B.A.

Students majoring in English at the University of Minnesota have the opportunity to study literature, literary criticism, literary history, linguistics, critical theory, and creative writing.

The English major at the University of Minnesota offers (relatively) small classes to encourage class discussion and active participation. Professors teach most of the required and elective courses; some sections are taught by lecturers and advanced graduate students. English majors write in a variety of contexts, and, appropriately for a research university, they have the opportunity to use one of the best libraries in the world for secondary, electronic, and archival studies.

Preparatory Coursework

Prospective majors are encouraged to develop their interests and skill in close reading and writing about literary texts by taking an introductory course in literature, creative writing, and/or English language before officially declaring the major. Suggestions include EngL 1001-1701, and EngW 1101-1104.

Degree Requirements

Students must complete at least 120 credits to graduate, including at least 35 credits in EngL, EngW, or EngC (beyond freshman writing requirements), including at least nine 3xxx or higher courses.

Students begin their studies, ideally in their sophomore year, with the department’s methods course (English 3001W), Shakespeare (English 3007), and surveys (English 3003W-3006W). The methods course, Textual Interpretation, Analysis, and Investigation, provides majors with the tools—close and critical reading, literature in history and culture, and the idea of multiple approaches to literary works—needed to succeed in their chosen field. Shakespeare and the British and American Literature surveys show how literary works can be seen in historical and cultural perspectives. Students should have completed these courses by the end of their junior year.

The linguistics/theory requirement allows students to deepen their understanding of the English language or to concentrate on theoretical questions that shape readers’ understanding of texts.

In addition to these requirements, students choose at least three electives, which are generally devoted to in-depth studies of particular authors, topics, periods, or genres. They often involve supplementary readings and library research in advance preparation for writing the senior paper.

Creative writing electives enable students to explore the intricacies and intimacies of the creative process and see for themselves some of the ways in which prose and poetry writings are brought together to be offered to the reader.

All English major courses must be taken A-F and completed with grades C- or higher.

Students must graduate with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better in courses taken to fulfill major requirements. Transfer students must complete at least five English courses, including EngL or EngW 3960 and the senior paper, at the University of Minnesota to be awarded a major in English.
Required Courses
Students take 10 courses (35 cr minimum) in EngL, EngW, or EngC (beyond the freshman writing requirements), including at least nine 3xxx courses, distributed as follows:

Foundation Courses
- EngL 3001W—Textual Interpretation, Analysis, and Investigation
- Three of the following British and American literature survey courses: EngL 3003W, 3004W, 3005W, 3006W
- EngL 3007—Shakespeare or 3xxx full-term Shakespeare in London course (department approved)
- One course in literary theory or English: See the department for a list of choices

Electives
Three courses (minimum 9 cr), to include at least two 3xxx courses (6 cr) and one 1xxx or 3xxx course (3-4 cr).

Senior Seminar or Writing Workshop & Senior Project
The program of study culminates in a writing project, completed in a rigorous and intensive seminar in which students write an extended, scholarly essay (EngL 3960W, 4 cr), or in an advanced creative writing workshop (EngW 3960W, 4 cr) in which students write a substantial manuscript of poetry, literary fiction, or literary nonfiction. Honors summa cum laude degree candidates complete EngL 3883V—Honors Thesis (4 cr) in lieu of EngL or EngL 3960W.

Minor Requirements
Students take EngL 3001 (Textual Interpretation), EngL 3007 (Shakespeare), two historical surveys of literature (EngL 3003W-3006W), and one 3xxx elective course for a minimum of 18 credits.

Skills
English majors develop skills that are applicable to a wide variety of careers. These skills include:
- Verbal, written, and visual communication skills
- Ability to research, read, and synthesize information efficiently
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Listening, clarifying, questioning and responding skills
- Creative writing skills
- Ability to work well with diverse groups

Employment
Common areas of employment for this major include but are not limited to:
- Arts and Entertainment—announcing, creative writing, managing, development
- Media—journalistic writing, editing, web composition/design, management
- Education—teaching, research, admissions, advising, student affairs
- Government—public information, campaigns, research
- Business—technical writing, administration, marketing, human resources, sales, consulting, recruiting
- Public Relations and Advertising—copy writing, corporate public affairs, lobbying
- Nonprofit—fundraising, grant writing, programming, management

The department has a career program, with alumnae/i speakers, one or two times per year. Contact the Undergraduate Office for current information. See also “Career Connections” at http://English.cla.umn.edu/undergradprogram/CareerAdvising/career.htm.

Graduates in English find satisfying careers in the fields listed above, among many other opportunities often focused on the art of communication. Internships give students opportunities to explore many of these careers and gain invaluable experience for future jobs. See http://English.cla.umn.edu/undergradprogram/contests.html for additional information about and links to career resources, service-learning opportunities, awards for English majors, department faculty, graduate and professional studies, academic advising and much more.

How do I declare an English major?
You will be required to declare a major by the time you have completed 60 credits.

1. Talk with someone from the department: an adviser, a professor, or a teaching assistant, to learn more about the major and its requirements.

2. When you have decided upon an English major, meet with the appropriate person from the department to complete a Major Program form.

3. Bring a copy of the form to your CLA student community.

4. If you decide to change your major, contact your CLA student community to learn more about your new major’s declaration process.
About the English major:
Undergraduate Advising
225 Lind Hall
(612) 625-4592
http://english.cla.umn.edu/

About CLA requirements, graduation, and other information about majors:
CLA Society & Culture Student Community
122 Johnston Hall
(612) 624-2549
http://www.class.umn.edu/sandc/
sac@class.cla.umn.edu

or

CLA Martin Luther King, Jr. Program
19 Johnston Hall
(612) 625-2300
http://www.class.umn.edu/mlk
mlk@class.cla.umn.edu

About careers, internships, and community learning opportunities in this major and others:
Career and Community Learning Center
135 Johnston Hall
(612) 624-7577
http://www.cclc.umn.edu
cclc@class.cla.umn.edu

About graduation with honors:
Students interested in graduating with honors should contact:
CLA Honors Division
115 Johnston Hall
(612) 624-5522
http://www.cla.umn.edu/honors/
honors@class.cla.umn.edu

Remember!
You have not declared a major until you have:

• completed a Major Program Form with your major adviser
• filed a copy with the major department
• filed a copy with your CLA student community
• be sure to keep a copy for yourself