

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY  
ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT  
**HANDBOOK**  
2018-2019

18<sup>th</sup> EDITION

ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

WACO, TEXAS

# 2018-2019 EGSA Handbook

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## WELCOME LETTER

Waco, Texas  
Summer 2018

Greetings Fellow Graduate Students,

Welcome to the latest version of the EGSA Handbook for Baylor English Graduate Students. We hope that you find it useful throughout your time at Baylor. It explains every stage of the MA and PhD programs, from guidelines on coursework and thesis/dissertation to personal narratives and advice for success. It also includes sections with useful information on assistantships, attending conferences, conducting research, and searching for a job within or outside academia. The final section also includes information on other key parts of a successful graduate experience, such as mental health, and spiritual life.

Please keep in mind that this is a resource created for students, by students, and that it is continually under construction. Its first version was created twenty years ago, in 1998, and it has been revised almost every year since by graduate students. Please serve your fellow students, and future graduate students, by letting us know if something is outdated, or if you think of a section that ought to be added. Official information from Dr. Russell, the English Department Website, or the Graduate School will always take precedence over this student-created resource. We are mainly compilers, trying to put all the information you need to know in one place.

As this handbook shows, EGSA cares deeply about equipping our members for success during their time in graduate school. In this resource, we've sought to provide the vital information you need to get started in the department, but please don't hesitate to ask one of us or the EGSA Peer Advisor any of your questions.

All the best in your endeavours,

Kelly Sauskojus and Reyna Johnson  
2017-2018 Orientation Co-Chairs  
Baylor English Graduate Student Association

### **EGSA Handbook Revision Committee, 2018-2019**

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## CHAPTER 1

# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Upon entering the graduate program, one of the first things you should do is carefully read the degree requirements for your program. The English Department offers two programs: the MA program, and the PhD program. The PhD program offers concentrations in British Literature, American Literature, and Rhetoric & Composition. The PhD program also offers an interdisciplinary certificate in Religion and Literature. The requirements for each program are posted on the English Department website and can be accessed [here](#).

MA in English: Beyond the BA

*Thesis Track (30 hours); Non-Thesis Track (33 hours)*

**1 foreign language** (does not count toward total credit hours)

For Thesis Track, **8 seminars total** (24 hours); for non-thesis track, **11 seminars total** (33 hours)

–Bibliography and Research (3 hours)

–Literary Theory (Literary Criticism) **or** Linguistics **or** Rhet./Comp. (3 hours)

–6 Elective English Courses (18 hours); for non-thesis track, 9 Electives (27 hours) are required.

**Thesis** (6 hours)

**Oral Examination:** Defense of the Thesis

The **non-thesis track** is possible but very uncommon. If students plan to pursue a PhD later, they should note that **the thesis track is much preferred** by most graduate English departments. For the non-thesis track, MA students must take extra elective English courses for a total of 33 hours. **An oral exam directed at topics in your coursework is required.** In the non-thesis oral examination, students are asked to discuss with a panel of professors some of the issues that arose in their coursework. Like the thesis defense, students must assemble a panel of three graduate faculty members to conduct the exam (all three, in this case, will come from the English Department).



Writing a creative MA thesis is currently a possibility. Ask around to see who is currently working on one, and talk to the peer advisor to learn more.

## PhD in English: Beyond BA (66 hours)

**2 foreign languages** (do not count toward total credit hours). You must fulfill your foreign language exam before taking your prelims.

### **18 English seminars** (54 hours)

- Old English language (3 hours)
- Bibliography and Research (3 hours)
- Literary Theory (Literary Criticism) **or** Linguistics **or** Rhet./Comp. (3 hours)
- 1 course from “English 1” (Old English, Middle English, Renaissance, Seventeenth Century, Restoration and Eighteenth Century) (3 hours)
- 1 course from “English 2” (Romantic, Victorian, Modern British, Contemporary British) (3 hours)
- 1 course from “American 1” (Colonial American Literature to 1800, Nineteenth-Century American Literature) (3 hours)
- 1 course from “American 2” (Modern American, Contemporary American) (3 hours)
- 11 Elective English Courses (33 hours)

You must take four classes from your primary historical area. (For example, if you would like to write your dissertation in Modern American Literature, then you must have a total of 4 courses from “American 2” in order to fulfill this requirement.)

### **Preliminary Examination**

### **Prospectus Review**

**Dissertation:** 12 hours total, including registration for at least 1 hour the semester you graduate.

## **Final Examination:** Defense of the Dissertation

### PhD in English: Beyond MA (42 hours)

\*PhD students who already hold an MA still must satisfy the distribution requirements (1 course from English 1, English 2, etc.); however, many of these requirements (listed below) may have been fulfilled during the course of the MA degree. In total, **a PhD student entering the program with an MA will complete 30 hours of coursework**, but the *type* of coursework varies based upon the classes he/she has completed during the MA. If distribution requirements overlap with your MA coursework, notify the Graduate Program Director. He or she must approve the overlapping coursework.

Hence, if any of these requirements are met with a course taken as a graduate student elsewhere, then **another elective seminar** must be taken to reach the total of 10 seminars beyond the MA degree. Most PhD students entering the program with an MA will have a large amount of the distribution requirements already completed. This allows them to primarily take courses in their specific historical area, depending on what courses are being offered and pending the Graduate Program Director's approval.

**2 foreign languages** (do not count toward total credit hours). You must fulfill your foreign language exam before taking your prelims.

#### **10 English seminars** (30 hours)

–Old English language (3 hours)

–Bibliography and Research (3 hours)

–Literary Theory (Literary Criticism) **or** Linguistics **or** Rhet./Comp. (3 hours)

–1 course from “English 1” (Old English, Middle English, Renaissance,  
Seventeenth Century, Restoration and Eighteenth Century) (3 hours)

–1 course from “English 2” (Romantic, Victorian, Modern British,  
Contemporary British) (3 hours)

–1 course from “American 1” (Colonial American Literature to 1800,  
Nineteenth-Century American Literature) (3 hours)

–1 course from “American 2” (Modern American,  
Contemporary American) (3 hours)

–3 Other Courses in your Major Subject Area (9 hours)

You must take four classes from your primary historical area. (For example, if you would like to write your dissertation in Modern American Literature, then you must have a total of 4 courses from “American 2” in order to fulfill this requirement.)

### **Preliminary Examination**

### **Prospectus Review**

**Dissertation:** 12 hours total, including registration for at least 1 hour the semester you graduate.

**Final Examination:** Defense of the Dissertation

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN RELIGION AND LITERATURE**

**2 foreign languages** (do not count toward total credit hours)

**10 seminars** (30 hours) –

–Old English language (3 hours)

–Bibliography and Research (3 hours)

–Literary Theory, Linguistics, or Rhet/Com (Literary Criticism) (3 hours)

Seven seminars in literature, just as in the regular literature track:

At least one course is required from each of the four categories of literature:

- English 1 (Old English, Middle English, Renaissance, Seventeenth Century, Restoration and Eighteenth Century)
- English 2 (Romantic, Victorian, Modern British, Contemporary British)
- American 1 (Colonial American Literature to 1800, Nineteenth Century American)
- American 2 (Modern American, Contemporary American)

One of the seven seminars must have a demonstrable component of religion in it, e.g., “English Religious Authors.”

Another seminar has to be Literature and Religion.

Total of ten seminars in English (just as the requirements are for other students doing a PhD in English), plus a Religion seminar taught in that department for a total of 11 seminars.

Doctoral Examinations, also now in line with the literature track exams:

- I. One area from those listed under "Specific Course Requirements," as the student's major area (3 hours) (Some options are: Old English, Middle English, Renaissance, Seventeenth Century, Restoration and Eighteenth Century, Romantic, Victorian, Modern British, Contemporary British, Colonial American Literature to 1800, Nineteenth Century American, Modern American, Contemporary American)
- II. The historical areas, consisting of the following two 90-minute exams:
  - A. One historical area contiguous with the major area (90 minutes);
  - B. Another historical area (90 minutes);
- III. Literature and Religion as the Open Area exam (3 hours)

Certificate does not appear on the student's transcript; student may list it on the c.v.

This information only applies to students beginning the program in Fall 2017 and beyond. If you began in Fall 2016 and earlier, you will be completing the old Religion and Literature track, and should see the Baylor EGSA website for [instructions](#).

## PROGRAM LENGTH

Many students ask how long it will take them to get their degrees. **MA students can expect funding for four semesters and two summers (2 ½ years)**, although it is possible to complete the MA in only 2 years. **All PhD students, whether they come in with a MA or not, can expect funding for 5 years.** If additional time is required for the PhD, tuition remission for the remaining years is typically granted, but students will have to look for graduate assistantships elsewhere on campus. The hard cutoff for finishing the PhD program is 8 years.

## COURSE LOADS

Graduate students typically take two seminars each semester and one to two seminars during the summer, but some take more or fewer, depending on their current needs and/or interests.

Two summer sessions are available each year, with at least one, and sometimes more, graduate English seminars each session. If you want to take summer classes but are not interested in the summer offerings, you may find a willing professor who will allow you to do an independent study during the summer. (It is a good idea to make sure the professor is teaching or on campus during

the summer before asking them. [See below](#) for more information on taking an independent study.) **MA students may be allowed one independent study, and PhD students may be allowed up to two.**

**Those students who enter the program without an MA must take 18 hours in the first year to be eligible to teach the next year.** This is typically distributed as 6 hours per regular semester (Fall and Spring) and 3 hours each summer session. Students who wish to take 9 hours during a semester they are not teaching may petition to do so, though permission and/or funding are not guaranteed. Many first-year students will take courses during both summer sessions so that they are able to teach in the fall with taking the normal course load of two courses per semester.

## REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

Most graduate seminars meet once a week for three hours, from 3:30 to 6:30 or 4:00 to 7:00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, though occasionally a professor may schedule a course at a different time. (Old English, for example, meets twice a week in the afternoon.) Other courses, such as Religion seminars and undergraduate courses, are offered at various times.

First, find out which seminars are being offered for the coming semester. Course descriptions for each semester are printed and available in the English Office (as well as the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor lounge) prior to registration.

Spring registration usually begins around the end of October or beginning of November. Summer and fall registration begins after Spring Break. [Graduate students register online via BearWeb.](#) **Note: Classes are filled strictly on a first-come, first-served basis, and registration dates are based upon seniority. The English Office will notify students when they are eligible to register.** Typically, only students in the first two to three years of the program are still in coursework. That means that incoming first-years will not have much free will in which courses are left. By second semester of their first year, students should have about 50/50 odds of getting into all their preferred courses. By their second year, students are typically senior enough to have their pick of courses.

When registering for classes, keep in mind that students are only permitted to take a course with the same number twice (i.e. ENG 5374). If you need to take a course for a third time, even if the topic and professor are completely different from previous courses of that number, you must get special permission from the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate School.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The MA requires students to demonstrate intermediate proficiency in one foreign language, and the PhD requires two foreign languages. You can satisfy this requirement in one of several ways, all of which are outlined in detail in the [Graduate Catalog](#), which is available both in print form and on the Baylor website. Typically, graduate students who have taken two years of a foreign language in college (IF these undergraduate foreign language classes were completed no more than five years before matriculating into the Baylor graduate program) can satisfy the foreign language requirement by filling out [this form](#) from EGSA's website and turning it in to the English office. The office also has hard copies of it. The form is simply called a "petition form," and it is the same form the Graduate School uses to document credit transfers from other institutions. Once Dr. Russell and the Graduate School have approved it, you can log into BearWeb to confirm that everything has been processed correctly. On BearWeb, go to student academic services -> student records -> degree audit. At the bottom of your degree audit, where it says 2) Foreign Language, the + means it's completed. If you are using undergraduate coursework to satisfy a language requirement, turn in the petition form as soon as possible. Don't wait until you're ready to take your preliminary exams to fill out the form; not all requests are approved. You have a **five year window** to use undergrad coursework to satisfy the language requirement.

**As a PhD student, you may not proceed with preliminary exams until your foreign language requirement is satisfied.**

Even if you take a foreign language here at Baylor, you *must* petition to get it accepted by the Graduate School. Pick up said form and follow the above directions. The petition is just a formality, but you have to get it done in order to take your exams.

If you need a foreign language as a graduate student, you have two options.

**A. Take a "Modern Language for Grad Students" course or take an ancient language course through the Classics Department during the summer.** These courses in French, German, Spanish, and Latin are held during one summer session and are essentially crash-courses in reading and translating the language. The course is officially two courses taught concurrently during one summer session. Latin is the one exception; Latin goes through the whole summer, with one class in summer session I and one in summer session II. Because of the heavy workload, we strongly recommend that you NOT attempt to take a graduate seminar while taking a summer language. If you are taking *a modern or classical foreign language during the summer*, follow these directions:

\* First, check [on BearWeb](#) to find out which languages are being offered during the summer, and choose a language. Foreign languages for grad students are numbered 5370 and 5371. You should probably check with the Graduate Program Director to make sure that the language will be accepted. French and German are always accepted.

\* Once you finish the class, you *must* petition the Graduate School to accept your foreign language. Do this as soon as final grades are posted.

B. Should you be interested in taking the **competency exam** in order to forego taking a foreign language course, you must go through the appropriate channels in the Department of Foreign Languages. A link to find out what will satisfy proficiency requirements in a foreign language can be found on the [Modern Foreign Languages website](#). You must also work within the specific timelines given by the Department of Foreign Languages. This option requires you to prepare for the competency exam on your own, but can save you money in summer fees and free up precious time off from classes. It is strongly recommended that you take any foreign language exams as early as possible in your graduate career, in case alternative arrangements need to be made; do not wait until you are ready to take your prelims.

## REGISTERING FOR CLASSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS

**Getting a Minor:** Graduate students can earn a minor with the MA (6 hours) and with the PhD (12 hours). In order to get a minor, you will need to talk to the Graduate Program Director very early in your program—ideally even before you register for your first seminars—and inform him of your intention to get a minor. He will walk you through the process of making it official. **All coursework attributed to a minor must be 5000-level; thus, a 4000-level undergraduate course will not be an option unless it is cross-listed with a 5000-level course.**

**For taking courses outside the English department, you will first need to contact your Graduate Program Director for approval (and then the *other* graduate program) and obtain a permit to be enrolled.** Check with the specific graduate program office to ensure that you are approved for enrollment. You will register for the course either via BearWeb or through the other department's primary administrative assistant.

## TAKING AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

**MA students may be allowed up to one independent study, and PhD students may be allowed up to two.**

The independent study will only be approved if 1) the course is immediately related to your dissertation/thesis and 2) the content of the course would never be offered as part of the regular curriculum. Whether or not these criteria have been met is subject to the approval of the Graduate Program Director. If you would like to take a course that hasn't been offered recently but has been taught in the past, you should directly petition the appropriate professor to teach the course again (as a regular course, not as an independent study).

The process for arranging for an independent study:

The first thing to do is to ask the professor if he or she would be willing to do an independent study with you. Many professors are open to this, though it can be time-consuming for them, so don't take it personally if they decline. Once the professor has agreed to conduct the independent study, you and the professor will need to compile a reading list and construct a brief course description. Then take the information to the Graduate Program Director for approval (although you might want to meet with the Graduate Program Director earlier to see if this independent study will be a possibility in the first place.) If approved, you will register for ENG 5308. It is up to you and the professor to decide when to meet.

