

AN APPROXIMATE TIMELINE FOR YOUR M.A. DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Note: This is a model only and may be adapted according to your work and life commitments and based on a two-year Program of Study.

Semester 1

1. Enroll in ECL 600 and consider taking RWS 609 if you plan to teach.
2. Enroll in additional MA seminars based on interest and begin identifying an area of emphasis.
3. Attend the department's MA orientation, usually the week before classes start.
4. Explore fellowship and TA-ship positions and prerequisite coursework (RWS 609) and apply for those for which you are qualified.
5. At the end of the semester, think about which of your seminar papers you may want to include in your Portfolio if you later choose the portfolio option or which one might potentially develop into the subject for a thesis. Factor these into your considerations when planning which courses to take the following semester.
6. Research department faculty, attend office hours and invited speaker events, and read, read, read.

Semester 2

1. Begin or continue taking courses in your developing area of emphasis (for your rationale of study, you will need to describe at least three courses you have taken that address this area of emphasis).
2. Take additional MA seminars as needed.
3. If you did not take RWS 609 previously and want to teach, enroll in it now. Similarly, apply for mentor/ tutor/ TA positions if you have not already done so and are interested in these opportunities.
4. As you choose topics for your seminar papers and plan to write them, think about which papers may work for your Portfolio. Consult the "[MA Portfolio Guidelines](#)" document for further information.
5. If you plan to write a thesis, you should have a thesis topic in mind by the end of this semester or, at the latest, by early the following semester. Consult the "[Thesis Guidelines](#)" document for further information.
6. Meet with the Graduate Advisor to assess your progress in the program over the first year.
7. Remember, this is YOUR graduate education, and you are responsible for learning inside and outside of the classroom. Take advantage of all of the learning opportunities offered on campus, in and beyond our department.

Semester 3

1. Complete your three courses in your area of emphasis.
2. Enroll in additional MA seminars as needed.
3. **THESIS:** If you are pursuing the thesis option, identify a potential chair and approach them with a draft proposal. Work with your thesis chair to complete the thesis prospectus and share with your committee members for their approval. Complete thesis committee paperwork and submit it to the College of Graduate Studies.
4. **PORTFOLIO:** If you are pursuing the portfolio option, identify a potential supervisor for your work and focus on the papers you would like to include in your portfolio. You are officially permitted to approach faculty in November to ask them to serve as your supervisor. Submit a draft of your main paper to the professor teaching ECL 790 by **December 15th**.
5. Submit your Rationale of Study to the department by **October 1st**. (For further details, consult the "[Rationale of Study](#)" document).

5. Once your Rationale of Study is approved by the Graduate Committee of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, submit a petition to be Advanced to Candidacy. If necessary, meet with the Graduate Advisor to file petitions.
6. If you are interested in pursuing a career in academia, begin to apply for Ph.D. programs, community college internships / jobs, or Fulbright fellowships.

Semester 4

1. Enroll in the portfolio class (**ECL 790**) OR make sure thesis paperwork has been approved and enroll in the thesis seminar (**ECL 799A**).
2. File an application to graduate through my.SDSU
3. Complete any remaining coursework.
4. Meet with your portfolio supervisor or thesis chair.
5. Work on and file your thesis or prepare for your portfolio defense.
6. Graduate.

Last Updated: June 12, 2024