

ENGLISH MAJOR SPECIALIZATIONS

The English major specializations offer a way for undergraduates in the English Department to optionally focus their elective coursework towards a specialized field of literary study. Four courses are required to complete a specialization, typically taken as part of the student's normal English upper division elective course load, although some specializations allow the use of a limited number of out-of-Department courses.

The fundamental idea informing the Specializations is that students should be empowered to explore particular areas of interest through a disciplined itinerary of courses. In addition, particular specializations often work to create a collaborative community of research by offering certain extra-curricular events – e.g., conferences or colloquia or field trips, involving undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty.

AMERICAN CULTURES SPECIALIZATION

The American Cultures specialization offers students an opportunity to study authors and topics drawn from a broad historical range. We also encourage students to develop a comparative understanding of the field. In practice, this includes exploring how different aspects of American cultures interact, and interrogating the ways regional, hemispheric and global trends shape, and are shaped by, American cultural expressions.

Faculty: Professors Blake, Ghosh, Gutierrez-Jones, Lim, Maslan, Newfield, and Waid (Specialization Director)

Website: acc.english.ucsb.edu

EARLY MODERN STUDIES SPECIALIZATION

The Early Modern Studies Specialization focuses on English literature from 1500 to 1800. It encourages students to take courses on a wide range of topics throughout this broad historical span and to study in depth both minor authors of the period as well as such major figures as Spenser, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Milton, Pope, Defoe, Richardson, Aphra Behn, and Samuel Johnson

Faculty: Professors Cook, Kearney, Fumerton, Griffin, Rose, and Warner, Andrea (Specialization Director)

Website: emc.english.ucsb.edu

LITERATURE AND THE MIND SPECIALIZATION

Literature has always honored the power of the imagination in shaping our experience of the world. Current developments in psychoanalysis, psychology, philosophy, cognitive science and neurobiology confirm the profound importance of language and literature in our understanding of the mind, the world, and their creative interactions. Study of the mind is now one of our most exciting fields of interdisciplinary research, informed by and informing not only literary criticism and theory but also the study of cultural and social practice. This specialization explores how and why symbolic activity allows us to experiment with, rather than suffer from, reality.

Faculty: Professors Caldwell, Carlson, Fradenburg, Gutierrez-Jones, Newfield, Samolsky, Young (Specialization Director), and Park

Website: mind.english.ucsb.edu

LITERATURE AND THE CULTURE OF INFORMATION SPECIALIZATION

The specialization in Literature and the Culture of Information brings the perspective of the humanities to the concept of “information” that many students will engage with professionally and personally in their lives. In particular, Literature and the Culture of Information compares the forms, media, institutions, and aesthetics of the “information evolution” to similar revolutions of the past-e.g., the print revolution. Courses offered by this specialization hybridize the theory, practice, and literature of contemporary information culture with studies of the earlier information media of oral discourse, manuscripts, and print and the literature they embodied.

Faculty: Professors Douglass, Liu (Specialization Director), Newfield, Raley, Rose, Warner, and Jue

Website: lcmbeta.english.ucsb.edu

LITERATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT SPECIALIZATION

How does literature affect environmental values and practices? Can a novel or poem make a more sustainable world? The Literature and Environment Specialization explores links between culture, science, and politics that are especially pressing in our current era. Courses in the specialization focus on the ways in which literature shapes and responds to a variety of environmental concerns, from animal welfare to pollution to global warming.

Faculty: Professors Caldwell, Cook, Duffy, Ghosh, Guerrini (History), Gutiérrez-Jones, Hiltner, Jue, Osborne (History), Samolsky, Shewry (Specialization Director), and Waid

Website: lit-enviro.english.ucsb.edu

MODERN LITERATURE AND CRITICAL THEORY SPECIALIZATION

This specialization is for students interested in reading Modern and post-modernist British, Irish, and world literature alongside cultural theory. COMMA emphasizes the coexistence of literature with modern and contemporary cultural productions. Courses in this specialization focus on Twentieth Century Anglophone literature and contextualize this by discussing such topics as critical theory, feminism, or postcolonial theory, as just a few examples.

Faculty: Professors Boscagli (Specialization Director), Duffy, Ghosh, Huang, Lim, Raley, Shewry, Samolsky.

Other faculty may also teach in this area.

Website: comma.english.ucsb.edu

MEDIEVAL LITERATURE SPECIALIZATION

In conjunction with the interdisciplinary Medieval Studies Program, the Undergraduate Specialization in medieval literature of the British Isles 500 – 1500 encourages students to take courses on a wide range of topics throughout this broad historical span, such as Beowulf, Literature of Chivalry, and Chaucer, as well as to engage with literatures in languages other than English.

Faculty: Professors Blurton (Specialization Director), Fradenburg

Website: medieval.english.ucsb.edu

CREATIVE WRITING

This specialization offers courses for students interested in developing an original creative voice and a critical intention in their imaginative writings. Students may explore a variety of genres, including: poetry; writing for performance; dramatic writing; testimonio; creative nonfiction; the memoir; short and long fiction; oral and community story-telling; digital expressions, and more. Many of the courses will emphasize embodied practice on the road to writing, and will integrate discussions of the building blocks of ‘craft’ with larger discussions of social equity, the environment and globalization. The specialization is designed to respond to the specificity and diversity of the students across the UCSB campus, especially to the underrepresented emergent writer.

Faculty: Professors Batiste, Huang, Lim, Moraga (Specialization Director); Olguín, Rana, and Waid.

The Creative Writing specialization is affiliated with Las Maestras Center for Xicana Indigenous Thought, Art and Social Practice, where students are offered on-going conversations with visiting writer and artist practitioners and off-campus community-based learning opportunities.

Website: <https://maestraxicana.ucsb.edu/creative-writing-specialization/>

INDEPENDENT SPECIALIZATIONS

Students may also develop their own particular specialization in consultation with a faculty advisor. Working together, this student and faculty advisor would tailor a specialization from already established course offerings.

Requirements for all specializations:

Any 4 elective courses or 3 elective courses and one upper-division seminar from the specialization course list. Courses required for the major (101,102,103A/B,104A/B) may not count toward the specializations.