## THESIS/DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

As you take your seminar classes, keep your eyes and ears open for ideas for your thesis or dissertation. **It is never too early to begin collecting your thoughts and organizing the reality that will become your thesis or dissertation.**

When you begin work on your thesis or dissertation, you should familiarize yourself with the Graduate School Guidelines for writing and formatting your work. There are many helpful [dissertation and thesis resources](#) available from the graduate school. The most detailed description of the formatting style is [these guidelines](#). These guidelines are reviewed every semester and might change; double-check that you are working from the correct one. Also remember that while you will use MLA style in your work, the Graduate School Guidelines override the MLA, particularly in terms of formatting.

Early while taking thesis/dissertation hours you should attend one of the formatting workshops offered by the graduate school. When you have a rough draft of your thesis or dissertation, you should also schedule an appointment with **Sandra Harman** ([Sandra\\_Harman@baylor.edu](mailto:Sandra_Harman@baylor.edu)) at the Graduate School to look over your formatting (this is called the "Preliminary Technical Review" and is required before your actual defense). Follow her instructions to the letter, and have her look over your thesis or dissertation again before you print your final copy.

## COMMENCEMENT INFORMATION

Please familiarize yourself with the [guidelines on the Graduate School website](#). Here are some highlights:

1. All students must be registered for at least one credit hour during the semester you intend to graduate.



2. Follow the [calendar](#) listed online. For Spring 2019 graduation, some key dates are Jan. 22 (file for commencement), March 1 (purchasing doctoral regalia), March 15 (last day to take the oral exam), March 25 (last day to submit defended and approved copy of dissertation), April 2 (last day to submit defended & approved copy of MA thesis).
3. All of your library obligations (fines and books checked out) must be cleared before you can graduate.
4. If you will be going through the commencement ceremony, you'll pay the Baylor Bookstore the approximately \$45 commencement fee anytime before the date of graduation and pick up your robe, hood, etc., from them. Renting the Doctoral Regalia is \$37; purchasing it is currently \$1018.

## CHAPTER 2

### FUNDING YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

Most likely, you have already been awarded some kind of assistantship upon entering Baylor's graduate program. This section is intended to give you information about a variety of options for continuing to fund your graduate study.

**There are three kinds of assistantship offered through the Department of English—Teaching Assistant (Levels 1 and 2) and Research Assistant.**

#### **Teaching Assistant Level 1/ Teacher of Record (TOR)**

**Dr. Danielle M. Williams** serves as the Interim Director of First-Year Writing (FYW) and supervises graduate student instructors. As a TOR, you will teach undergraduate courses as the sole instructor of record. Historically, TORs in English have taught two sections of English classes each semester; however, the course load is likely to be reduced in the near future and the course assignments may change somewhat with TORs receiving the same level of pay. You will be updated in a timely manner when any changes occur.

Like any other member of the teaching staff, you will be responsible for planning and conducting class meetings, creating and evaluating assignments, holding office hours, conferencing with students, and attending required three FYW meetings (i.e., we hold a meeting the Friday before fall classes commence and at the end of each semester during one of the study days). The department offers mentoring support to enhance your efforts in the classroom, and you are encouraged to seek out additional professional development opportunities offered by the Academy for Teaching and Learning (e.g., Seminars for Excellence in Teaching, or SET) and the Graduate School (Teaching Capstone in Higher Education, or TeaCHE). Incoming TORs are required to attend a week-long orientation workshop before fall classes begin and weekly meetings throughout the year facilitated by the Director of First-Year Writing.

You will meet regularly with Dr. Williams and your mentor to discuss classroom activities, assignments, grading, classroom management, etc., as well as to engage with enduring and emerging theories and practices in Rhetoric and Composition. During the first half of each semester, your advisor and mentor will observe one of your classes and evaluate your teaching. Since reflective practice is an important of your development as a teacher, you will also write responses to your teaching evaluations each semester to identify your strengths and to develop a personal plan to address any potential areas of improvement. After passing doctoral examinations, advanced graduate students are eligible to teach a literature survey course (ENG 2301, 2304, or 2306). In rare circumstances, TORs may have the opportunity to teach advanced writing courses (ENG 3300 or 3303). Graduate students are invited to apply to serve as the Graduate Assistant to the Director of FYW after they have passed their exams.

## **Teaching Assistant Level 2/Graduate Consultant in the Writing Center**

As a Level 2 TA, your responsibility will be to serve as a Graduate Consultant in the university's Writing Center, located in the basement of Carroll Science Hall (and moving to the second floor of Moody Library in Spring 2019). As a Graduate Consultant, your supervisor will be **Dr. Kara Poe Alexander**, Director of the Writing Center. You will also work under the Graduate Assistant Director(s), who will assist in training, scheduling, and other administrative tasks. The Writing Center employs undergraduate peer tutors from all disciplines as well, and you will work closely with these colleagues, serving as mentors and sources of information as needed.

As a Graduate Consultant, you will be responsible for working **20 hours per week** and logging those in the online time card system. Additionally, you will attend staff meetings and a training session at the beginning of the fall semester. The Director and Graduate Assistant Directors will work together at the beginning of the semester to create a work schedule for you, based on the courses you are taking and the Writing Center's needs.

### **Research Assistant (RA)**

As an RA, you will be responsible for working **15 hours per week** assisting a professor or professors in the department. The type of work could range from library research to bookkeeping to serving as editorial assistant for a journal or book, depending on the professor's needs. When possible, the department will try to assign you to a professor in your primary focus area so that your work together can be mutually beneficial. You and the professor(s) to whom you are assigned will arrange your weekly work schedule. Typically, incoming international students receive RA appointments as per certain visa requirements.

first-year RAs who wish to teach during their second year should make this request known to the director of the writing program some time during their first year of study. Typically, because RAs do not have the tutoring experience of other students they stand at a disadvantage in consideration for Teacher of Record appointments. This is by no means a hard and fast rule in the department, but we want students to be aware that the normal path to teaching involves a year in the writing center first.

## **REGARDING HEALTH INSURANCE**

Baylor will cover 80% of the insurance premium for for Baylor's Student Health Insurance Plan for **Teachers of Record** in addition to their stipends. This results in the annual rate being \$605, with the option to purchase unsubsidized coverage for family. For more information about this insurance coverage, see the [Costs and Benefits page](#) on the Graduate School's website. Graduate students not

serving as TORs also have access to Baylor insurance (endorsed by Blue Cross/Blue Shield), though Baylor does not subsidize this insurance.

## LOANS

In addition to departmental assistantships, you may want to apply for a student loan. To do so, you must complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA); you can access the FAFSA at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). The FAFSA is available by January of the year for which you are applying. You will want to submit this form as early as possible, since Baylor's Financial Aid office cannot figure your eligibility for a loan until the Federal Student Aid Programs has processed your FAFSA.

Once your FAFSA is completed, the Financial Aid Office will adjust your available financial award (i.e. the amount of subsidized/unsubsidized Direct Loans you may request) in BearWeb. You can manually input the loan amount you would like to accept. The loan money is then refunded to your personal bank account (you can also set up direct deposit of funds via BearWeb).

## OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

If you need **travel funding** to present at a conference, some funds are available. See the [section on applying for travel funding](#) for instructions.

**There are also other programs on campus that provide employment opportunities for graduate students.** Some of these positions can be held in addition to your English department assistantship and some would be in lieu of work for the English department. Occasionally, grad students get similar assistantships during the summer in order to pay for summer expenses. The most frequent external assistantships awarded to English graduate students, over the summer or during the semester, include **The Graduate Writing Center, Armstrong Browning Library, The Honors College, Baylor University Press, and The Institute for Oral History.** Should you be interested in one of these alternative assistantships for following semesters, notify your Graduate Program Director as soon as you begin your course of study at Baylor. It should be noted that Teachers of Record are strongly discouraged from pursuing an additional job during the school year.

## PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES

Baylor offers competitive parental leave policies, with up to a full semester of leave. See the Graduate School's [Childbirth and Adoption page](#) for more information.

## CHAPTER 3

# ADVICE FOR THE MA

### MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MA YEARS

The number one piece of advice for having a successful MA program: Even though you may only be planning on being here for two years, don't hesitate to get involved in the department. Go to events and get to know people because the hard work of grad school is a lot more manageable when you are part of the encouraging EGSA community.

### APPLYING TO BAYLOR'S PHD PROGRAM

If you are interesting in staying at Baylor for your Ph.D., discuss your desire to stay with the graduate program director at the beginning of your second year. In past years, the process has included a committee of professors who are familiar with your work, including your thesis, reviewing your progress in the program.

### WRITING THE MA THESIS

The master's thesis and defense are vital components of the MA degree in Baylor's Department of English. Should you be interested in pursuing the non-thesis track, inform the GPD of your intention early in your program.

**For the actual formatting and technical Graduate school requirements, consult the Baylor Graduate school website.** At the beginning of each semester, the Graduate School releases an updated edition of the dissertations and theses guidelines, which each student must follow carefully. A PDF file of the latest guidelines is [available online](#).

- Determine your topic and discuss your ideas with your advisor. My advisor told me this is a great time to explore a riskier idea or one that would not be advised for a dissertation (such as a single-author or even single-text study, a study on well-researched authors, or something that fascinates you that wouldn't necessarily be as marketable).
- Your advisor will help you determine the specific timeline for drafts, the types of drafts, the specific length, the number of chapters, and the frequency of meetings.
- Stay in contact with your advisor.

- Try to work on it regularly.
- Visit the Graduate Writing Center! They will help you in any stage of the project!
- Meet with a reference librarian! (Eileen Bentsen)

### **Formatting and Paperwork:**

- Attend the formatting workshop to learn about the specific details of the format.
- Pay attention to the forms and deadlines. (Bring the forms and a pen to your defense.)
- Formatting substantially increases your page length!
  - o English currently uses Palatino Linotype instead of Times New Roman.
  - o For example, in Times New Roman, with formatting, but without front matter, my thesis was 83 pages. In Palatino Linotype, it was 103 pages.
  - o Headings and subheadings are more common in thesis writing, and because of the spacing between types of headings, they increase the length.
- Follow MLA 8<sup>th</sup> edition and the Graduate School's style guide. The Graduate School's format supersedes MLA in cases of disagreement.

## **MA GRADUATION TIMELINE**

- Determine your general topic and find an advisor.
- Sign up for ENG 5V99 for Fall and Spring semesters. (If you are planning on an August graduation, you will also need to take at least one credit then so that you can graduate. Check with GPD about the summer credit when you decide to be a summer grad.)
- Attend a Formatting Workshop with the Graduate School. (Not required, but highly recommended)
- File for graduation at the beginning of the Spring (January 22, 2019) or Summer semester.
- File your petition for the foreign language requirement. (Deadline is March 22, but you don't want to be worrying about more paperwork at that point.)
- Determine your thesis committee (advisor, second departmental reader, and reader from another department at Baylor).
- At least a month in advance, determine the time and place with your committee members. You generally have to find an available room and reserve it yourself.
- Schedule a preliminary technical review with Sandra Harman (Graduate School) for at least two weeks before your defense. Your life will be easier if you've been doing this correctly from the beginning.
- Submit Announcement of Oral Defense at least ten working days before your defense. (Graduate School webpage). This is the only form that you will ever officially file before your thesis defense happens.

- Submit your thesis to your committee at least two weeks before your defense. (No official rule, but it is a good guideline.)
- Defend your thesis. (March 22 for May 2019 graduation -- this is two weeks after spring break; before the end of the Spring 2019 semester for August 2019 graduation). Note that even if you graduate in August you will **MUST** defend before the semester is over. This gives you a few extra weeks, but not much.
- Celebrate!
- Submit Record of Oral Examination form to Graduate School (March 25 for May graduation)
- Submit electronic copy of revised and approved copy of MA thesis (April 2 for May graduation).
- Celebrate!
- Graduate!

## UNOFFICIAL TIPS FOR THE MA THESIS

Below is a series of informal tips that the EGSA Handbook has housed for several years. As this year's editors, our experience tells us that each person's journey writing an MA thesis is different. Use the following advice merely as a way to visualize how others have experienced this process, not necessarily as a step-by-step guide for writing your own thesis. We hope you will, however, enjoy the humor and wit that has inserted itself into this section as the Handbook has evolved!

### 1. Finding a topic

Try to take a class in the literary area that you're considering, and see what happens with a seminar paper. It is easiest to develop a seminar paper topic into your thesis topic, but that doesn't work for everyone. You may want to explore a question that really perplexes you, argue with a critic, or find a gap in current criticism of an author/work. To develop your thesis argument, you will naturally need to spend quite some time researching, but don't fall into the trap of over-researching. Be writing while you're researching. Be sure to choose a topic that's *manageable* for the average thesis. **(Note that different professors have different length requirements; some are from 60-80 pages while others are 80-100.)** When you decide on an argument, write a tentative outline for your thesis, something that can be converted into a 5-10 page thesis proposal, since your thesis director will likely require one.

### 2. Finding a director

It is important that you choose a professor you will enjoy working with, preferably someone from your area of special interest. Every director is different to work with, so before making your final decision, you might want to ask advice of your graduate student colleagues. Consider ahead of time what you want from a thesis director—lots of attention, no attention, or something in-

between—so that you can pick a director accordingly. Also, although most graduate faculty are happy to help students looking for a thesis advisor, before popping the question, you may want to take into consideration how many other thesis and dissertation advisees your proposed director is already working with.

### 3. How much time should I expect to spend on this?

Many grad students finish their theses in two semesters, while others take a full year or more. All we can say is that the time varies, depending on how busy you are with other things, how much knowledge you had of the topic before beginning work on your thesis, how long it takes you to put your argument together, etc. Many students require several months of preliminary reading before they feel comfortable enough to narrow their topic and to begin more intense research and writing. Since you have two years and a summer to complete your MA degree, you should plan on finishing your thesis by the end of the summer of your second year at the latest. Typically, students defend in March to graduate by May, or June to graduate by August.

*Treat each chapter of your thesis like a seminar paper.* How long does it generally take you to plan and write a polished seminar paper? If it takes you 3-4 weeks, for instance, plan that long for each chapter, as well as allowing time at the end of your writing for your thesis committee to read your thesis chapters and for you to finish revising. Be aware, too, that turn-around time on your thesis chapters may not be as fast as you would like and may depend on the time of year. Professors generally stay very busy and are less likely to have time to devote to your thesis at the end of a semester than during the first part of it. Summer may also present a problem, since professors are often out of town or otherwise hard to reach.

Some students find that they greatly benefit from having a support system while they're working on the thesis. For instance, you might get together on occasion with one or more people also going through the thesis process in order to encourage one another and keep each other accountable as you work toward self-established deadlines. Some students also find that having a study carrel in the library—a place they use solely for researching and writing the thesis—helps to keep them disciplined. Remember, too, that this is a master's thesis, *not a dissertation*. The important thing is to demonstrate competence in the research and writing process. Just get the thesis finished!

### 4. Finding second and third readers

Decide on your other thesis committee members with the directing professor in mind. You'll want your committee members to work well together, but also take into consideration which professors have knowledge of your topic area. For your second reader, you should be able to choose any graduate professor in the English Department. It may not be as easy for you to find an outside reader if you're not familiar with any professors from other departments on campus. Depending on your thesis subject and approach used, you may want to choose an outside reader from the Philosophy, Religion, or Psychology Departments. Ask your thesis director if he or she has any suggestions.



## **POTENTIAL PITFALLS FOR MA STUDENTS**

You are in graduate school because you can write at a very high level. The actual writing of the thesis is not the hard part for students. Rather, students have trouble, and cause themselves stress, by:

1. Not finding an advisor early enough.
2. Not communicating with their advisor.
3. Not staying on top of deadlines.
4. Occasionally, struggling with formatting.

