

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF ARTS

Master of Arts in the field of English Studies

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

(Applicable to students admitted in the academic year 2022-23 and thereafter)

The MA in the field of English Studies has a cross-cultural focus and this unique curriculum is designed to take advantage of Hong Kong's historical, geographical and political position. Each course considers different aspects of theories, languages and literatures of cross-cultural exchange especially with respect to East-West, post-colonial and global situations.

The main objective of the curriculum in English Studies is to interrogate, challenge and develop theories of language and literature as critical insight into the contemporary world, and to give expression to this understanding in oral and written assignments, culminating in a capstone experience. To this end, each course involves an appreciation of relevant theories and approaches and armed with these, encourages critical responses to cultural practice in its various representational and linguistic forms, which may include fiction, poetry, film, advertising, travel writing, spoken, written and multimodal discourse. This involves not only an understanding of how English might be used in different linguistic communities, but also an understanding of important contemporary debates concerning culture, politics, ideology and language.

The MA in the field of English Studies consists of two introductory courses (9 credits each), four seminar courses (6 credits each), and a capstone experience (18 credits) in the form of a final research project and a conference paper. The MA can be studied in full-time or in part-time mode. Part-time candidates will take two parallel courses per semester (12 weeks) over the first three semesters, and complete a final capstone course in the fourth semester. Full-time candidates will take four courses in the first semester, and an additional two courses in the second semester, along with the capstone experience. Full-time students may choose to take all their seminar courses in one stream if they wish to specialise in either Linguistics or Literature. While part-time students normally follow a fixed curriculum with half of their courses in Literature and half in Linguistics, they can apply for special approval to take seminar courses in either Linguistics or Literature stream. With at least three courses and the capstone successfully completed in one stream, those students' transcripts will indicate the respective specialisation ('MA - English Studies [Literature]', 'MA - English Studies [Linguistics]'). For students who do not specialize in one stream, their transcripts will indicate 'MA - English Studies'. Courses for part-time students will be offered in the evenings, while full-time students will take courses during the day and in the evenings. In order to allow more flexibility, part-time students may also apply for special approval and take electives offered during the day in either literature and linguistics in lieu of the course(s) offered in the evenings after they have taken the mandatory introductory classes in literature and linguistics. Each session may consist of a lecture, workshop, students' presentations, or other form of in-class learning. Student participation in all courses is required. Full-time and part-time students are allowed to take up to a total of two elective seminar courses online (i.e., up to 12 out of 60 credits, equivalent to 20% of the total curriculum load) throughout their studies. Up to two elective seminar courses may be offered online in an academic year. Priority to enroll in online courses will be given to part-time students.

A range of 120-150 hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activities) is the norm for a 6-credit course. Our 9-credit courses operate on the basis of 180 hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activities). The curriculum has a total study load of approximately 1,200 hours, of which a minimum of 150 are contact hours.

1. Compulsory introductory courses (9 credits)

These courses introduce intellectual enquiry into novel cross-cultural situations where English language or literature are concerned. Each course involves an appreciation of relevant theories and, with students armed with these, encourages critical responses to cultural practice in its literary representations and linguistic forms. Contact hours are normally three hours per week, consisting of a combination of lectures, seminars, group discussions, presentations, and other in-class and online activities including quizzes and tests. Assessment is by 100% coursework (including oral tasks and written assignments like tutorial responses and reflections, critical essays, creative non-fiction, research papers, weekly or bi-weekly exercises), with a total written output of approximately 5-6,000 words.

2. Seminar courses (6 credits)

These are advanced modules that tackle more specific areas of interest in cross-cultural studies through language or literature. Assessment is by 100% coursework (including oral tasks and written assignments like tutorial responses and reflections, critical essays, creative non-fiction, research papers, weekly or bi-weekly exercises), with a total written output of approximately 4,000 words.

3. Capstone Experience: Final Research Project (18 credits)

Each student will develop and present a final research project on a literary or linguistic topic as part of the fulfillment of the requirements for the MA degree. Students will have the opportunity to pursue their own research interests under the supervision of a teacher who will utilise class-time to a) provide in-depth instructions surrounding the capstone experience; b) provide core knowledge surrounding the production of the final research project (e.g., templates for writing extended essays, guidelines on formulating aims and research questions); and c) provide individual guidance to students so as to help them to formulate a topic and scope the research, to suggest reading, and to review plans and draft chapters. Class time will thus consist of discussions on research methods, theoretical considerations, and presentation skills. The project proposal must be submitted for approval by the beginning of the second semester for full-time MA students, and by the beginning of the fourth semester for part-time MA students. Students are expected to spend much of their time on independent research and writing. The Capstone Experience will culminate in three major research outputs: 1) an extended essay of ca. 2,000-3,000 words on their project; 2) a creative output on their project (e.g., poster, film, website); and 3) the presentation of their research and findings at an MAES conference. Full-time students who select to specialise in either linguistics or literature, need to complete the capstone final project in their respective area of specialisation. Those full-time and part-time students with a CGPA of 3.6 or higher, who are on track to receive a Distinction before the capstone experience can also apply to do an extended final essay of ca. 5000 words to prepare to apply for further postgraduate studies. Assessment is by 100% coursework.

Amended April 27, 2021, March 31, 2022, May 17, 2022, September 13, 2022