

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY™

Graduate Programs—PROGRAM CHANGE REQUEST

UGPC APPROVAL _____

UFS APPROVAL _____

CATALOG _____

DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH

COLLEGE: ARTS & LETTERS

PROGRAM NAME:

MASTER OF ARTS AND MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

EFFECTIVE DATE

(PROVIDE TERM/YEAR)

PLEASE EXPLAIN THE REQUESTED CHANGE(S) AND OFFER RATIONALE BELOW AND/OR ATTACHED:

THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT PROPOSES TO OFFER STUDENTS IN ITS MA AND MAT PROGRAMS THE OPTION OF TAKING A COMPREHENSIVE EXAM RATHER THAN WRITING A MASTER'S THESIS, AS DETAILED IN ATTACHED PROPOSAL.

Faculty contact, email and complete phone number:

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Consult and list departments that might be affected by the change and attach comments.

Approved by:

Department Chair: _____

College Curriculum Chair: _____

College Dean: _____

UGPC Chair: _____

Graduate College Dean: _____

UFS President: _____

Provost: _____

Date:

10/3/14

10/3/14

10/6/14

10/8/14

10-15-14

Email this form and syllabus to UGPC@fau.edu **one week before** the University Graduate Programs Committee meeting so that materials may be viewed on the UGPC website prior to the meeting.

GUIDELINES FOR ENGLISH MA/MAT EXAM OPTION

Department of English, Schmidt College of Arts & Letters

[This proposal, with revisions, was approved by the English Department in a meeting on 15 November 2013.]

Brief Background

Since their inception, the English MA and MAT degrees have required students to produce a thesis as the end-product of their studies. In recent years, the Department has come to recognize the desirability of offering students the option of taking a comprehensive exam as the culmination of their program, rather than writing a thesis. We envision an option in which the student, working with her or his exam committee, produces a substantial reading list of both primary and secondary texts: a list which draws upon the student's course work and supplements that course work with further readings to instill a deeper and broader knowledge of the literary field.

Goals of Exam Option

Comprehensive exams provide a broad base of knowledge for students entering the teaching profession while also allowing them to specialize in one or possibly two areas of concentration. The option offers additional flexibility to students applying to Ph.D. programs who would prefer to take a comprehensive exam. Comprehensive exams promote group learning and study, thereby fostering a sense of community for the graduate students.

Preparation for Exam Option

Students desiring to take the MA comprehensive examination should meet with the Graduate Advisor a full semester before taking the exam to discuss preparation for the examination. In place of six hours of thesis credit, students who elect to take the comprehensive exam will take six hours of exam credit. The student, in consultation with the exam committee (three faculty members, one of them designated the chair), will schedule the comprehensive exam date towards the end of the Spring semester of her or his second year in the program. In order to schedule the exam date, the student must take into consideration the schedules of the various committee members as well as the graduation deadlines set by the Graduate College. All required course work must be completed or else be in the process of being completed during the semester in which the student takes the MA comprehensive examination.

Students will put together an exam committee of three faculty members and develop a reading list in conjunction with that committee. Ideally, these are faculty members who have expertise in the student's primary area of concentration. By the end of the exam preparation semester, the student must turn in the "Exam List Approval" form to the Graduate Advisor, with signatures from all faculty on the student's exam committee. "Exam List Approval" form will list the tentative exam date as well as the final version of the exam's reading list. The final reading list should be comprised of about 20-25 primary texts and 5-10 secondary texts .*

*"Primary texts" are works of literature; "secondary texts" are works of criticism and theory. It is strongly suggested that the student pursue research into the criticism relating directly to the primary texts on her or his reading list, even if such criticism is not explicitly listed among the

secondary texts on the reading list.

Exam Format and Grading

The comprehensive exam will consist of a two-day written exam. The written exam will be drawn from the reading list of required works selected in consultation with the student's committee. The student will address one (or possibly two) of the following areas of concentration for the exam: (1) British Literature; (2) American Literature; (3) Rhetoric & Composition; (4) Science Fiction & Fantasy; (5) Multicultural & World Literatures.

The exam readings will therefore be drawn from one of these areas of concentration. The student could include some texts relevant to the coursework they've taken, and the faculty committee will add other important texts from the field that the student needs to read. While coursework will provide a foundation for the MA examination, significant individual study will be necessary to complement formal coursework. The exam will be developed by the exam chair in consultation with the other members of the exam committee.

The goal of the exam is to test reading comprehension, close reading and literary analysis skills. To this end, the exam will have two parts. Part A of the exam will take place on-campus and require that the student identify and explicate passages from primary sources on the reading list. Part B will be a take-home portion, which requires the student to apply the theoretical or critical approaches on the exam list to at least two works on the primary reading list. Each faculty member on the committee will choose two passages from the exam list of primary texts for Part A and one secondary source for Part B.

The MA examination will be graded as "High Pass/Passing with Distinction," "Pass," "Pass Minus," or "Fail." Students earning a grade of "Fail" on the MA Exam will be placed on Academic Probation for the term following the exam. Probationary status can be removed by earning a passing grade ("Pass Minus" or higher) in the following semester, summer excluded. In the event that the student does not pass the exam in the following semester (excluding summer) and probationary status is not removed, the student can be academically dismissed from the program. Graduate Assistants maintain eligibility for an assistantship while on probation.

Assessment

The Graduate Committee, during the first year in which the exam option is offered to MA and MAT students, will develop a set of assessment criteria and procedures separate from those applied to thesis-writing master's students.