## CHAPTER 4

# ADVICE FOR THE PHD

Here are some unofficial reminders and recommendations from previous PhD students who successfully completed their preliminary exams and went on to write their dissertations. **See the English Department website for official guidelines for taking preliminary exams and preparing the dissertation.**

### ANONYMOUS PHD STUDENT A

#### **Selecting areas:**

I recommend that you read and test in the areas that are directly pertinent to your dissertation interests. Additionally, the better part of wisdom dictates that you test in those areas in which you have taken a seminar [from the professor reading the exam]. While you may feel you have adequate exposure to a particular period or topic without having taken a seminar here at Baylor, not having the benefit of the examiner's approach to the material can hinder your success.

#### **Selecting examiners:**

As a grad student recently through the ordeal of prelims, I strongly recommend that you consider carefully by whom you want to be examined. Select examiners with whom you have established a cordial and respectful relationship. Do not assume that the exam is an extension of the professor's class, or that because you've done reasonably well in a class that everything will go smoothly for the written exam. Each professor has different expectations regarding what the preliminary exam should accomplish and contain, which brings me to the next point.

#### **Discovering examiner's approach and rationale:**

Since you really want to pass your exams after the first sitting, it behooves you to deliberately seek from your examiners their modus operandi. Some will be forthright about how they will approach the exam; others may merely speak in general terms like, "I expect both quantity and quality." If so, then ask, "How many pages do you expect for the given time period?" You may even want to ask for some examples of the kinds of questions asked previously (another means of getting a bead on this target is to ask grad students who have already taken exams about their questions.)

**Narrowing focus:**

After you have selected your examiner, you will want to think through the kinds of works to read. Most reasonable examiners will permit a fair amount of leeway in the selection process, but ultimately, the examiner has the final word as to what works you will be responsible for mastering. Some examiners have a standard list of works and questions, others will be happy to cater to your interests.

**Scheduling the exams:**

The Department requires that you take all the exams within ten working days. How you arrange the exams and the times and dates you take them within that time period are really your call. Typically, most of us allow a day or more hiatus between exams.

**ANONYMOUS PHD STUDENT *B*****Setting Up Readers and Reading Lists:**

Most often (though not always) your exam director will be your dissertation director. You will more than likely be on your own when choosing your other committee members. My advice:

- Have your open area be something you are truly interested in, either connected to your major area or one of your other serious interests; it's a three hour exam—make it worth your while. I'm a medievalist: my director was Wendy Allman and she did my open area—Middle English dream visions and sources. Dr. Hanks covered my medieval major area. My contiguous historical period was 16<sup>th</sup> century with Dr. Hunt, and my open area was 18<sup>th</sup> century with Dr. Gardner.
- When picking your contiguous historical period, talk to the profs first; ask what they expect from a 1 ½ hour exam. Then decide whether you want to choose that period or not. Some professors have a pretty set reading list; others are much more willing to consider your input. Choose carefully!
- When picking your other historical period, my advice is to go with a professor you like. I took 18<sup>th</sup> century, not because I particularly like the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but because I like Dr. Gardner. The most fun I had during the whole ordeal was writing those two essays.

**Scheduling and Taking the Exams:**

Make sure you allow plenty of time! It will take longer than you expect to wade through all the material, even if you have read most of the material before, and you will never feel quite ready. Don't panic—that's completely normal.

It's best to schedule exams during the school year since faculty members are often out of the office during the summer. For registration, you will need to take a dissertation hour (6V10). You have ten days in which to take the exams. TAKE THE FULL TIME!! It will take you at least one day to recover consciousness after each exam, and around another half day before you can contemplate cramming for the next one. Try to incorporate weekends in your schedule—like take an exam Friday, one Tuesday, and one Friday or Monday. Do know that you can usually postpone exams if something comes up or you haven't gotten through your reading list. Talk to your director.

I took mine in chronological order—sources and dream visions, medieval literature, and 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. This worked for me; you do what works for you. Unless you are a real morning person, don't schedule your start time at 8:00 am. It's a three-hour block of time. I went from 9-12 each time. I was also in a different room each time (summer classes were going on), but that's not too big a deal. Make sure you get plenty of sleep and have a good breakfast so you don't flake out an hour and a half in. You are allowed to go to the bathroom—do so if you need to.

Also, take a few minutes at the beginning to fully read the question(s) (my open area question was about a page long), absorb it, and calm your chaotic mind. Scratch out an outline before you start. If you run out of time, don't just abruptly end; take the last three minutes to make a bulleted list of what you had meant to talk about. Try to save some time at the end to read and spell-check your work.

You will be brain-dead when you are done. Even if you have high hopes to begin working on your dissertation IMMEDIATELY, do know that it won't happen; it hasn't happened yet with anyone I know. You will want to watch stupid movies and drink tasty beverages and do nothing school-related—THIS IS NORMAL. After you hear about your results (which may be two weeks or three months later, depending on your examiner), have an official celebration if you've passed. If you need to retake a section, set up an appointment with that committee member to go over your exam and to discuss the next one.

### **Selecting and Narrowing a Dissertation Topic:**

Eventually, you will have to start thinking about the dissertation. If you don't already have a topic in mind, talk to your director. You could begin with an idea you raised in a seminar paper (that's how I got my idea). More than likely, however, your idea will be too broad. Rarely will it be too narrow. Remember, you have around 200 pages to write; this goal will practically force you to pick a topic that is too broad. Just play with it, listen to your director, and do your reading. You will be wading through tons of secondary material during this period, reading criticism and highlighting pertinent passages all over the place. However, when you actually get to the writing stage, you will have forgotten most of what you had read and will find yourself re-reading. This is normal, too!

You will begin with your prospectus, the 10-15 page “summary” of your dissertation. This may seem nearly impossible, but the layout of the prospectus makes it a bit easier. There are specific sections: Opening Statement, Argument and Synopsis, Overview of Research, and Methodology. Tackle one of the latter two first. Then wade into the other sections. When you are finally at the stage that you

feel ready to write, your prospectus will emerge pretty easily (I read criticism from January to August and then wrote my prospectus in the week before Fall semester began).

You will pass your prospectus on to your director, who will hold it in his or her hot little hands for who knows how long. After he or she okays it, pass it on to your second reader (in the department) and your outside reader. You want your second reader to be someone you get along with and who can provide you with both technical/practical and topic help. My second reader is Dr. Denton; I chose her because I like her, she understands me, and my dissertation topic centers around word usage, so her linguistic background will likely be helpful. My outside reader is Dr. Murray—she's a medievalist *and* a linguist. All are excited about my topic.

### **The Review:**

Your review is professional in nature, so dress up and be prepared. However, it is nowhere near the pressure cooker that is the dissertation defense. Your director will not let you get to the review stage if he feels you are not ready. It really is more of a discussion, with the three committee members getting together (often for the first time in the process) and talking with you about your idea. Take a notepad and pen, because they will give you advice, sources or criticism to look up, etc. If you must take a drink, put it in a glass or cup; don't carry in a soda or water bottle/can.

Sometimes you'll be encouraged to narrow your topic a bit more. One student found out that she had about three potential dissertations in her prospectus, so after listening to the advice from her committee, she narrowed down to her first and favorite idea. I, too, was advised to cut a chapter from my working outline. Rarely will you have to correct or rewrite your prospectus once you've gotten to this stage, so yay!

My review was only 20 minutes long, and that included the professors' alone time afterwards to discuss my performance. Other reviews take longer. There's no hard and fast rule. Then, you'll be called back in and officially told you're on your way. You'll likely be congratulated by your committee members; make sure you have friends at the ready to congratulate you as well and treat you to a tasty beverage at your favorite restaurant. Ride the euphoria! (The crash will come soon.)

### **Researching for the Dissertation:**

You will have already begun researching by the time you officially start your dissertation. Don't be surprised to find yourself re-reading sources and criticism. It's frustrating, but it is natural. Then, just start jotting down ideas. One good piece of advice: try to write down as much of your own idea as possible before incorporating the outside material. You want to make sure that you're not just reacting to what everyone else has already said.

To save money: you will be spending money during this process, but you don't want to go bankrupt. Buy books that you know will be useful and that you will want to have for the rest of your academic career; but please get them used! Try [campusi.com](http://campusi.com) as your search engine (searches hundreds of booksellers, including all the Amazons as well as smaller booksellers). Otherwise, use the library! If you find a source that rocks but is too expensive to buy (typical), you have two options: keep it

checked out until you are done and put those Post-It flags on the pages you know you will need. Or, if you think that every page will be flagged, photocopy the book. Go to the copy center in Morrison or to Kinko's. Do front and back photocopying (5 cents a page at Morrison or 8 cents a page at Kinko's), then have Baylor's copy center spiral bound the book (maybe \$1.25?). I photocopied about 30 books for this purpose, paying an average of \$8.00 a book. Then, I highlighted to my heart's content. Note: these are books that I expect to be using in my academic career—books and authors that I will cite in my published articles, not books that I will only use for this project. Gather your photocopied articles into binders. It's nice to have them all together in one place rather than floating around your apartment.

At some point in time, you have to stop reading and start writing. It's a big step into the unknown, but if those before you have gotten through it, so can you!

### **Writing the Dissertation:**

Designate a space for dissertation stuff, either a second bedroom/office, or your kitchen table or desk and two to three shelves of your bookcase (I bought a small three-shelf bookcase specifically for dissertation materials). KEEP THE STUFF THERE!! Paper does multiply and take over. To prevent from being buried, be firm. Take out only what you will need for that day's writing and put stuff away when you are done with it. Keeping a clean workspace is essential; a cluttered workspace means a cluttered mind. If you find yourself completely blocked, clear off your workspace of non-essential materials. I was overwhelmed by all of my materials, not knowing how to get started. My table had three six-inch binders of articles, the three-volume Vinaver, and six or seven books of criticism. Not surprisingly, I couldn't write a word. I'd look at an article, find a quote, write out a three or four sentence response, and then be stuck again. Nothing went together; I was finding awesome stuff for my intro, which I wasn't writing yet; and my stress level was rising exponentially. I finally had to put EVERYTHING away, so my table held only my laptop and the one-volume Vinaver. Then and only then could I begin writing.

Don't forget your prospectus; while I have not used the bulk of my prospectus, I am grabbing random sentences and paragraphs to use as starting points.

Tackle it in pieces—some people prefer starting at the beginning, with the introduction. I, however, am doing my body chapters first; then, I will write my conclusion and my introduction (tailored to fit the body) so I don't have to re-write or drastically edit the meat of the diss. Give yourself due dates if your director is hands-off. It is really easy to procrastinate on this, but the more you do, the more overwhelming the process will become and the harder it will be to get started. Have a support group of fellow students. Go talk to someone in the counseling center if need be. Keep a sense of humor, and don't forget to have some fun every now and then. If you don't already, take up regular exercise to burn off that excess energy and stress and to keep your blood pressure at normal levels. [Editor's Note: see "Where to Go" section, particularly the part about Karaoke.]

## (NON)ANONYMOUS PHD STUDENT “C”

Steve Schuler, president of EGSA from 2007-08, defended his dissertation successfully and then left us all behind for a professor position in Alabama. Here are his very helpful suggestions and reflections, written in June 2008.

### How to Write a Dissertation without Losing Your Mind

Steve Schuler

When I took over the Handbook and Orientation Committee a few years ago, I wondered why there was no section on the dissertation, so I asked some friends to contribute tips on the dissertation process. I found out why there was no such section, because I got no response. That was the first lesson I learned about the dissertation process: it will consume your life, especially towards the end. That is to be expected. You are earning the highest degree available in your field, so the dissertation is going to take an enormous amount of time and effort to complete. But others have gone before you, and you probably have friends who are also writing their dissertations. My first bit of advice is to talk to them, ask them what they're doing, trade tips, and find out how they're coping. To their advice, you can add what follows, which is a list of tips, suggestions, and cautions that I have gleaned from my own experience and from others in the dissertation stage.

#### *Topic Selection and Initial Research*

- Before you commit to a topic, have a long talk with your director. Your director can make valuable suggestions about narrowing or broadening it, as well as warn you away from dead ends. Be aware that some directors may direct dissertations only on a very narrow range of topics, so if those topics don't appeal to you, go elsewhere. Early in the process, ask your director about the publication potential of your topic—you don't want get to the defense only to have someone to say, “it's a good argument, but no one is going to want to publish it.”
- Do what interests **you**. You will devote a lot of time to this project, and if the topic doesn't hold your interest, you will never finish. When it comes to theory and methodology, use whatever helps you understand the author(s) on whom you're writing. If your method happens to be something trendy, fine. But be careful with trendy theories. They may be outdated by the time you get around to submitting the manuscript to a book publisher four or five years down the line. It is better to be original than to be trendy.
- Yes, your dissertation should establish you as a “specialist” in a particular sub-field of literature. No, that doesn't mean you can't change or modify your specialization later on. Your dissertation topic can affect your immediate marketability, but it doesn't have to determine your whole career.
- In an ideal world, you would have read every relevant piece of criticism on your topic before you write your prospectus. But you don't live in the ideal world. You live in the real world, and you will continue to read secondary material throughout the entire writing process.
- Before you write the prospectus, you must read enough of the primary works to know that your argument is tenable, and you must read enough of the secondary literature to know that your

argument is **original** and **publishable**. Most fields, even big ones like Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton, are dominated by a surprisingly small number of authorities whose work you must engage. Find out who they are, and set yourself a manageable list of their works that you must read before you start writing. Read them quickly, take some notes, and then start writing.

- Establish **your own reading** of the primary text(s) first, and use the criticism to supplement your reading—as with seminar papers, all the more with the dissertation. This does mean, of course, that you are expected to know the secondary material pretty well. You want other critics to take your work seriously, so you must take theirs seriously as well.
- If you haven't already, learn to skim articles, and learn to use the indexes of books. While you will have to read some of the secondary literature from cover to cover, much of it will only have a paragraph or two that might pertain directly to your topic. Economize on time as much as you can.
- Organize your research **early** in the process. Develop a system for taking notes on primary and secondary texts, as well as for storing books and articles you plan to use repeatedly. Organize both on your computer and on your bookshelves, and back up all your electronic research notes.
- Get a library carrel. PhD students at dissertation stage can get a carrel for two years, and they have first priority (except for faculty)—and once you finish your prelims, you are at “dissertation stage.” A carrel is a great place to store books and materials, and it is a quiet place to read and write. It's almost like having your own monastic cell!

#### *Preparing the Prospectus*

- You need a committee of at least five professors who are graduate faculty. One must be from outside the department. Common sense suggests that you should have a full committee assembled before the review. It is a pain to try to get faculty members to sign on afterwards.
- Your director will advise you on selecting committee members, and I highly recommend having a couple of closed-door talks with your director about the relative merits of various prospects. Also get advice from other graduate students, who may be able to recommend faculty whom you didn't know had experience in your field, or warn you away from faculty members who may not be sympathetic to your project.
- It is **most** important that your committee gets along, and that they support your approach to your project. Expertise in the subject is a tertiary concern. If you are the only expert on your topic at the defense, that will probably work to your advantage.
- The department website has a brief but helpful list of suggestions for the prospectus. You will find it at the bottom of the page with the PhD degree requirements.
- Your prospectus explains the argument that you will make in the dissertation. In addition, you will probably identify your methodology / theoretical perspective. You should also explain how your work builds on and/or modifies existing scholarship. You may want to look at other students' prospectuses, but be careful! Different faculty members will have widely different expectations, so find out what **exactly** your director expects your prospectus to contain.
- As you draft the prospectus, **envision the dissertation completed**. How long will it be? How many chapters? How will the chapters build on each other? This plan should be flexible, but you need a plan anyway. Also be aware that if your dissertation starts getting long you may need to drop a proposed chapter. You might plan at least one “expendable” chapter. But you should also have some “reserve material” in mind, in case your first draft doesn't turn out to be long enough.



