

The English Major: A Guide

The English Major offers a flexible, rigorous curriculum that focuses on reading and writing. In your English coursework, you can study creative writing, literature, language, rhetoric, and more. Here are some tips to help you navigate the major.

Talk to an Advisor Every Semester, at Least

- Director of Undergraduate Studies Darren Canady (canady@ku.edu)
- Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies and Honors Coordinator Mary Klayder (mklayder@ku.edu)
- Advising Specialist J.D. Smith (jdsmith@ku.edu)

Kick it Off Right

One great way to kick off your English coursework is to take a 200-level course or a 300-level class that interests you. Always been a big Shakespeare fan? Take 332! Want to study rhetoric and writing? Try 380! Want to do creative writing? Take a workshop!

Take ENGL 300 as Early as You Can

This introductory, seminar-style course will orient you to English courses, fields of specialization, opportunities, and career pathways. It's offered every semester! The earlier you take, the better prepared you'll be for the rest of your courses.

Read Course Descriptions

Every semester, the English department posts descriptions of all courses. Read these to get a sense of what the courses will involve! (<https://english.ku.edu/courses>)

Mix it Up

At the 300-level, try to mix “knowledge base” courses (like literary history courses (312, 314, 320, 322), Shakespeare (332), and literature of social justice (341)) with courses that focus on your interests (like fiction writing (351) or special topics courses).

Challenge Yourself

Think about what courses will challenge and support you intellectually and practically. Whatever you end up doing after college, the intellectual rigor of English classes will help you. Check the sample course profiles on the English website (<http://english.ku.edu>) to get an idea of what this could look like.

Think about Research or Department Honors

Research in English can take many forms: publishing a piece of creative writing, doing archival research, presenting your work to peers, and much more. The department also boasts one of the most active Honors programs at KU. Ask an advisor for more information.

Enroll with a Purpose

Be sure to think (and talk to an advisor) about what courses you should take. If you have particular outcomes in mind (like med school, law school, graduate school, editing, copy-writing, and on and on), then look at the sample course profiles and make a coursework plan.

Remember What Capstone Means

You are required to take two 500- or 600-level (“capstone”) courses for the major. Think of these capstones as advanced, research-intensive work in your area.

Take Advantage of Resources

Your instructors, the advisors, and other English students can be a great resource for making your way through the major. You should also check out the English Website: <http://english.ku.edu>.

ENGLISH MAJOR WORKSHEET

Student Name: _____

KU ID: _____

Email: _____

Graduation year: _____

10 total courses (30 hours), plus one course (3 hours) for Honors.

1 COURSE: ENGL 300

1. ENGL 300: Introduction to English Studies

7 COURSES IN ENGLISH STUDIES

Seven (7) English Studies courses. One may be at the 200 level, but the rest must be 300 or above. Talk to an advisor and see sample course profiles at <http://english.ku.edu> for guidance.

2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

2 CAPSTONE COURSES

Two courses at the 500 or 600 level. You must complete ENGL 300 and two 300-level courses before proceeding to capstones. If you are doing Honors, one capstone must be ENGL 598, and you must also take thesis hours (ENGL 599).

9. _____
10. _____

If Honors, check this box for ENGL 599:

BREADTH REQUIREMENTS

Copy the course numbers from above into the blanks below to show you have fulfilled these requirements.

Rhetoric, language, and writing studies: _____

Literature, language, or rhetoric prior to 1850: _____

Diverse identities, communities, and texts: _____

OPTIONAL MAJOR EMPHASIS

Students may designate a Major Emphasis consisting of at least three courses, but this is not required. In consultation with a departmental advisor, students may also designate a custom area of emphasis. From the courses above, check that you have fulfilled the requirements for each emphasis.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literary Studies
_____ (lit history)
_____ (theory)
_____ (capstone) | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Writing
_____ (genre 1)
_____ (genre 2)
_____ (capstone) | <input type="checkbox"/> Language, Culture, and Rhetoric
_____ (380/387)
_____ (another LC&R course)
_____ (capstone) |
|--|---|--|

Custom Emphasis: _____ From the courses above, these make up my Major Emphasis:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____