

MA in English

Literature, Creative Writing, Composition/English Education at Sonoma

- Award-winning faculty
- Rigorous curriculum
- Small classes and one-on-one mentoring
- Literary magazine
- Teaching opportunities
- Internships
- Literary event planning
- International reading series

Priority application deadline:
first Friday in January

Final deadline: first Friday in March



W elcome to the Master of Arts in English. Join a lively community of scholars and writers engaged in a dialogue that crosses and transcends imaginative and theoretical inquiry. Write yourself into the world by exploring opportunities in our rich curriculum and conclude your degree by creating a critical thesis, a book-length manuscript, or a digital arts project.

"At Sonoma, students engage in active, passionate exchange in small cohorts as well as one-on-one with faculty mentors. I invite you to come read and write alongside us."

— Anne Goldman,
Graduate Director



MA Student Accomplishments

Our graduates have seen considerable long-term success in fields such as advertising, editing and publishing, public relations writing, graphic design, software development, and legal work. Many are teaching English in Bay Area community colleges and other universities around the country. Several have landed tenure-track positions in English at Santa Rosa Junior College, Napa Valley College, and Porterville College.

Creative writing graduates from the program have received awards including a National Endowment for the Arts grant, a National Poetry series winner, the National Book Critics' Circle Award for Poetry, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Creative writing graduates have published books with Graywolf, Wesleyan University Press, Rescue Press, Omnidawn, Letter Machine Editions, Swoon Reads: Macmillan, and Kelsey Street Books.

MA program graduates have pursued further degrees at other prestigious programs. For the Ph.D. in English, students have completed degrees at University of Texas, Rutgers University, University of Massachusetts, University of Michigan, and University of California at Berkeley. For the MFA in Creative Writing, students have gone on to University of Iowa Writers Workshop, Temple University, Naropa Institute of Disembodied Poetics, University of Arizona, University of Denver, University of Chicago Center for the Book, California College of the Arts, San Francisco State University, Mills College, Saint Mary's, University of San Francisco, and University of Massachusetts.

Testimonials

“It became very clear to me that the MA could be whatever I wanted it to be. That is to say, I could make my graduate experience as big and diverse and interdisciplinary as I could imagine. The faculty at SSU not only encouraged this, but helped to realize my academic and creative pursuits with a great deal of care and enthusiasm. Faculty at Sonoma State taught me that the academy can actually be porous, rich, and expansive. It’s exactly this kind of learning experience that shaped me as a thinker, a writer, a teacher, and a community organizer.”

– Christy Davids, Instructor, Temple University

“One of the greatest aspects of the English MA included training as a blend of developing a pedagogical framework rooted in theory, building pragmatic in-class activities and assignments, and after a year of coursework, teaching in the classroom. Graduate students are guided by veterans in the field and are encouraged to bring in new techniques and innovate within the classroom. Finally, you have the chance to build lasting relationships with your cohort of new instructors; these people will challenge, support and inspire you to be the best instructor you can be.”

– Matthew Martin, Instructor, Sonoma State University

“With generous mentorship and guidance of professors with whom I worked closely, I grew tremendously as a writer and scholar. Opportunities to collaborate with my cohort were abundant and fruitful. I was offered several graduate work opportunities in the campus Writing Center that provided professional experience and lifetime connections of which the rewards (both personal and practical) are unending. By completion of my program, I had presented confidently at a conference, published creative work proudly and established an approach to teaching with which to begin my career confidently.”

– Emily Hostutler, Instructor, Sonoma State University



“My experience as a Master’s student at Sonoma State University was overwhelmingly a positive one. Coursework provided a necessary bridge between my undergrad and PhD, and I would not be in my current program without the training I received there. Faculty mentors were encouraging and dedicated; I learned not only research but the fine art of crafting an argumentative sentence. In addition, I made lifelong friends and colleagues whose brilliance continues to inspire me.”

– Lauren Benjamin, PhD candidate in Comp Lit, University of Michigan

Faculty

Brantley Bryant
Literature (Early British, Medieval)
PhD, Columbia University

Gillian Conoley
Creative Writing (Poetry and Literary Editing and Publishing)
MFA, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Anne Goldman
Literature (19th and 20th Century American and Creative Writing (Nonfiction))
PhD, University of CA, Berkeley

Kim Hester Williams
Literature (19th Century American, African-American Literature)
PhD, University of CA, San Diego

Stefan Kiesbye
Creative Writing (Fiction and Literature (20th Century American))
MFA, University of Michigan

Catherine Kroll
Single Subject (Composition Studies, English Education, World Literature)
PhD, University of CA, Berkeley

John Kunat
Literature (Renaissance, Shakespeare Studies)
PhD, University of Virginia

Noelle Oxenhandler
Creative Writing (Nonfiction)
MA in Creative Writing, State University of New York at Brockport

Tim Wandling
Literature (19th Century British, Romanticism)
PhD, Stanford University

Chingling Wo
Literature (18th century British and World Literature)
PhD, SUNY, Stony Brook

Affiliate Faculty:

Scott Miller
Director, Sonoma State University Writing Center
Literacy Education, Rhetoric
PhD, Ohio State University

Karen Grady
Education (TESOL and Literary Studies)
PhD, Indiana University

For more detail, visit <http://www.sonoma.edu/english/707-664-2140>

Visiting Writers and Scholars

Alice Notley, Lyn Hejinian, Robert Hass, Yusef Komunyakaa, Yiyun Li, Michael Palmer, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Will Alexander, Brian Evenson, Rebecca Solnit, Brenda Hillman, Joanne Kyger and Ishmael Reed have appeared through Writers at Sonoma, our annual international reading series that brings emerging writers as well as winners of the Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, National Book Award.

Distinguished Scholars who have participated in panels, class visits, and talks include Dr. Miquel Salmeron, Ellen Siegelman, and Dr. Asa Mittman.