- Dissertations seldom come out exactly as the prospectus predicts. I originally planned to write two more chapters than I actually wrote, but a friend of mine had to add another whole section when Plan A ended up not generating enough material. **Stay flexible.** Your map—the prospectus—should be as detailed as possible, but you should remain open to scenic detours and even minor changes in destination.
- Make a **checklist** of all the deadlines you will have to meet and forms you will have to submit along the way. There are a lot of them, and your director will not keep track for you! Most are established by the Graduate School, but the department has its own requirements too. Carefully read both the English department webpage on degree requirements AND the Graduate School webpage on Theses and Dissertations to make sure you don't miss any steps. I don't want to scare you, but... (actually, I DO want to scare you) a couple of missed deadlines can set you back a whole semester. Check and double-check your deadlines, especially near the end of the writing process.

### *The Prospectus Review*

- Send hard copies of your prospectus to your committee members two weeks ahead of time. They need time to read and digest it before the review. Think about how long you sit on student papers before grading and returning them. Is it likely to be any different for your professors?
- You should be familiar with the major secondary works that pertain to your topic, but you will probably not be expected to have read all the works on your bibliography. The bibliography is generally a list of works that you plan to consult, though it doesn't hurt if you've already consulted many of them.
- **Memorize your thesis statement**, and be able to briefly articulate your major points, making reference to major critics in the field. Your committee will probably ask you to succinctly explain your argument, so be ready.
- You should also be ready to discuss the current state of criticism on your topic, as well as your perspective on the important critics in your field. You **must** know enough of the criticism to be able to demonstrate beyond doubt that your argument is original and publishable!
- If possible, indicate to your committee that your prospectus is tentative. If they can all agree that your final document may be something a little different than the prospectus predicts, it will make the defense go a lot smoother.

### *Drafting the Dissertation*

- Many people who drop out of graduate school quit at dissertation stage. How many of these people do you think have written 250 pages, but just never got around to defending? Okay, T. S. Eliot did, but you aren't T. S. Eliot. I would bet that most graduate students who never "finish" writing their dissertations never really get them started in the first place. The hardest chapter to write is the first one. So **DO NOT procrastinate!** Write the first chapter quickly, and then get started on the next chapter while your director looks over the first one.
- Think seriously about the future of this document. Right now the defense may be years away, but eventually you will be a tenure-track professor who needs to publish something. Begin planning the future of your dissertation now. Will you want to publish it as a book? Or would you prefer to chop it up for articles? If you hope to extract articles from it, certain sections of each chapter should be relatively self-contained. If you are planning on the book route, you

should maintain stronger continuity between chapters. Remember that most book publishers want between 250 and 350 manuscript pages, so if your dissertation comes in right at 200 pages, you will need to write another chapter or two before it's ready for submission to a press. And on the tenure track, that could take a whole year.

- Your MA thesis allowed you to keep thinking in 20-25 page seminar papers, but a 25-page chapter is too short for a dissertation. Begin thinking in terms of 30-60 page chapters, which should be broken up into sections as your material warrants. And don't rely primarily on verbosity to make your chapters longer. That's just annoying.
- Set aside blocks of time to write **every week!** For every week you neglect your dissertation, you will lose two weeks of momentum. Many grad students are good at cranking out last-minute papers, but you cannot write a dissertation at the last minute.
- Use your prime thinking time for reading and writing, and let your students have your dead hours. I write best between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., but for you it might be different. Remember, you are here **primarily** to earn a degree. Your teaching is a means to that end. Prioritize accordingly.
- Set writing deadlines for yourself. If necessary, have your director hold you to deadlines. Somehow, writing comes easier when someone is breathing down your neck.
- Plot out a reasonable completion schedule. 100 pages a month is probably not realistic. But at five pages a month you'll never finish. I found that 5-10 pages a week was just about right for me, but your mileage may vary. Set reasonable, incremental goals for completing each chapter. How long does it take you to write a 25-page seminar paper? Three weeks? So it should take about six weeks to write a 50-page dissertation chapter, right? Well, maybe. But set goals anyway. They will help you keep your writing on track.
- Observe administrative deadlines. Two semesters before you plan to graduate, look up all the pertinent deadlines and make a timetable. You will need to know when you must file for graduation, when you must defend, when various other forms are due, and when you must have the final copy submitted to the Graduate School, among many other deadlines.
- **Keep your end in mind.** It's easy to get lost in the details of writing, spending a week tweaking a footnote rather than writing to advance your argument. Do not let the complexity of the project get in the way of completing your project.
- Don't waste your time trying to shoehorn irrelevant criticism into your dissertation just to make the works cited page longer. Ignore (or briefly reference) what doesn't directly apply to your project and focus on what is insightful, enlightening, or otherwise helpful. Of course, also take time to gently correct incomplete or wrongheaded books and articles.
- Most directors will want to see work in progress. (I would not work with a professor who didn't.) As soon as you finish a chapter, give it to your director to read. But while you are waiting for feedback, **do not** stop writing! It may take some time for your director to return your chapter, and you cannot afford to be idle for a month while you wait for feedback. Better to waste your time writing.
- If you must stop writing while you wait for feedback from your director, use the time to catch up on the minor secondary work that you put off while you were working on the prospectus. Your committee will expect you to have read all the relevant criticism before your defense, even if you have not integrated it all into your text.
- Learn the formatting requirements. While your citation format is going to be MLA, the Graduate School requires your other formatting to be a modified form of Turabian. But don't surf over to Amazon to buy the book just yet. The Graduate School has a packet on their

website that gives you all the pertinent information you will need—download and internalize it. The Graduate School also conducts a formatting workshop. **Go to the workshop**, preferably early in the writing process!

- Get to know your word processing program really, really well. You're going to have to make it jump through all kinds of hoops, such as re-starting the numbering of footnotes in each chapter, making page numbers appear on some pages but not others, etc. In MS Word, this will involve a lot of section breaks. Even if you are good at finagling your documents, it will take you at least a day to get your formatting straight.
- Formatting is easier if you have been doing it right all along. As you write, use the right format for font, images, quotations, citations, and footnotes. You can worry about page numbers and margins later. Mrs. Harman is strict but helpful, so don't hesitate to ask her about your formatting. And if you're not sure about something, just be consistent. It's a lot easier to correct if it's consistently wrong. And when formatting gives you fits, there are IT people who can help.
- This is no time for losing files. **Save your work!** Back up all your documents—drafts, notes, bibliographies—in several places, such as on TA office computers, on removable drives, and in e-mail. If possible, print drafts of each chapter as you go, and store them in a safe place. If all else fails, you can always re-type the whole thing. [The use of a service like dropbox.com is also recommended.]
- Yes, it IS entirely possible to go from prospectus review to dissertation defense in one year, although the average time is two years or more. But if you are in a hurry to graduate, do remember that there is a “residency requirement” that you be enrolled for a full year after you take your prelims.
- **Break your back to finish it here!** Those are the exact words of one of my committee members. The statistics vary, but the majority of PhD students who take jobs before finishing their degrees never finish at all. And believe me, you don't want to be teaching a 4/4 class load with the tenure clock running if you're still trying to write the last two chapters of your dissertation. Whatever it takes, get it done before you take a job!

### *The Defense*

- When you send your dissertation to your committee, you are giving them a book to read. It would be polite to give them a month to read it before the defense. Sure, one or two of them will probably read only the first and last chapters the night before, just like you do for seminars, but give them the benefit of the doubt here. Assume that they care about your topic and are genuinely interested in what you have to say. Neither they nor you will benefit if they are forced to read hastily.
- Take the correct paperwork to the defense. You must bring TWO copies of the signature page, plus the Record of Oral Examination form. You do not want to have to hunt professors down later for signatures.
- Also bring copies of your primary text(s), in case you need them to answer questions. Even if you don't reference them during the defense, they make you look prepared and studious.
- Memorize your thesis statement, and be able to briefly summarize your main argument. Your director will probably start by asking you to explain it, so be ready.
- After that, the discussion could go absolutely **anywhere**. Your director will probably give each committee member an opportunity to ask questions and offer criticism. Hopefully, you will

receive constructive feedback, so take along a notebook to write down suggestions for revision. Questions may range from enquiries into your general interest in the topic and your methodology and/or theoretical perspective to your use of secondary sources, or even to small details like diction and formatting. You should be ready to respond positively even to criticisms you may not wholly agree with.

- Even if the discussion becomes heated, **don't** become defensive. Responses like "I'll certainly keep that in mind as I revise" or "Yes, I would like to work that into the book version" can defuse a lot of tension. But if you must argue with a committee member, remember that you really just want his or her signature. Sacrifice your ego if necessary.
- Towards the end of the defense, your director will probably ask if you have any questions for the committee. Have a question. Appropriate questions might address the publication potential of your dissertation, including specific university presses or journals that might be interested, the effectiveness of your overall structure, or additional sources that you could integrate into your work.

### Mopping Up

- **Be pragmatic about revisions.** If your director suggests a change, make it. Don't argue unless you honestly think the change will be detrimental to your argument. Don't cling to a particular turn of phrase or unsupported hypothesis just because you think it's pretty or interesting. Change anything that doesn't hold up to your director's scrutiny. Whatever you think now, your dissertation is not a work of fine art whose symmetry and grace depend on the perfection of every detail. It's just a dissertation. And if you think your director is suggesting a lot of changes, just wait until you get your manuscript accepted for publication by an academic press.
- Your director is the **only** member of your committee who will see your revisions. The other committee members are serving in an advisory capacity only. This does not mean that you should disregard their advice—after all, they probably have a good sense of what is publishable and what is not—but don't be afraid to candidly discuss their suggestions with your director afterwards.
- You have ten days to revise AND to get your director to approve your revisions. That is not a lot of time, certainly not enough to write another chapter. So make sure your dissertation is up to snuff before the defense. Revisions after the defense should be primarily local: clarity, precision, diction, syntax, and proofreading.
- Your director will have to sign an Approval of Final Copy form, as well as the Permission Form in duplicate. It's easiest to give him or her these documents to sign all at once.
- Stay on top of your administrative deadlines and paperwork. You still have to submit your final, revised copy to the Graduate School and convert your dissertation into an electronic document, as well as post it to BearDocs. But you're almost done, so keep at it!
- After the defense, it is customary to send thank-you notes to your committee members. Small gifts are not unheard of, but don't go overboard. Nevertheless, your committee members, and especially your director, have done a lot of extra work to get you here, and they deserve your appreciation.

## CHAPTER 5

# DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

### EGSA: ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The English Graduate Student Association (EGSA), the primary source of professional development for graduate English students at Baylor, is an organization whose membership is open to any Baylor University graduate student in English. A multi-faceted organization, EGSA both promotes camaraderie among graduate students and works to enhance the diverse professional interests of both Master's and Doctoral students. Perhaps importantly, as a liaison to the English department faculty and administration, EGSA is an advocate for the graduate student body.

One of the ways that you can develop professionally is by participating in an EGSA committee, serving as a chair, or a student officer. Besides making your fellow graduate students' lives easier and richer, such experience will look good on your *curriculum vitae*. Having the kind of experience that these positions can provide might also help you in your future job interviews, where you may indeed be asked: "So, what kind of committee work have you done?" The following description of EGSA outlines the basic purposes and functions of this organization:

### BAYLOR EGSA PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

#### Statement of Purpose:

Baylor's English Graduate Student Association (EGSA) serves the English graduate student population through the following functions:

- serving as an advocate for graduate students
- functioning as a recognized liaison between graduate students and both English department faculty and University administration
- advancing the professional interests of both MA and PhD students
- seeking to orient students who are new to the program
- promoting camaraderie among graduate students

Membership in EGSA is open to all Baylor University graduate students in English.

**EGSA OFFICERS:** Except as otherwise noted, all of the following positions are for 1-year terms.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. President
  - One-year term; President should have served as Vice President in previous year. If this is not possible, the President should be a graduate student in English who has been at Baylor for two years or more.
  - Determines the year's goals and agendas with advice from the executive council and by soliciting graduate student input; acts as a liaison between graduate students and the department, the Graduate School, and elsewhere as needed; meets with the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and department chair regularly (usually monthly) to communicate student needs/concerns and to gather information about departmental events/concerns; calls general and executive meetings and presides over meetings (approximately 3 times/semester, depending on perceived need); schedules the first meeting of the semester, a welcome and agenda-setting meeting, during the first week of classes.
2. Vice President
  - One-year term; in second year, becomes President upon approval of EGSA
  - Assists the president and the secretary in their duties as needed; along with the President, meets regularly with the GPD and department chair; promotes departmental and campus events (e.g. graduate faculty/student mixers, Beall Poetry Festival, Scholar's Week); assists Professional Development Coordinators in developing events as needed; updates the EGSA calendar on the website.
3. Secretary
  - Records and distributes minutes of EGSA meetings; publishes an EGSA Digest (via email) with announcements from EGSA, GPD, Dept Chair, or other groups/individuals to graduate students on a weekly or bi-weekly basis; sends and collects emails ballots for open positions or other proposals as needed; gathers signatures for "Thank You" cards to secretaries, GPD, the Dept chair, the director of the first-year writing program, the Writing Center director, and EGSA's faculty advisors at the end of each year for their support of graduate students; keeps a list of current English graduate students, updating the spreadsheet on the EGSA website each year.
4. Treasurer/Fundraising
  - Collects membership dues (\$10) at the beginning of each year; confers with Lois Avey on the EGSA account and keeps financial reports/receipts for EGSA; assists with the biannual EGSA Conference Financial Committee.
5. Peer Advisor
  - Serves as the contact person for graduate students who have questions about their specific English graduate programs of study; makes available and explains the

worksheets for the PhD program and the MA program; sends reminders about deadlines and dissertation/thesis workshops for the graduate program.

\*Elections of open positions on the EGSA council or other EGSA Positions (see below) shall be held at the final meeting of the year on one of the reading days immediately preceding finals at the end of the spring semester. If seats are vacated during the year, nominations/elections may be held during the year via email or by calling a special election meeting. If only one nomination is received by the close of nominations, that student (upon acceptance) will be appointed to the open position.

\*\*To be a full member of EGSA with voting rights and privileges, graduate students must have paid their membership dues to the treasurer. Graduate students in English who have not paid their dues are associate (non-voting) members of EGSA. A vote cast at the first meeting of the year (in the fall semester) is accepted as a notification of intention to pay dues and become a full member of EGSA for that academic year.

### **OTHER POSITIONS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

1. Professional Development Coordinators (2): These officers serve a one-year term. They offer at least one professional development event per semester, soliciting advice from EGSA faculty advisors and Vice President as needed. (Successful past examples include CV writing workshop, publication/research agenda roundtable with professors, how-to sessions with graduate professor/s...)
2. GSA Representative: “This person should have been at Baylor for at least one year, with exceptions for those programs that are only one year long. The representative attends monthly GSA meetings, works with one of the standing committees (Academic, Social, or Policy), and exercises a vote on behalf of the graduate students in their department” (GSA description).
3. GSA Alternate: “An alternate may be a new student; usually one who is interested in ‘learning the ropes’ and serving as your department’s Representative the following year. The Alternate preferably attends all meetings with the representative, would be introduced to the activities and issues of GSA, and would have the proxy vote if the Representative is not in attendance.”
4. Technology Chair (second-year position): The technology chair maintains and updates the website and provides technical assistance to the members of the EGSA executive council.
5. Fundraising Chair: The Fundraising Chair is responsible for planning the annual book sale, which consists of collecting book donations, publicizing the event, coordinating volunteers, and working with Student Activities. Those who assist at any fundraising events are considered part of the fundraising committee.

