

Syllabus  
ENGL 5398-120  
Spring 2020

**Instructor Information:**

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**Course Description:**

Scheduled when student is ready to begin thesis. No credit until thesis is accepted.

Prerequisite(s): [ENGL 5374](#), 24 hours of graduate credit and permission of department chair.

The thesis project is a rigorous, extended, and sustained piece of original scholarship that offers an in-depth analysis, examination, or argument of one topic. Students pursuing this option will enroll in six credit hours of ENGL 5398 (Thesis) with approval from the Graduate Coordinator for the MA in English. These credit hours can be taken in a student's final semester or be spread over the final two semesters. However, once the student begins enrollment in thesis hours, the student must maintain continuous enrollment of at least one credit hour of thesis per semester until the student graduates. Please note that only six credit hours of ENGL 5398 can be counted toward graduation.

The thesis shall be prepared in accordance with the procedures specified by the Graduate School. Upon completion of the thesis, the student shall sit for an oral defense before their thesis committee.

Committee Formation

Students should arrange to meet with the Graduate Coordinator for the MA in English to present a topic or area to consider for a thesis. The Graduate Coordinator for the MA in English and student will decide together who to name the chair of the thesis project. Only graduate faculty can chair a thesis project. Should the designated faculty member agree to chair the thesis student, this person will, then, become that student's thesis advisor, and the contact person for the student throughout the thesis project. The thesis topic must be approved by the Graduate School by filing the Thesis Proposal Approval Form available from the Graduate School. Deadlines related to the thesis are also available from that office, including deadlines related to submitting the topic approval form, the defense deadline, and filing an electronic copy of the thesis.

The specific of the thesis—that is, number of chapters, expectations for content, and deadlines—will be determined by the chair of the committee. The chair of the thesis committee will recommend at least one additional reader for the thesis project. More normally, the thesis will

have two additional readers so that the thesis committee will consist of three full-time faculty members who are also members of the Graduate Faculty. In some cases, one reader may be from outside the English department. Only the Graduate Coordinator for the MA in English can approve the formation of a committee. The thesis advisor will need to secure this approval before the student begins work on the thesis project.

It is incumbent on the student to remain in steady communication with the thesis advisor at every stage of the thesis. The thesis advisor will set deadlines for progress. Only those who meet these deadlines, meet them at the level the advisor sets, and who remain in contact with the advisor should expect to receive a passing grade for thesis hours, or to remain on track to complete the thesis in a timely manner.

### Requirements of Thesis

While many of the requirements of the thesis will be determined between the chair and the student, there are some basic requirements every thesis project must meet.

- There is 60-page minimum, not including works cited, images, or appendices.
- The thesis will make an original contribution to some area within English studies.
- Students must successfully defend their thesis in an oral defense (see below).

As already stated, the structure of the thesis can vary. One possible structure for the thesis is,

- Introduction: State the scope, central research question(s), and thesis. Also, describe the structure of the manuscript that follows, including the purpose of each chapter. The Introduction is often written last because you will not know what you are introducing until you write the rest of your thesis.
- Chapter 1: Review the relevant scholarship. Demonstrate to your reader that you are a master of the field. You do not need to include every publication, but you should not miss anything important. Show the various schools of thought, and where scholars agree or disagree. Conclude by showing where the gaps and unanswered questions are – that is where your thesis fits in.
- Chapter 2-X: Subsequent chapters explore how your work in primary and secondary sources fills the gaps in how one understands your topic or question. Each chapter should link back to your central research question(s). The required number of chapters, as well as the overall length of your thesis, will vary based on your topic. If you have questions about this, please direct them to your thesis chair.
- Conclusion: Explain what we now know about this subject as a result of your work, and how your work has changed our understanding of the topic.

Again, this is only one possible structure. Only the thesis advisor can approve the structure for each thesis project. Issues that may arise between the student and the thesis advisor should be directed to the Graduate Coordinator for the MA in English, or, to the department chair for Humanities if the Graduate Coordinator is also the thesis advisor for a project. The chair is the final arbitrator for issues related to the thesis.

### Thesis Defense

Following the completion of a thesis, the student will provide a professional presentation of the most central elements of the thesis and defend those elements and others related to the thesis. While the specific expectations for a student's defense will be determined by the thesis chair,

every defense will include an oral presentation equivalent to a professional presentation for an academic organization, will require the candidate to field impromptu questions from the thesis committee regarding the presentation and the thesis itself, and will be made open to the public, although guests are not allowed to participate (e.g. ask questions, make interjections, offer their own ideas etc.).

A defense can result in three outcomes:

- Pass with no thesis revisions
- Conditional pass based on thesis revisions
- No pass

An outcome of “no pass” requires the student to work with the thesis advisor to address issues raised by the committee, and to sit for another oral defense. A student can only sit for one defense a semester, which means that an outcome of “no pass” will delay graduation at least one semester. Two unsuccessful defenses will result in the student being converted to the non-thesis track.

An outcome of “conditional pass based on revisions” can only convert to a pass if the student submits all revisions ahead of the deadlines established by the Office of Graduate Studies. Following a successful defense, but before submitting the thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies, the student must make certain that the thesis is free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. The Office of Graduate Studies will return theses if they contain such errors or do not conform to its prescribed format. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in an outcome of “no pass,” and all the conditions of a no pass will become applicable.

Following approval by the Office of Graduate Studies, the thesis will be published and made available through ProQuest. Questions about thesis publication should be addressed to the Office of Graduate Studies.

### **Drop Policy:**

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop\_Request\_Form.pdf].

The Registrar’s Office will provide on the University Calendar a deadline for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar’s Office immediately. Attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits. Please note that professors cannot drop students; drops are the responsibility of the student.

Students that find themselves facing an unexpected, life altering circumstance before the drop deadline published on the academic calendar should drop the course. Should a student encounter an unexpected, life altering circumstance after the drop deadline, that student may be eligible for an incomplete so long as all work due before the circumstance has been submitted

and the student has a reasonable chance to pass the course should the work be completed as soon as the circumstance resolves itself. No student should expect to receive an incomplete.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation could result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course.

Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, using another student's work, collusion, and abuse of resource materials. Any instance of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade for the course. All academic misconduct concerns will also be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to violate those standards or expectations.

### **The University Writing Center:**

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students between 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides.

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [<https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

### **University Library:**

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these

resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](https://tamuct.libguides.com/) [https://tamuct.libguides.com/].

### **Program Assessment:**

The English program uses student assignments to determine if they are meeting departmental learning outcomes. To that end, some of the projects you complete for this course may be used for programmatic assessment. An effort is made to remove all identifying markers from any artifact used in this manner. Your identity should, therefore, be protected. Still, please let your instructor know by the end of the first week if you do not want your work used in this way. Contact your instructor if you have any questions or concerns about this process.

### **Academic Accommodations:**

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) webpage [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html].

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit <https://www.tamuct.departments/index.php>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines online](#), please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

### **Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students:**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who

are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) web page [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines online](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf), please visit the website <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

### **911 Cellular:**

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas  
911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### **Copyright Notice:**

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author. Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author (instructor). Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.