



University at Albany  
SUNY

# GUIDE TO THE ENGLISH MAJOR

## ABOUT THE ENGLISH MAJOR

English Studies is a rapidly changing discipline that embraces a number of related fields, from British, U.S. and post-colonial literatures, to literary theory, cultural studies, cinema, electronic texts/media, creative writing and rhetoric. While its focus is increasingly interdisciplinary, the curriculum of the English major at the University at Albany fosters two fundamental abilities: the first is *critical thought and interpretation*; the second is *thoughtful expression*.

Students of English Studies pay attention to language, literature, and culture in their historical and theoretical contexts; in their aesthetic and practical dimensions; and in their social, as well as political significances. Working with the Advisement Office and a Faculty Mentor, students tailor a program of study that develops specific areas of intellectual interest, while preparing for post-graduation goals.

The Department offers a variety of special programs to its majors, such as the English Honors Program, a chapter of Sigma Tau Delta (International Honors in English), the Writing Center, and undergraduate internship opportunities. English majors have gone on to successful careers in education, law, editing, publishing, medicine, theater and film, broadcasting, politics, public policy and administration, advertising, and librarianship, to name just a few!



The foundations of the curriculum are the four required "core" courses, which reflect the Department's commitment to the principles of critical reading, writing, and analysis.

## THE CURRICULUM

### *The Major In English (36cr)*

#### *Core Courses:*

- AEng205z: Introduction to Writing in English Studies
- AEng210: Introduction to English Studies
- AEng305z: Studies in Writing about Texts
- AEng310: Reading and Interpretation in English Studies.

#### *Electives:*

- 9 credits at the 200 level or above.
- 9 credits at the 300 level or above.
- 6 credits at the 400 level or above.

#### *Faculty Mentorship:*

All English majors have faculty mentors with whom they can discuss their long term academic and career goals.

#### *Advisement:*

Declared English majors are advised by the English Undergraduate Advisement Office, which provides year-round academic advising to all English majors.

## MAJOR IN ENGLISH AT UALBANY?

- **Flexibility!**  
*Chart a course through your major suited to your interests.*
- **Diversity!**  
*100+ sections taught each semester.*
- **Small class size!**  
*Only 25-40 students per class.*
- **Intensive writing instruction!**  
*Many courses devoted to creative and critical writing.*

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### *CAREER PREPARATION*

The major in English prepares students for any field of work that requires a broad liberal education with special strength in language, critical analysis and research. English graduates find careers in theatre and film, government, counseling, broadcasting, public policy and administration, banking, retailing and manufacturing as well as writing, editing, publishing, teaching, advertising and public relations.

English majors sometimes choose to pursue advanced degrees (MA or PhD) in the

field of English; however the English major is also excellent preparation for advanced study in such professional graduate programs as law, medicine, social welfare, and education.

Students intending to pursue studies in English at the graduate level are encouraged to apply to the English Honors Program which provides the opportunity to explore interests in the field, and culminates in a written thesis. Students entering secondary education are encouraged to receive a broad education encompassing American, British (including a course on

Shakespeare) and World Literatures, grammar, and composition.

English majors have access to a variety of career planning resources (the advisement office, faculty mentors, internships in English, the Pathways into Education Office, and the University's Career Development Center) which work together to assist the student in identifying her interests, choosing an academic/career path, completing appropriate coursework, and simplifying applications process for graduate school.

### *INTERNSHIP IN ENGLISH*

The English Department Internship Program offers students who meet admissions criteria (3.0 GPA in English, faculty recommendations, and a writing sample) the opportunity to earn credit while exploring professions for which the English major has prepared them.

The program places students in a wide variety of on- and off-campus positions in professions such as law, publishing, education, print and broadcast journalism, business, social service, and government. Interns work 10 to 15 hours a week at the internship site while completing an in-class academic component.



Put your degree to work. Explore different fields through the English Internship program.

### *CONTEMPORARY WRITERS AT WORK: THE WRITERS INSTITUTE AND ENGLISH 350*

In cooperation with the New York State Writers Institute, the department is able to offer AEng350: Contemporary Writers at Work. Students read works in a variety of genres by authors appearing on campus with the Institute's

Visiting Writers Series. In addition to attending public lectures, students meet authors in seminars devoted to discussions of the author's work and various issues facing writers today.



The roster of Visiting Authors can be found by visiting:  
[www.albany.edu/writers-inst](http://www.albany.edu/writers-inst)

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### *THE ENGLISH HONORS PROGRAM*

Excellent preparation for future graduate study, the English Honors Program promotes intellectual exchange between students, and prepares them for independent academic scholarship and creative work.

The program includes two honors seminars and

culminates with a senior honors thesis, a sustained, independent research or creative project in a field/genre of the student's choosing and on a topic of her/his own design

Majors who have proven themselves to be able scholars (major GPA of 3.5 and an overall GPA of 3.25) may apply

for entrance into the English Honors Program (typically in the Spring semester of sophomore year).

Successful completion of the program earns an honors certificate in English and nomination for graduation with "Honors in English" from the University.

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### *UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE*

The English Department provides undergraduates with the preparation and opportunity to present their ideas in a public forum by hosting a one-day Undergraduate Research Conference.

Each Spring, undergraduates

present their work to an audience of students, faculty, and community members who participate in discussion and debate. The event, which is highlighted by a keynote speaker renowned in the field, includes readings from undergraduate fiction, essays,

poetry and performance. Students participating in the Spring Research conference meet the intellectual challenge of formulating a cogent critical argument and the professional experience of delivering an effective public presentation.

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### *SIGMA TAU DELTA INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH HONOR SOCIETY*

Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society, Theta Phi chapter, welcomes English majors and minors interested in putting their English education into practice through community and campus service, literacy outreach, social events with faculty, fundraising, literary and academic events.

Theta Phi chapter maintains an Honors Lounge in the Humanities Building where members study, hold meetings, and create opportunities for social and academic activities of various kinds.

There are about 40 active members each year. Graduating seniors are honored at the departmental recognition ceremony.



Impact the community by getting involved with Sigma Tau Delta.

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*Visit the department of English Website at [www.albany.edu/english](http://www.albany.edu/english) for detailed information on all of the department's programs!*



## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

### UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY SUNY

Humanities 333  
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1400 Washington Avenue  
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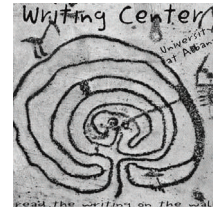
### *THE WRITING CENTER*

The Writing Center assists UAlbany students, faculty and staff with their writing at all stages of the writing process.

Tutors are available to work with writers on a wide range of texts including, but not limited to, academic essays, resumes, cover letters, lab reports, grad school application essays, poems, stories, and letters.

Undergraduate peer tutors and graduate Teaching Assistants assist writers by providing an informed perspective that allows writers to move towards articulating, analyzing and adapting specific writing practices. Equally important, the Writing Center provides a pedagogical setting for undergraduate and graduate tutors to gain experience and expertise in writing, research and teaching.

The Writing Center is host to the undergraduate literary arts journal *Spell for Rain*, and provides resources and institutional support for several student-based creative writing initiatives, such as UAlbany's open-mic series "Spread the Word."



### English Department Important Contacts

Department of English Website: <http://www.albany.edu/english>

Advisement Office: Humanities 381

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