6. Social Chairs (2): The two social chairs organize and promote events such as, but not limited to, a fall picnic, a holiday party, a spring Welcome Back Party, Bad Wine/Bad Poetry Night, etc. The fall picnic and Welcome Back party will be held on the first Saturday of the fall and spring semesters, respectively, and other events will be decided at the first EGSA meeting of the year and added to the EGSA calendar on the website.
  
7. Orientation/Handbook Chair(s): The main duties of the orientation chairs are coordinating and planning the preview weekend, which usually happens in early February. The orientation chairs will be given a list of incoming graduate students, and will coordinate travel details, food and lodging, and orientation activities. They will also be available to provide information and answer question during the remainder of the spring semester. The chair(s) also revises the EGSA handbook over the summer as needed, with help from volunteers who serve on either the handbook committee or the orientation committee. The chair(s) organizes the date and time for the EGSA orientation in the fall, avoiding conflict with the schedules of GSA orientation and coordinating with the writing center director's and freshman writing director's training schedules for incoming students with assistantships.

## **BAYLOR ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION 2018-2019 OFFICERS AND CHAIRS**

### *Executive Council*

President – Holly Spofford

Vice President – Ben Rawlins

Secretary – Clayton McReynolds

Treasurer/Fundraising – Austin Fortenberry

Peer Advisor – Sara Dye

### *GSA Representatives*

Voting Representative – Caitlin Lawrence

Alternate – Sorina Higgins

### *Other Positions and Committee Chairs*

Orientation/Handbook Chairs – Kelly Sauskojus and Reyna Johnson

Technology Chair – Rachel Kilgore

Social Chairs – Christina Lambert and Molly Lewis



Professional Development Coordinators – James Cochran and Sarah Tharp

***Graduate Program Director:***

Dr. Richard Russell

Richard\_Russell@baylor.edu

**CHAIN OF COMMAND**

These individuals can be contacted as needed or desired in order to pursue the best graduate student experience possible at Baylor: EGSA Council ⑦ GPD ⑦ Dept Chair ⑦ Graduate School ⑦ University Administration

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One of the regular activities sponsored by EGSA is the Professional Development forum. Normally two of these forums are scheduled each semester, on various weekday afternoons. These forums began in 1995 to give grad students and faculty members an opportunity to share their work, with presentations ranging from finished conference papers to informal discussions of a student's or professor's ongoing research. However, in the intervening years the programs evolved into seminars or workshops focusing on practical issues affecting graduate students. Past programs have included workshops on a variety of subjects, including preparing for prelims, getting published, preparing and presenting a conference paper, interviewing for your first teaching position, balancing personal and professional life, and sharing tips with the next year's newly-appointed teaching assistants.

Two EGSA officers are responsible for planning these programs (the two Professional Development Coordinators). If you have an idea for a program that you would like for us to put together, please pass this on to one of the Professional Development Coordinators. Watch your e-mail for announcements of upcoming meetings and look for flyers posted around the department.

**BOOK SALE**

The annual book sale is EGSA's primary method of fundraising. We will be looking for volunteers to help staff the tables for the two or three days of the book sale. The sale is conducted in the Student Union Building (SUB) lobby. If you have books that you would like to donate (i.e. get rid of) or if you know of books that are available, contact the fundraising chair.

**EGSA WEBSITE**

Check out the [EGSA website](#) to stay up-to-date about forms and other information about the department. A lot of it will be the same information as the handbook, but individual forms may get updated there faster. It also includes a calendar and introductions of graduate students. see what events and opportunities are occurring that might be of interest to English graduate students.

### **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Social activities for EGSA members (and families) will be arranged by the social chair throughout the school year. In addition to the orientation activities, a variety of outings and/or events may be planned for EGSA socializing purposes. Past events have included Halloween Parties, Bad Wine – Bad Poetry Nights, and other assorted gatherings. Read about upcoming events in the EGSA Digest, or contact your social chairs for more information.

### **BAYLOR GSA**

As a graduate student at Baylor, you are a member of the Baylor Graduate Student Association (GSA). Our GSA Representatives keep us up-to-date with academic or administrative issues and policies that affect graduate students, as well as facilitating interaction with graduate students from other departments through events such as GSA picnics, intramural opportunities for graduate students, etc. You may also want to serve on a standing committee. See our departmental representative, or the [GSA website](#) for more info.

### **RESEARCH SEMINARS**

Currently, there are three interdisciplinary graduate research seminars at Baylor. Each research is chaired by committee of faculty and graduate students to promote activities, lectures, and contests in their respective fields. To get involved, with one in your area, contact one of their representatives in the English Department:

1. The Medieval-Renaissance Research Seminar (MRRS): [reyna\\_johnson@baylor.edu](mailto:reyna_johnson@baylor.edu)
2. The 19th Century Research Seminar: [nicole\\_bouchard@baylor.edu](mailto:nicole_bouchard@baylor.edu)
3. The 20th Century Research Seminar (Mod/Con, for modern and contemporary):  
[sorina\\_higgins@baylor.edu](mailto:sorina_higgins@baylor.edu)

### **EGSA HANDBOOK COMMITTEE**

#### **First Edition, Fall 1998**

Gay Barton

Jennifer Newton

#### **Second Edition, Fall 1999**

Jason Carter

Jeff Clayton

Mona Choucair      Kimberly Rucks

Amanda Estep      Mikki Galliher

Jennifer Newton

**Third Edition, Fall 2000**

Andrew Armond      Rebecca Munro

Peter Epps      Jennifer Newton

Sara Morris      Allison Trumble

**Fourth Edition, Fall 2001**

Peter Epps      Jennifer Newton

Sara Morris      Allison Trumble

Marcus Hensel

**Fifth Edition, Fall 2002**

Brenda Welch      Jennifer Hughes

Jennifer Newton      Marcus Hensel

Peter Epps

**Sixth Edition, Fall 2003**

Jennifer Newton      Kacy Tillman

Brendy Welch      Karen Werner

Donna Higginbotham

**Seventh Edition, Fall 2004**

Katie Calloway      Yolanda Robles

Bethany Jones      Steve Schuler

**Eighth Edition, Fall 2005**

Bethany Getz      Yolanda Robles

Reid Makowsky      Steve Schuler

Lane Murphy

**Ninth Edition, Fall 2006**

Laura Bedwell      Heather Martin

Reid Makowsky      Steve Schuler

Lane Murphy      Ginger Stelle

**Tenth Edition, Fall 2007**

Adrienne Akins      Ginger Stelle

Jordan Gibson      Natalie Terry

Geoffrey Reiter      Erin Werley

**Eleventh Edition, Fall 2008**

Anna Blanch      Steve Petersheim

**Twelfth Edition, Fall 2009**

Margy Thomas

Courtney Salvey      Ginger Stelle  
Margy Thomas      Bethany Wilson

**Thirteenth Edition, Fall 2010**

Margy Thomas      Steven Petersheim

**Fourteenth Edition, Fall 2011**

Christy Davis      Courtney Bailey Parker  
Nathan Kilpatrick      Danielle Williams

**Fifteenth Edition, Fall 2012**

Sarah Clark      Nathan Kilpatrick  
Michael Milburn      Danielle Williams  
Amy Schroeder      Courtney Bailey Parker

**Sixteenth Edition, Fall 2013**

Sarah Clark      Lindsay Fenton  
Michael Milburn      Ryan Womack

**Seventeenth Edition, Fall 2014**

Sarah Clark      Andy Rasmussen  
David Smith      Elizabeth Travers  
Ryan Womack

**Eighteenth Edition, Fall 2018**

Kelly Sauskojus      Holly Spofford  
Ben Rawlins      James Cochran  
Nicole Bouchard      Sarah Tharp

The handbook/orientation committee forms each spring and operates mainly during the summer, working to revise and expand the EGSA Handbook.

## CHAPTER 6

# RESEARCH: LIBRARIES AND TECHNOLOGY

### BAYLOR LIBRARIES

You will want to make yourself comfortable with the Baylor libraries before you begin your research. We suggest that you plan a block of time to check out all that the libraries can offer you. Baylor has eight libraries. For the names, locations, special focuses, and hours for each of them see the [library website](#).

The university's primary library is the **Moody Memorial Library**, which is connected to **Jones Library**. The Moody-Jones complex is where you are likely to do most of your research. Much of the information you will need for using these libraries is located at the reference desks in Jones and Moody: hours, maps, services, computer lab information, research guides, and more. Orientation and library tours are offered by Moody Library at the beginning of each semester—dates and times will be posted around campus. Large wall directories are located in the corridor connecting Moody to Jones, and there are charts of the library stacks for each floor beside the BearCat terminals near the Moody circulation desk. The Polk and other special collections are available for use in the Special Collections reading room.

Baylor's most famous repository is the **Armstrong Browning Library**, which features a world-famous collection of original manuscripts, reviews, and memorabilia belonging to and connected with Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In addition, this library houses a significant collection of other manuscripts and rare books. The ABL is a non-circulating research library. All requested items must be used in the third-floor **Belew Scholar's Room**, with the exception of the library's audio/visual holdings, which are used in another third-floor location. The library's collection of manuscripts make particularly good material for theses and dissertations, as many of them have never been published or used in research. Besides offering an impressive collection of research materials, the ABL also houses some of the most beautiful study spots on campus. Be sure to visit the **Treasure Room**, the **Foyer of Meditation**, or the **Jones Research Hall**.

The **Church-State Library** in the **Carroll Library** building – across the Burleson Quadrangle from Carroll Science – offers a comfortable place to work. The Texas Collection is also held here (which contains, among other things, publications by Baylor Professors).

NOTE: Students can only check out books from the library over the summer if they are enrolled in fall classes.

## OSOFAST

Occasionally, you may be unable to obtain the resources you need from Baylor's libraries. In those instances, you will find **Baylor's interlibrary loan system, OsoFast** an invaluable resource. OsoFast allows you to check out materials from participating libraries, putting many research materials at your fingertips. Before you use this service, check Onesearch to see if Baylor owns the item(s) you need. Most of the time, you can request via OsoFast right from the item description on Onesearch. Alternatively, you can request it using [OsoFast's online system](#). Log on using your Bear ID and password, and provide the required information. Note that OsoFast is astoundingly fast: You will usually get electronic copies of articles and other digital materials in 2-3 days, and books in under a week.

Adding the OCLC (this can be found on WorldCat) and ISBN will speed things up considerably (especially if you have hard-to-find requests). You will be notified by email when your materials arrive. Generally speaking, you may pick up books at the circulation desk and retrieve journal articles/book chapters through Baylor's E-doc delivery service. You can return OsoFast books just like you would any library resource, at the circulation desk or in any of the drop bins. You can also renew books online through Osofast within 3 days of their due date (if the sending library allows this). The ILL staff can also help with hard-to-find books and articles that you need.

## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Another key research tool for English graduate students is the variety of electronic databases available on the library's website. Here are some of the most helpful databases:

- **WorldCat:** World Catalogue, shows location of books – can connect directly to OsoFast to order books if they are not in the BU libraries.
- **MLA International Bibliography:** offers a detailed bibliography of journal articles, books, and dissertations; subjects include literature, language and linguistics, and literary criticism, among others.
- **ABELL:** offers a bibliography of journal articles and books; subjects include literature, language and linguistics, and literary criticism, among others. Focuses on British Literature.
- **JSTOR:** allows users access to bibliographic information and, in many cases, the full text of articles on a variety of subjects (English, Religion, Philosophy, History and the like).
- **Oxford English Dictionary:** traces the definitions of words from their earliest usage up to their latest usage; also provides the etymologies of words.
- **PCI Full Text:** Like JSTOR, PCI contains the full text of a wide variety of articles; also indexes the journal's table of contents.

Interdisciplinary Databases:

- **First Search:** indexes scholarly publications; about 70% are available with full text. Part of EBSCO.
- **InfoTrac:** a comprehensive periodical resource that puts more than 39 million database records at researchers' fingertips.

Religion Databases (of primary interest to Religion and Literature students):

- **ALTA Religion:** indexes religious and theological journals and articles
- **Religion and Philosophy Collection:** includes detailed bibliographic information, abstracts and, in some instances, the full text of articles.

This list is intended to be a guide to help you begin your research. You will quickly discover which databases you find to be most helpful and other more specific databases that pertain to your area of interest. Set aside some time to look at the databases available to you and try out their various search options.

## THE GRC

The [GRC](#), also known as the Incubator, is an important study space just for graduate students in the library. It includes 5 study rooms, which are frequently used for graduate writing center appointments, as well as a conference room. The GRC is the frequent home of many graduate school events, such as [Just Write](#), weekday evenings where students come together for snacks, writing, and no distractions.

## RESEARCH LIBRARIAN

The Baylor Library also includes librarians assigned to specific disciplines, and [Eileen Bentsen](#) is the one for English, along with a few other humanities. She is very useful and kind, and will make you a cup of tea and help you find more sources than you believed existed for your topic. She is also a good resource for learning more about archival research, and digital humanities.

## ZOTERO

The library highly recommends using Zotero or some other research citation software to make the process of organizing and citing sources for long projects easier. Sources can be added to Zotero manually or via Onesearch. Once added, they can be sorted, annotated, and shared. In word-

processing software such as Word, Zotero can be used to add in-text citations and a full bibliography, which can be easily toggled between multiple citation styles. The library offers workshops on Zotero throughout the year, and maintains a [page of resources](#) on using Zotero effectively.

### **WIRELESS LAPTOP CHECKOUT SERVICE**

The TechPoint desk in the Moody Garden Level Study Commons on the ground floor of the library offers many laptops for student use. All laptops, both Mac and PC, come [fully equipped with software](#), including the complete Adobe suite. Click [here](#) for a full list of items available for checkout. The [rules of use](#) state that items can be checked out for one day for free, and can be renewed once on the due date. This is a great resource in an emergency if your laptop breaks, and also allows graduate students to work on projects requiring advanced software at home.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT LOCKERS**

A great resource for MA and PhD students once they're in the mostly-writing stages of their program is the lockers on the second floor of the corridor between Moody and Jones. They are right next to the GRC and will save you the hassle of carrying books back and forth between office, library, and home. The [library's locker policy](#) states that you can rent a locker for one full year as a MA student, and two full years as a PhD student. To rent a locker, login [here](#) with your Baylor ID and fill out the form.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT STUDY CARRELS**

Moody Library has limited keyed carrels available to graduate students who meet one of these criteria: MA students working on their thesis, or PhD students working on their dissertation or studying for comps. Applications for carrels are made by filling out [this form](#). Because of the limited number of keyed carrels, they are assigned for the period of one semester. Carrels may be renewed, but the number of renewals is limited. The library has complicated renewal limits; see the carrel request form for details.

### **LIBRARY MISCELLANY**

Students may utilize **AirBear** – a wireless internet connection available campus-wide. Using **AirBear** is free to all who have a working Bear ID and password and a wireless enabled laptop. For



more information regarding how to connect to **Airbear** see <http://www.baylor.edu/its/index.php?id=65255>.

Additionally, cheaper Microsoft Products are available from **Baylor Bookstore** – including Microsoft Office.

Your **PawPrints** work in all computer labs on campus that have printers. You receive 600 (pages) per regular semesters, and 600 in the summer.

