critical literary essay only. In other words, the subject matter should deal with literary texts and literary topics only unless it is a Comparative Literature paper.

Dual MA/MFA Degree

Dual-degree students must be admitted to both the MA and MFA degree programs.

In addition to application materials required for the MA, dual-degree applicants must submit a non-returnable portfolio of creative work that represents style and potential; this portfolio should include either 25 pages of fiction or non-fiction, 10-15 pages of poetry, or the first 15 pages of a screenplay or stageplay.

Students already enrolled in either the MA or the MFA program who wish to switch to the dual-degree program must apply and be admitted to the other degree program before completing 27 credits.

Academic Requirements

Master of Arts in English

The MA in English consists of 36 credits of which two are required courses (three credits each):

ENG 556 (3): Literary Theory and Critical Practice: 1920–the Present

MA students begin their coursework with ENG 556: Literary Theory and Critical Practice, an introductory course that examines the contemporary theories and methodologies that inform the multifaceted field of English studies.

ENG 597B (3): MA Thesis

MA students conclude their work with a Thesis project. Students work with a Thesis Director to prepare and defend an article-length thesis of distinction in literature, cultural studies, or rhetoric.

DUAL DEGREE: MA/MFA

The dual-degree combines the MFA and the MA in a 54-unit program of study. The dual degree combines the practice and study of creative writing with more extensive literary scholarship. Full-time students complete the degree in three years. It is designed especially for students who intend to pursue careers in teaching English and creative writing at the university, community college, or secondary-school level.

Application Deadlines

Submit your application and all supporting documents by the deadline listed below. Applications received after these deadlines will be considered on a rolling basis as space is available.

- For Fall Semester, including scholarship consideration: February 1
- For Spring Semester: November 1

Recent Faculty Book Publications (Literature, Rhetoric and Cultural Studies)

Mark Axelrod
No Symbols Where None Intended: Literary Essays from Laclos to Beckett (2014), Notions of the Feminine: Literary Essays from Lawrence to Lacan

Ian Barnard
Upsetting Composition Commonplaces (2014)

Joanna Levin
Bohemia in America, 1858-1920 (2010) and the co-edited collection (with Edward Whitley) Whitman Among the Bohemians (2014)

Rei Magosaki

Richard Ruppel
A Political Genealogy of Joseph Conrad (2014)