## CHAPTER 7

# CONFERENCES

Why do Scholars go to conferences?

- To interact with people who share your interests
- To get feedback on current work and future projects
- To learn what other scholars are working on (the “state of the field”)
- To network (meet: editors of journals, notable scholars, peer scholars, helps with collaboration, getting hired, getting published)
- To stimulate your imagination about current and future projects and teaching ideas
- To have fun socializing and build friendships

### FINDING A CONFERENCE

The first step, of course, is to find a conference suitable for your research. There are conferences and conference sessions on every conceivable topic—literary criticism within a given period; linguistics, rhetoric, composition; popular culture; studies of a particular writer; regional literature; and so on. To find out about conferences, you can access the [University of Pennsylvania’s Call for Papers website](http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/).

<http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/>

This website contains calls for papers (CFPs) posted by conference administrators and volume editors all over the world. You can search for conference and publication opportunities according to historical period, genre, theoretical approach, topic, or theme. You will need to check this periodically. Note: a large number of conferences have deadlines of Mar and Apr, Oct and Nov.

This resource is helpful both for those who would like to find conferences and publications that fit papers they have already written and for those who prefer to gear their research and papers specifically toward a CFP.

Many of the individual societies also list CFP’s on their websites or in the latest issues of their journals (i.e.: CCL – Conference on Christianity and Lit, Society for Victorian Studies).

## WRITING THE CONFERENCE PAPER

Below, you will find a step-by-step guide for crafting an effective conference paper and/or publishable article. This guide was originally compiled by Dr. Thomas Hanks and has maintained a spot in the EGSA Handbook for many years. We hope it will prove helpful to you as you make your own forays into academia.

Probably the most common way to enter upon publication is to begin with a conference paper which you later develop into an article, into a chapter in a book, or even into the heart of a book. This handout provides one way to approach the writing of such a paper.

The chief requirement for conference papers: **PRODUCE SOMETHING WHICH HAS NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY WRITTEN**. The major thrust of your paper, then, is not to rehash the work of other scholars, but instead to present a brief review of their work as an introduction to your own independent contribution to your topic.

1. Review the text(s) you have tentatively elected to explore. Look for some aspect thereof which you find interesting and wish to analyze.

My next step is always to “brainstorm”—to type/jot down as many ideas, associations, terms, etc., as come to mind while I’m thinking about the text. Then I review the brainstorming, see if some of the ideas fall into related groups, put those ideas together, and hope for illumination. Illumination often happens: a guiding idea very often appears during the review.

When you arrive at a guiding idea about your text and at a methodology for approaching your idea (text analysis, chronological recounting of a pedagogical approach followed by analysis, source study, etc.), jot down a “prospectus” for the paper you are thinking of writing. (A prospectus is simply a paragraph outlining your idea and stating your provisional thesis for the paper.) This is a **provisional** prospectus; you will probably revise it later as you take note of other scholars’ contributions. It will also serve as an abstract, if you are to submit an abstract first instead of a paper. Don’t worry: you are allowed to diverge from the initial abstract as you write the paper, and most of us do—but not to the extent of choosing a wholly new topic.

2. Construct a working bibliography by seeking critical articles and books about your chosen topic in the scholarly literature of the past ten years. Look in the most recent works first.

3. In addition to seeking out the newest material, survey also the “classic” sources of information on your topic: works more than ten years old whose insights have not been superseded. You will find these noted in the reference lists, footnotes, bibliographies, etc., in the more recent works you survey.

4. Next: read, **before** taking notes, the parts of articles or of books which discuss your topic. Then take notes on them. **BE SURE TO BEGIN YOUR SURVEY WITH THE MOST RECENT OF THE WORKS ON YOUR TENTATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY LIST**. You will probably not find essays on the topic you choose in all the sources you survey, but **do look**. **DO NOT LOSE**

SIGHT OF YOUR OWN THESIS AS YOU SEE WHAT OTHER THINKERS HAVE WRITTEN.

5. Review (or re-review) the data you are working with, seeking further insights.
6. Write an eight-page paper (exclusive of notes and bibliography) about your text and idea(s), devoting no more (and probably less) than a third of the paper to your review of other scholars' work. The remainder of the paper will be your own analysis. The review is important, of course—but your ability to analyze is still more important.
  - a. Type the paper, using the 12-point Times New Roman font.
  - b. Use MLA reference format unless you're already planning to send your expanded conference paper to a journal which uses, for example, Chicago Style. If you've that in mind, then, of course, use Chicago Style from the first. If you don't know what reference format is appropriate--look in the journal(s) you're considering. You can save yourself some MLA-handbook time by visiting the web page at the following URL: it has a type-over template for MLA or Chicago Manual of Style reference forms:  
<http://www.wright.edu/%7Emartin.maner/rptemp.htm>.
  - c. Aim to exhaust the current and classic critical literature touching on your topic. Since you are producing a new way to view the text(s) you are analyzing, you will be doing one or more of the following with your review of other scholars' work:
    1. showing briefly the earlier critical approaches to your text (the approaches which your paper will supplement or supersede);
    2. giving credit to any other scholar(s) whose observation(s) gave you the new perspective which produced your paper;
    3. showing your audience that you have done your homework--that you have indeed exhausted other critical literature in your specific area, and that no one has earlier written what you are about to write in your essay.

### **REVISING THE CONFERENCE PAPER**

1. Colleague Review: You will of course do your normal revising and editing when you've finished a draft with content which satisfies you. A helpful next step involves one or more colleagues. Trading reads with a colleague is one exceedingly productive way to improve a paper. The best way to do this may be to ask your colleague to read your paper to you aloud, while commenting upon unclear items as she/he reads. Wherever she/he stumbles in the reading aloud, that is the place your audience will stumble in comprehension. Wherever that happens, simplify and clarify. (You, of course, are now obligated to do a similar critical reading of one of your colleague's papers.)

2. Check-list for conference-paper diction and organization:

- a. Are the sentences shorter than is your norm? Listeners cannot keep track of the more complex sentences which we can use in papers we intend only to be read. Aim for about 18, certainly no more than 25 words per sentence; each independent clause counts as one sentence (the preceding, then, would be two short “sentences”).
- b. Is your paper organized like the traditional “three-paragraph essay,” with a clearly worded thesis at the END of your introduction, topic sentences beginning each body paragraph, and your thesis RESTATED at the beginning of your conclusion? There are other successful ways to organize conference papers--but this is the standard, and it’s easy for listeners to follow.
- c. Do you from time to time address the audience, and use a few judiciously-placed “I” terms? You are talking to people, colleagues, in a room when you deliver this paper; do not try to objectify yourself out of sight and hearing.
- d. Do you repeat major points? You don’t want to insult your audience, of course--but they can’t go back and re-read, so you will want to repeat major points--perhaps reword them so you won’t seem simply repetitive.
- e. Have you made a handout for any extensive passage(s) you want to call to your audience’s attention? (Especially passages in languages other than Modern English.) They can’t hold such things in their minds as you read through your paper--but you can help them by copying out and distributing beforehand the passages you think they’ll need. Then--when your reading comes to the place where the passage resides--be sure to REFER your listeners to, e.g., “Passage One on your handout.”

Pay attention to the specific time/length guidelines for your conference; they can vary. **A general guideline is to allot two minutes per page**, depending on your individual reading pace. The usual conference paper is 9 or 10 pages (in double-spaced 12-point font); this is about what you can read in 20 minutes—the usual time allotment for conference presentations. MLA recommends 7 pages for a 15-minute presentation.

## WRITING THE CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

A guide by Dr. Pond

An abstract is a summary of a paper, article, or book. In general, they are about 250-500 words. When submitting your abstract you should include your name, institutional affiliation, and email address. Be prepared to also submit a CV, which organizers usually ask you to limit to one page.

A good conference abstract needs to do these basic things:

- 1) identify the author/texts/topics that you explore

- 2) introduce and summarize the argument,
- 3) contextualize the argument, usually through a key (but brief) reference or two to others who participate in the conversation that the applicant is trying to join,
- 4) note the payoff of the argument, the “so what,” how the audience will benefit from hearing this paper
- 5) be very clear about how the paper relates to the theme/purpose of the conference.

From *The Professor Is In Blog*: “[How-To\(sday\): How to Write a Paper of Conference Proposal Abstract](#)”

The paper abstract is highly formulaic. Let’s break it down. It needs to show the following:

- 1) big picture problem or topic widely debated in your field.
- 2) gap in the literature on this topic.
- 3) your project filling the gap.
- 4) the specific material that you examine in the paper.
- 5) your original argument.
- 6) a strong concluding sentence.

Each of these six elements is mostly likely contained in a single sentence.

Sentence 1: Big picture topic that is being intensively debated in your field/fields, possibly with reference to scholars (“The question of xxx has been widely debated in xxx field, with scholars such as xxx and xx arguing xxx”).

Sentence 2: Gap in the literature on this topic. This is the key sentence of the abstract. (“However, these works/articles/arguments/perspectives have not adequately addressed the issue of xxxx.”).

Sentence 3: Your project fills this gap (“My paper addresses the issue of xx with special attention to xxx”).

Sentence 4: (length here depends on your total word allowance, and more sentences may be possible): The specific material that you are examining—your data, your texts, etc. (“Specifically, in my project, I will be looking at xxx and xxx, in order to show xxxx. I will discuss xx and xx, and juxtapose them against xx and xx, in order to reveal the previously misunderstood connections between xx and xx.”)

Sentence 5: Your main argument and contribution, concisely and clearly stated. (“I argue that...”)

Sentence 6: Strong Conclusion! (“In conclusion, this project, by closely examining xxxxx, sheds new light on the neglected/little recognized/rarely acknowledged issue of xxxxx.”).

For your reference, here are two abstracts that demonstrate how the principles above work. Each has parts missing, as noted. Inclusion would have strengthened the abstract:

1. Access to marriage or marriage-like institutions, and the recognition of lesbian and gay familial lives more generally, has become central to lesbian and gay equality struggles in recent years [Sentence 1--Big problem]. [Sentence 2--Gap in literature MISSING here]. This paper considers what utopian fiction has to offer by way of alternatives to this drive for ever more regulation of the family [Sentence 3--Her project fills the gap]. Through analysis of Marge Piercy’s classic feminist novel, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, and Thomas Bezucha’s award-winning gay film, *Big Eden*, alternative ways of conceptualizing the place of law in lesbian and gay familial lives are considered and explored [Sentence 4--Her specific material in the paper]. Looking to utopia as a method for rethinking the place of law in society offers rich new perspectives on the issue of lesbian and gay familial recognition [Sentence 5--Her argument, weak]. I argue that utopian fiction signals that the time is now ripe for a radical reevaluation of how we recognize and regulate not only same-sex relationships but all family forms [Sentence 6-- a strong conclusion.].

[Imagining a Different World: Reconsidering the Regulation of Family Lives. Rosie Harding. [Law and Literature](#). Vol. 22, No. 3 (Fall 2010) (pp. 440-462)]

2. History, it seems, has to attain a degree of scientificity, resident in the truth-value of its narrative, before it can be called history, as distinguished from the purely literary or political [Sentence 1--Big problem]. Invoking the work of Jacques Rancière and Hayden White, this essay investigates the manner in which history becomes a science through a detour that gives speech a regime of truth [Sentence 2--Literature, no gap mentioned]. It does this by exploring the nineteenth-century relationship of history to poetry and to truth in the context of the emerging discipline of history in Bengal [Sentence 3--Her project fills the gap]. The question is discussed in relation to a patriotic poem, Palashir Yuddha (1875), accused of ahistoricity, as well as to a

defense made by Bengal's first professional historian, Jadunath Sarkar, against a similar charge in the context of Bankimchandra Chatterjee's historical novels [Sentence 4--Her specific material in the paper]. That the relationship of creativity to history is a continuing preoccupation for the historian is finally explored through Ranajit Guha's invocation of Tagore in "History at the Limit of World-History" (2002) [Sentence 5--Her argument, weakly stated]. [MISSING Sentence 6---a strong conclusion].

[History in Poetry: Nabinchandra Sen's "Palashir Yuddha" and the Question of Truth. Rosinka Chaudhuri. [The Journal of Asian Studies](#). Vol. 66, No. 4 (Nov., 2007) (pp. 897-918)]

### APPLYING FOR TRAVEL FUNDING

This is the process for MA and PhD students to apply for funding for conference travel (listed as "professional travel") from both the Graduate School and the English Department. The English Department's funding policy has changed, allowing MA students to apply for funding to travel to conferences (but not for research).

1. At least four weeks out, apply to the graduate school for funding -- this is done via email to [GSTA@baylor.edu](mailto:GSTA@baylor.edu). Details for this are listed on [their website](#), which includes some other helpful info about what they'll fund (normally \$400 twice a year, although there are exceptions).
  - a. Fill out a [travel award application](#) form. A "brief outline of expenses" would look something like this: Plane flight (\$300), Conference Fee (\$110), Hotel (\$350), Meals, etc.
  - b. Attach your conference acceptance letter/conference schedule as proof that you're accepted.
  - c. As part of the application process, you'll have to have a faculty sponsor for your presentation. It's easiest to get a sponsor if it's a paper you've written for a class. Otherwise, any professor who knows your work and you feel comfortable asking is fine. Here's a sample email:

Hi X,

Would you be willing and able to email a brief statement of support to [GSTA@baylor.edu](mailto:GSTA@baylor.edu) for my upcoming X conference? (They need a support email to approve funding.) I'm presenting "X" on a panel called "X" (chaired by X).

Thanks so much,

2. Once you've been approved by the graduate school, you can then email the English department to request funding as well. You may only receive funding from the English



department if you've been approved by the graduate school and exhausted your maximum funds there (\$400).

- a. Attach: Approval from graduate school, acceptance email from conference, the application that you send to GSA
- b. Sample email:

Dear Drs. Gardner and Russell,

I'm heading to X for the X conference soon, and I anticipate needing some additional funding. (I've received approval/funding from the grad school, and have attached those forms here.) Thank you so much for considering this request. Please let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,

3. While you're at the conference, keep track of all receipts.
4. When you get back to campus, within 15 days, submit an expense report to the English office (this is what Lois & Julie emailed us about in May). You will only fill out one expense report even if getting funding from both the graduate school and the department. This form goes through Lois up to Dr. Gardner. It's a form from [this scary looking website](#). Make sure that you add the graduate fund amount to this form when you turn it in. The Dept ID number is 0321309, and the account is for domestic or international.
5. If they approved your request, English will dispense funding to you. Whether you are receiving funding from English or not, they will pass along the form to the graduate school to dispense funding, which will be mailed to you as a check.

For students seeking to attend the annual **MLA conference**, the MLA offers a travel grant of \$200 for "advanced graduate students" who are members of MLA as partial reimbursement of expenses for travel to or attendance in pre-convention workshops, sessions, or interviews. For additional information or details on how to apply, refer to the MLA's website at <www.mla.org> under Prizes and Awards.

Many other conferences will offer competitive funding for grad students, particularly if it can be shown that this conference relates back to dissertation work.

## **DELIVERING THE CONFERENCE PRESENTATION**

Conference presentations, far from being boring, can be dynamic, vivid intersections of ideas. The story of a conference paper begins far back in your past, in the ways you develop your voice as an instrument of communication, how you train your body for confident presence, and the love you pour into a curious, creative, passionate pursuit of ideas. The presentation itself is the main episode, full of drama, suspense, laughter, and enlightenment. But that is not the end: The question-and-answer session, casual conversations later, and the collaborations that can emerge from conference networking are the rich results of a good paper.

### *Wording*

Your conference paper is a script for oral delivery: Think of how the audience is going to receive it rather than how you are receiving it.

It's all about comprehensibility and engagement. Limit sentence length to under 18 words. Limit syllable count; few polysyllabic words.

Use clear signposts and transitions: my thesis is.... The second example I'd like to share is....

Repeat important points.

Perhaps give an extemporaneous summary at the halfway point.

Include Jokes, direct address to the audience, references to other papers you've heard or other things that have happened at the conference—IF you're comfortable!

Keep quotes quite short. Make it obvious that they're quotes. Maybe put them on the screen, or provide a handout if they're long.

### *Timing*

Keeping to the allotted time is one of the most important, respectful, collegial, and professional things you can do. If you take an extra 5 minutes, you are stealing it from the next presenter, saying that your content is more important than theirs, being selfish and unprepared. It's arrogant and makes it look like you've haven't practiced and that you don't care about your colleagues. Practice, practice, practice the timing until you get it right!

A pitfall to avoid: thinking that summarizing will save time.

### *Technology*

Watch the TEDx talk "How to avoid death By PowerPoint" by David JP Phillips. Do some research into effective design.

There are some good alternatives to PowerPoint, including Prezi, Apple's Keynote, and Google Slides.

Whatever you use: practice, setup, and troubleshoot ahead of time, in the space if possible.

Reading from paper is still best practice. Never read from a laptop.

### *Delivery*

It is still debated whether it is best practice to read a written paper or to speak freely.

**TIME.** The amount you write out should be in inverse proportion to the amount of time allotted for the presentation. If it's a five-minute flash paper, write out every darn word and practice until you get it exactly right, then read it word for word at exactly the tempo you practiced. If it's a standard 20-minute paper, I believe you can mix reading and speaking freely—more on that in a minute. If it's an hour-long talk, you can afford to improvise more.

**CONTENT.** the more familiar you are with the topic, the more you can afford to speak freely. The less familiar you are, the more you had better write it out.

Advantages to writing it out:

1. Precise timing
2. Precise wording

Advantages to speaking freely:

1. more engaging voice, gestures, eye contact
2. ethos: showing expertise on the topic

My suggestion? Write a detailed outline, with precise wording where it's important, and practice enough that you can have just as engaging a voice, gestures, and eye contact as if you were speaking freely, but you can still stick to the timing. In a word: PRACTICE.

### *Body*

Body language: engaging, restrained, relevant gestures.

Eye contact: important! Not quick little dips up and down.

Posture: super important! There are lovely training videos available on each of these topics online.

Please stand if you are able! If not, have as much of your person visible as possible.

Have a friend record you practicing and presenting, watch the videos, see what you can work on in future.

### *Voice*

Watch out for verbal tics: “um,” “uh,” “like,” “you know,” “right,” “again.” Don't panic! They are easy to overcome! Lots of really good techniques online for getting rid of these. First, record. Second, count how many. Next, make a visual to remind you to get rid of it. Cards, notes, phone reminder, etc. It will take about a week. Don't worry if they come back in presentations for a while. Just keep at it; do the week again before and after each presentation, and eventually you'll reduce them to a non-distracting frequency.

Throat-clearing and Vocal fry: medically really bad. Will destroy your vocal chords. But there's hope! Really easy technique videos online for how to stop these.

Projection. Get some voice training. Singing, theatre, therapy. Work on it gradually over time, but do work on it.

Practice, practice—then take yourself and your audience on a journey through this subject-matter that you love and on which you are an expert. Adventures might be nasty, uncomfortable things—but since you've practiced the timing, at least nobody will be late for dinner. And remember: **YOU ARE THE EXPERT IN THE ROOM** on this particular slice of this particular subject. I don't care if the most world-famous, award-winning, multiple-book-publishing PhD-holding expert in the world is in the room and you're just an undergraduate: That person will not have looked at exactly the same set of data as you have through exactly your lenses. They don't have your experience. They're not you. So you have something to offer that no one has thought of before. Be confident,

be brave, practice a lot, expect some danger, and have fun!

### *Q&A*

There's really no way to prepare for a Q-and-A, because you have no idea what people will ask. You can plant question-seeds in your paper, like "I won't share my third example here, but you can always ask me about it later." There's always that one person who says: "What would Derrida say about your topic?" and the one other who starts a sentence that rambles on for five minutes and involves about three tangential anecdotes, and wraps up with: "I guess I don't really have a question."

Three pieces of advice:

- Be honest. If you don't know, just say I don't know.
- Don't shame people. You can simply thank them for their comment and move on.
- Use the time to share relevant material that wasn't in the main paper. Only if it's relevant!

If you in turn serve as moderator, stop that person with the rambling five-minute sentence! Don't let them go on! Rephrase questions to make them more relevant.

When you in turn are in the audience, ask clear, short, focused, relevant questions that you know the presenter would love to hear. Listen for their question-seeds and help them grow.

### *Networking*

A good paper generates good conversations. Seek out people whose papers were on related topics. Seek out the experts in your field. Ask to have lunch or tea with them. Ask them about their work. Advice: Asking questions is better than pushing your own ideas forward in these casual conversations. Also be careful of personal space and time. Conferences are exhausting, so don't impose. Experienced scholars generally love to help emerging scholars, but make sure they get time to eat, sleep, relax, and talk to others.

## CHAPTER 8

# PUBLISHING

Keep your eyes and ears open for publication opportunities. First of all, make every effort to turn your conference and seminar papers into journal articles.

### FINDING A JOURNAL

The best way to find a journal that fits your paper is by speaking with a faculty member in the area: They will be able to tell you whether a publication is legitimate, let you know some good strategies for getting accepted to it, and can sometimes point you to other Baylor graduate students who have successfully gotten published in it.

A number of the larger conferences have their own publications and usually include select conference papers in their journals. Keep a lookout for such conferences, and be sure to follow up on invitations (usually in the conference program) to submit your paper for publication. Conversations at conferences can also yield publication opportunities. Someone you meet may be the editor of a journal who is looking for a particular kind of article, or someone who comments on your paper may have a suggestion of a journal that might be interested in it.

#### **MLA Directory of Periodicals**

This is an incredibly helpful resource that can be [accessed online](#) through Baylor's library website. You can search for academic journals according to subject, scope, and title.

The MLA Directory contains information about length and topical requirements for submissions as well as the selectivity of journals, preferred editorial style, and directions for submission. Most importantly, it contains a timeline for decisions and publications, as well as their approximate acceptance rate. It is an invaluable tool in finding appropriate journals for publication. **Note: The MLA Directory is NOT updated on a regular basis. Always double check submission requirements before submitting your article!**

### STARTING THE ARTICLE

As you develop your conference paper into a publishable article, make sure you've surveyed all the relevant criticism on your topic. Editors are seeking your original insight into some aspect of your topic, so you'll want to be able to show that what you are doing is a fresh approach. Also, journal articles are normally longer, more in-depth studies than conference papers, so you should expand your subtopic. For most journals, plan for about 6,000-8000 words (but of course, as with conferences, follow the journal's guidelines). Check recent issues of the journal to get a feel for general length and style of the journal.

Also be alert to other publication opportunities. Watch for announcements of special encyclopedias or dictionaries being prepared in your field of study (and ask your professors to let you know if they learn of such projects). Such books require multiple contributors, and editors often accept contributions from graduate students. Other publication opportunities may grow out of collaborative projects with your colleagues or one of your professors.

## **RESEARCHING AND WRITING AN ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION**

1. If you follow the most common professional path, you will base your article on one or more of your previously written conference papers. I recommend that practice--it economizes on your labor and time. If you are pursuing an idea independent of an earlier conference paper, then just review the earlier guide to conference papers before you begin the article-length essay. You will duplicate the idea-development sequence as you begin your new research and writing.
2. The chief differences between conference papers and essays intended for publication are:
  - a. Publishable articles exhaust ALL the relevant criticism. In the conference paper you looked at the past five-ten years'-worth of criticism, with some material from the classic essays on your topic; now you must pursue your interest as far back as critics have written on your topic. Your goal is to miss NOTHING that has been written on that topic. You will not necessarily put it all in your article--but you MUST have read it all, so you can include relevant material. Otherwise you put yourself in the position of a dummy when a reviewer reads your essay and thinks, "Why did the author ignore my article on this? It's fifteen years old, to be sure, but it covers two of the essay's major points."
  - b. Publishable articles are usually longer than conference papers. (See the section below, "Expanding the Conference Paper.") Practice varies, but most journals look for both a minimum and a maximum length for articles they publish. Generally speaking, you will want to plan for about 20-25 pages of text, inclusive of notes and works cited. (A "page" is neatly arrived at on your computer if you use a 60-space line in Times New Roman type.) If you have a journal already in mind, look at the guide at the front of a recent issue to see what length of essay the editor welcomes.

c. Publishable articles are on the whole less conversational than conference papers. Much depends on individual taste here, but most editors will think twice about accepting an essay which is peppered with “I” and “you” and which generally projects the bonhomie properly reserved for the face-to-face conversation of a conference paper. This does NOT mean that you should reach for inflated diction; it does mean that your sentences are likely to average twenty-five to thirty words in length instead of twelve to eighteen, that you will use “I” and “you” less often, and that you can include more quoted material if you need it--a reader can go back to such material, where a listener cannot.

3. “Expanding the Conference Paper.” You don’t want to think of your projected article as a padded conference paper. Rather, you should think of the conference paper as a good beginning on the article. How do you proceed? No two of us follow the same path, but here are some hints:

a. Look back at your early drafts for the conference paper. Did you reject some promising subtopics because you hadn’t space for them? Resurrect them.

b. Did some promising directions emerge during conversation about your conference paper after you presented it to colleagues, either at home or at the conference? You will have written down those comments; now is the time to dig them out and ponder them. You may decide to follow up on some of your colleagues’ suggestions for further development of your core ideas.

c. In your researching the entirety of the critical corpus, did you come across some points of view which you found stimulating, or which you think need countering in order to pursue your own argument? Those, of course, will take their places in your essay. (This is not to say that you want to expand greatly the proportion of space you devote to other peoples’ thoughts--those have been printed already and don’t need reprinting. You may find yourself expanding some areas of your paper, though, in order to note that critic X has also thought what you are thinking, or to argue that critic Y’s view needs revising in the light of your new argument.)

In short, given that you presented two, maybe three subdivisions of your subject in the conference paper (subtopics), do you now—In the light of your review of earlier brainstorming, your further thought, your expanded critical review, and the critical comments of your colleagues—have new subtopics to develop? Or new directions? If so, you’re ready to write. If not--you need seriously to ask yourself, “Is this subject appropriate for an article? Or should I simply revise the conference paper for publication as a note, or as a short article?”

## **EDITORIAL EVALUATION OF YOUR ARTICLE-LENGTH PAPER**

Editors chiefly seek in your new essay an **original insight** into some aspect of the question you're addressing. Along with the originality of that insight they expect clear, simple wording, easy-to-follow organization, and--especially--generous citations from or references to the text as you argue your point. They also expect to see you self-consciously employ a specific critical methodology.

Secondarily, they expect you to have exhausted the entirety of the critical commentary upon your topic, and to have included references to that work in your paper. They want to see that you have clearly shown where earlier critical discussion has thus far arrived concerning your topic, and they expect to see you clearly indicating what new insight(s) you develop in your essay.

Third: editors expect you to have used the most recently published reference and source-list conventions of the Modern Language Association or--more commonly--of University of Chicago Style.

Final Note: An old but excellent guide to publishing your thoughts appears in R. B. McKerrow, "Form and Matter in the Publication of Research," *PMLA* 65.3 (April 1950): 3-8.



## CHAPTER 9

# TEACHING

### PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Graduate students wear several hats. If we have assistantships, we work for Baylor University and are members of its student body as well. We are concerned with our present—studying, writing, taking classes—but also with our future as professionals in a highly competitive job market. Thus, the development of professional attitudes and skills is a significant goal to be pursued alongside our development as scholars.

Reproduced below is the segment of Baylor’s Personnel Policies outlining general conduct guidelines for all Baylor employees. **We feel that our acceptance of a stipend from Baylor constitutes our agreement to abide by these guidelines for the duration of our employment.** The handbook you will receive as a TA or GA will include additional guidelines for professionalism as you work with undergraduate students.

#### Standards of Personal Conduct:

Personal and Professional Conduct Baylor University places a high value on human relations and human rights. Therefore, the University strives to maintain a work environment that is based on mutual respect for all employees. In turn, the University expects each individual to diligently perform the job for which he or she is employed. In addition to compliance with all approved policies and procedures, attention to work-related duties and customer service is of utmost importance. Professionalism in communications and behavior is the expected form of interaction in all of the University’s work-related settings. When differences of opinion occur, only constructive and respectful forms of communication are considered appropriate.

#### Code of Ethics:

Members of the Baylor University community (including regents, faculty, staff, students, and administration) are expected to conduct themselves and the affairs of the University in an ethical and lawful manner. This expectation is a foundation for Baylor University’s mission of educating “men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.”

Members of the Baylor University community are expected to act in a way that builds a distinctive sense of caring, kindness, mutual respect, collegiality, and fairness. The idea that the Baylor community is a family has always been vital in our historical traditions, and we here reaffirm our commitment to that idea. Out of respect for this community, we do not slander or defame.

All other BU Personnel Policies can be found on [their website](#).

## ACADEMY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

ATL does all kinds of special events, but perhaps their most useful one to English graduate students is the [Foundations of Teaching Workshop](#), which is offered every year at the end of the spring semester. You hear from lots of great speakers, workshop a syllabus, and do a micro-teaching demonstration; if you make it to both days of the workshop you'll also get a free copy of *Make it Stick*.

## CHAPTER 10

# AFTER GRADUATION

### PREPARING A CURRICULUM VITA

Sooner or later, most graduate students will need to prepare a curriculum vita (CV) for use in seeking employment, admission to other graduate programs, or grants and fellowships. The CV differs from a résumé in length and detail: while it is still a summary and should contain no complete sentences, a good CV will include academic, creative, and community involvement information which would be out-of-place on a résumé for non-academic use. While preferences vary, the CV should not be shorter than three pages and should only be more than ten pages if you are exceptionally prolific.

**Most curricula vitae will follow a pattern like the following:**

#### ***Identification***

Full name and contact information, including current telephone number and mailing address. You should also include an e-mail address, if you have one. Be sure to use your personal phone, address, and e-mail, not one provided to you by your current school or employer.

#### ***Education***

All post-secondary institutions at which you have studied, with start and finish dates, degrees granted, majors, minors, concentrations, and honors. Begin with the most recent.

#### ***Employment***

All jobs you have held, including volunteer or civic positions, with start and finish dates, employer name and location, title, and brief description of responsibilities. Again, begin with the most recent.

#### ***Publication and Performances***

Articles and creative writing publication credits, as well as performances in the fine arts, formatted as a brief bibliography.

#### ***Awards and Honors***

Any means by which authorities or colleagues in the field have acknowledged you, including grants, fellowships, merit-based awards, competitions won, and honorary societies. Include date awarded.

#### ***Miscellany***

Other scholarly, professional, or civic activities which you believe to be relevant, such as non-published presentations at conferences and participation in ongoing projects. Keep it brief!

The following letter was written by a 2004 graduate from the PhD program who found a job shortly after finishing her degree. We hope you find it encouraging as you prepare to set out on your own job search!

Dear Baylor English Grads, especially those of you thinking about the academic job search:

Not too long ago I was where you are now, worried about searching for and finding an academic job after graduating with my PhD from Baylor. If you don't mind, I'd like to pass along a few tips to help you with the often-intimidating job search process:

### **SEARCHING FOR AN ACADEMIC JOB**

First, don't start searching for an academic job until you're actually ready. Applying for jobs too soon is an unnecessary use (maybe even waste) of your time. Universities and colleges do not want to interview you until your dissertation is almost complete. You'll need to be at least halfway through writing and have a realistic defense month in mind.

Since some jobs are not listed on *Chronicle.com*, you'll also want to check the Association of Departments in English Job Information List (from *www.ade.org*—get the username and password from the English dept. office). In addition, get the names of as many colleges and universities as you can and check their individual websites for faculty position postings. (That's how I found my current job.)

Broadening your search will increase your chances of finding a job. Search for different types: post-doctoral fellowships, visiting professorships, full-time community college positions, and rhet/comp jobs.

#### *Applying for an Academic Job*

Do set up a file with Baylor Campus Services. Give them (or have sent) your 3 recommendation letters, as well as your transcripts. Every time you apply for a job, e-mail Campus Services the address of the school and let them know which items to send.

When you apply for a job, send your application letter (on Baylor letterhead) and c.v. in a large Baylor letterhead envelope (available from the English office). Some schools may require you to fill out or send other information, but, even if they don't, it's a good idea to send your teaching philosophy, samples of your syllabi, and possibly an assignment sheet or two. (Only send items relevant to the job you're applying for.) Include this extra material with your application letter and c.v.

#### *Interviewing for an Academic Job*

When preparing for a phone or campus interview, research the school. Find out what the strengths and weaknesses seem to be of their English dept and take note of what strengths you could bring to their program.

In addition to preparing answers to potential questions from them, have a list of questions prepared to ask them during a campus interview. These questions might concern the school's student population, the expected course load, employment benefits, reimbursement for moving expenses, required advising and committee responsibilities, conference travel funding, and length of contract (9, 10, or 12 months?). At a religious institution, be prepared to share your testimony and discuss how you would integrate faith and learning in the classroom. At all institutions, be able to talk about integrating technology into the classroom. (Part of your research should include how much emphasis that school places on technology in the classroom, of course.)

Prior to your campus interview, find out what kind of presentation you should prepare. Should it be of your scholarly work (rather like a conference paper), or should it be a teaching demonstration? If a teaching demonstration, find out whether you will be teaching an actual class or fellow professors or a mixture. Find out as well whether you can (or should!) use audio-visual materials and PowerPoint.

Finally, a word to the wise: while most universities will pay for your campus interview trip (either up-front or in reimbursement), bring extra cash in case they don't pay for meals or even gasoline expenses.

Best wishes as you begin your academic job search!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Newton, PhD (Baylor '04)

## FINDING A JOB OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA

Jobs within the Academia are vanishing. MA and PhD students might consider job prospects outside of academia. [VersatilePhD.com](#) is an excellent resource for the alt-ac or non-ac job search because it includes job postings, sample resumes and cover letters, career narratives, and career exploration guides--and your account is free through Baylor. Check out the [Graduate School's page for careers beyond academia](#).

*Narrative: Finding an Alt-Academic Job*

**This letter was written by a recent MA graduate who found a job as an editorial assistant at Time-Warner.**

When I first began the hunt for a post-MA job, I made the mistake of visiting a local career fair. I met with the usual dismay that greets those of us in the liberal arts. One man, though, surpassed the rest and left me stunned. Upon learning that my degree was in English, he scoffed at me, then turned to the surrounding undergrads – young dreamers with degrees in business and finance – to

explain, “An English major, you see, is a person who has chosen to goof off on Mom & Dad’s dime, but will never give anything back. Basically, they’re all leeches on society at large.” He then turned back to me to demand, “Just what do you think you can *do*?”

I spent the following weekend staring catatonically at the wall, rocking back and forth and picturing my future life as a homeless person, wondering what it would be like to sleep outside and how long they’d let me live at the Salvation Army. We’ve all experienced ridicule at our “impracticality” in choosing to study English. And most of us have, at one time or another, given in to the panic of, “Oh, no – what *can* I do?” The truth is that many fields are available to you: law, education, publicity, marketing, various types of writing and editing, and more.

As one who has recently survived and found victory in the hunt for a “real job,” I want to share a few practical tips that you can start putting into practice *now*, and that will help you when the time comes for your own big job hunt:

1. **Play your own game, no one else’s.** Yes, this is from a *Joan of Arcadia* episode (season 1, episode 3, “Touch Move” – available for rent or sale), but it’s proving to be excellent career advice. Check out the *Joan* episode for full explication.
2. **Decide what you want to do as early as possible, then go for it.** If you’re not sure, try to focus on two or three main options; it’s okay if they change over time. Focusing will give you direction. Do your research right away; start building skills and knowledge that you’ll need.
3. **Enjoy your time in academia – just keep a foot in the outside world, too.** Talk with people outside the English department, outside the university. You’ll probably find it very easy to get caught up in our piece of the world, and you should; we’re in a great field! But to succeed later in life, you’ll need to be able to relate to people outside the Baylor English department.
4. **Take advantage of your electives.** Look at your course of study early on, then look at all the options available in other departments to see what courses interest you and when they are offered. PLUS, studying outside the department is a great opportunity to meet professors with connections outside of academia. If you’re interested in media, for example, there’s a professor in the Communications department who has a reputation for getting undergraduates great internships. Read the department descriptions and professor bios; meet with professors and ask questions.
5. **Network.** No, networking is not sleazy and it’s not just for MBAs – there are tons of people looking for jobs, and it’s reassuring for companies to have a personal connection to the people they hire. Also, networking can be an invaluable source of inside information that will help you stand out from other job candidates. The people who interviewed me were impressed that I could casually refer to recent articles in industry magazines and that I could use industry terminology, both things I learned from networking.
6. And lastly, a recent epiphany of mine: **Understand that the world isn’t out to get you; it’s just really busy.** Do your research, decide where you belong, and then sell yourself. Don’t worry if it takes some time to get hired. Much of our problem as English students is also one of our greatest strengths – our versatility.

Most importantly, we have something that few people have and everyone needs, and that is the ability to communicate effectively. Unfortunately, since we're so universally qualified, we don't come with a neat label that many college graduates have. We are not groomed for "marketing" or "nursing" or "athletic training." As a result, no one knows where we belong, so we get lost in the shuffle. Unless, that is, we take initiative. That's why *you* need to do the research to know where you belong. Employers will recognize your value, and they'll be relieved to know where to place you.

The summer before I graduated, I interned at Baylor University Press as an editorial assistant. I was taking classes and working in the Writing Center, and my work at BUP was strictly volunteer, which might seem crazy – why work for nothing when life is so busy? But that job was one of the best investments I ever made. Not only did I find my passion in the publishing world, I gained the experience that I needed to land my dream job. I am thrilled to be working as an editorial assistant for Time Warner Book Group. This job is more perfect for me than I could ever have imagined. And at least half of our editorial staff have degrees in English.

Some of the best advice I got during my job hunt was from Dr. Newman, the director of BUP. I called him two months into my job search, exhausted and frustrated, and he told me, "The next 3-6 months of your life are going to be horrible. But then, you're going to feel fantastic." He was absolutely right. Job hunting was terrifying. I spent months lying awake in cold sweats, only to race to the computer at three in the morning to send out more resumes; I felt physically ill for the entire semester; I annoyed all my friends by spending most of my time in self-absorbed panic. ("I can't end up homeless! I have no survival skills!") From what I can tell now, I had it pretty easy. I sent out 50+ resumes (I've heard you should expect to send out over 200) and had my dream job within six months. It was the most frightening experience I've ever had.

But yes, now life is sweet. And I'm more convinced than ever that English is a fabulous field of study, whether your plans are to teach, to research, to go into business, or to enter any of the other dozens of opportunities out there. Whatever you do, use common sense, and don't be intimidated. You are incredibly valuable, and you are qualified. The job hunt is a game of endurance, but you can find something that you love.

--Heidi Gabrielle Nobles

## CHAPTER 11

# BAYLOR RESOURCES

### THE GRADUATE WRITING CENTER

The Graduate Writing Center is a resource for graduate student writers who desire to improve their writing skills. Our consultants, all advanced-stage doctoral students from across the disciplines, are trained to help with a variety of writing projects including academic papers, reports, personal statements and applications, papers intended for publication, theses and dissertations, and grant proposals. Consultants will not proofread papers, but they are available to help with any stage of the writing process--brainstorming, drafting, or revision.

To make an appointment with a Graduate Writing Consultant, send an email to [gwc@baylor.edu](mailto:gwc@baylor.edu) along with the paper you would like the consultant to review. In the initial email, indicate any issues you hope to address (i.e., organization, transitions, clarity). A consultant will contact you that day to arrange a one-hour appointment at a location convenient for you. Consultants need at least 24 hours to read your work before they can meet with you.

### COUNSELING CENTER

Graduate school can be a stressful time, even to the extent that some have declared a mental health crisis in graduate education. According to a [2018 study in \*Nature Biotechnology\*](#), graduate students are six times more likely to experience depression and anxiety compared to the rest of the population. Given this, remember to take care of yourselves during graduate school. Baylor offers [the counseling center](#), online counseling, and the spiritual life center. The counseling center offers free services for individuals, couples, and groups. For more information about the mental health services provided by Baylor, check out [this page from the Graduate School](#). You can also just visit the counselling center in the SLC: They take walk-ins during most open hours.

### THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Baylor Graduate School maintains an [invaluable website](#) for current students, with resources on timelines to graduation, student housing, job opportunities, and more.



## HEALTH CENTER

The Baylor Health Center, located in the SLC, offers a variety of basic primary care services, listed on [their website](#).

## GSA

Baylor's Graduate Student Organization is always putting on events and workshops. You'll receive plenty of emails from them, but their Facebook page is probably the best way to stay on top of all of the most recent details. We also have multiple English Department students serving on their leadership team, so do your best to support them.

## THINGS TO DO

**On Campus:** Numerous special speakers and programs come to Baylor throughout the year. For many of these, you will need simply to watch for flyers posted around campus or read the campus newspaper, the Lariat.

**Baylor Athletics Ticket Office** If you're into this sort of thing, Baylor is a good place to be. You should get free admission with your student ID to any sporting game except football. You also get free admission to football, but you have to [follow this complicated process](#) described on the Baylor Bears Ticket website about a week before the game happens.

**Baylor University's Theatre** Baylor's student theater shows are astoundingly good. Tickets run about \$17, and you can see their [2018-2019 season here](#).

**The Baylor School of Music Concerts** are also astoundingly good, and tickets are usually free or super cheap. They happen any night of the week, and you can check out their concert schedule [here](#).

**Mayborn Museum** (710-1110) "celebrates the natural science and cultural history of Central Texas"; the Discovery Rooms can be a lot of fun!

## CHAPTER 12

# WACO LIFE

**Waco** offers a variety of restaurants, entertainment venues, shopping, and seasonal activities for just about any person's tastes. For additional information on places and events, you can consult the city's information web site at <http://www.wacoheartoftexas.com/> or you can try the Tourist Information Center, located in Fort Fisher Park, alongside the Brazos River. (If you are on University Parks going west from campus, turn right on the access road just before going under I-35 and then an immediate right onto the park road. Phone number 750-8696.)

### **Some Baylor English Favorites**

**Dichotomy**

**Pinewood**

**Common Grounds**

**Balcones**

**The Dancing Bear**

**Torchy's**

**Alpha & Omega**

**Lula Jane's**

### **Churches**

Baylor's office of Spiritual Life maintains a [list of local churches](#) on their website. You're also always welcome to ask fellow students for recommendations.

### **Grocery/ Home**

**Super Wal-Mart** 4320 Franklin Ave., at intersection with New Road

**Target** 5401 Bosque Ave

**HEB** There's several throughout town, but the closest is at Valley Mills and I-35.

## Movie Theaters

**Starplex Galaxy 16** (772-5333) At Valley Mills and Franklin. Best seats, \$5 w/ Student ID.

**The Hippodrome** - This is Waco's historic dine-in theater in downtown. Student tickets are \$7.

**Hollywood Jewel 16** (399-9500) Down Highway 84 past the mall.

**Premiere Cinema** (772-1511) On Valley Mills near Jason's Deli. \$1 on Tuesdays and \$2 any other day!

**Gatesville Drive-In Theater** (865-8445) Located about 30 minutes south of Waco

## Museums

**Dr. Pepper Museum and Free Enterprise Institute** (757-1025) Learn the mystical origins of the popular soft drink, and how to practice . . . free enterprise. Don't forget to have an old-fashioned Dr. Pepper float in the soda shop!

**Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum** (750-8631) Just to clear up any confusion—it has nothing to do with the baseball team.

**Texas Sports Hall of Fame** (756-1633) See George Foreman, Earl Campbell, and all your favorite Texas athletes enshrined.

**Red Men Museum** (756-1221) An “eclectic” collection of pieces. A watercolor by Adolf Hitler and the Colt .45's and .48's of the infamous Bonnie and Clyde. Things you don't see everyday.

## Malls/Shopping

**Central Texas Marketplace** I-35 and Hwy 6. Has a Ross, Marshall's, Bed Bath & Beyond, Sports Authority, PetSmart, Dress Barn, Old Navy, Ann Taylor Loft

**Richland Mall** (776-6631)

**Round Rock Outlets** just north of Austin, about 1 hour south on I-35

**San Marcos Outlet Mall** About 2 hours south of Waco on I-35 but worth the trip.

**Shops at Sironia** Attached to Amelia's on the Avenue restaurant

**Wolf Creek Ranch** in Georgetown, between Waco and Austin, worth the trip.

### **Live Entertainment**

**Common Grounds** offers live music some evenings

**McLennan Community College** Check their website or call: 299-8200 (performing arts center box office) for more information on their surprisingly good theatre, music, and Art Center events.

**Treff's** has live music occasionally, such as a Piano Man on Thursdays

**Waco Civic Theatre** (776-1591) An opportunity and a warning: even if you have no acting experience whatsoever, you too can participate in a WCT production.

**Waco Hippodrome** (Box office 752-9797; Administrative Office 752-7745)

**Waco Symphony**

### **Seasonal**

**Waco Library Book Sale** This is perhaps the most important and fun seasonal event for the Baylor graduate student. It will run from November 1-4, with different specials and admission fees announced on the [Waco Friends of the Library website](#).

**Brazos Nights** Free summer concerts beside the river.

**Heart of Texas Fair and Rodeo** Held in October.

**Heart of Texas (HOT) Coliseum** (776-9027) Call for current attractions.

**Independence Day Fireworks** over the Brazos River downtown.

**Tonkawa Falls** swimming hole near Crawford

**Waco Cultural Arts Fest** October, downtown in Heritage Square

**Waco Margarita and Salsa Festival** downtown in late August - live music

**Westfest** annual Czech festival on Labor Day weekend in West, 30 minutes north

### **Other Activities**

**Cameron Park** has bike trails, disc golf, and beautiful scenery; the second largest state park within city limits (second only to Central Park in NYC)

**Cameron Park Zoo** (750-8400) check newspaper for free-admission days

**Flea Market** on LaSalle, Saturday and Sunday mornings

**Homestead Heritage** traditional Anabaptist community near Waco; don't miss the Homestead Fair on Thanksgiving weekend

**Lake Air Bowling Lanes** (772-1717)

**Lions Park Miniature Golf** (772-3681) Batting cages and race cars

**Skate World** (772-0042)

**Tehuacana Creek Winery**

**Westview Bowling Lanes** (772-6600)

**Lake Waco** our version of a beach; \$4 per car