HOW TO APPLY to the ENGLISH M.A. PROGRAM

The Graduate English Program at Rutgers–Newark is unique in the region for offering a general M.A. with courses in literature and theory taught by distinguished research scholars and writers who love to teach. A vibrant academic community within a rich tapestry of ethnicities and nationalities, intimate for its compact size and friendly atmosphere, in sight of Manhattan, and minutes from the Downtown Arts District and Newark’s Penn Station (and PATH), the campus is not like anywhere else on the Rutgers map. We invite you to come and see for yourself what we’re about.

Applications are submitted online by going to <http://gradstudy.rutgers.edu> and clicking on Newark. (You’ll also find the Graduate School-Newark’s online catalogue there.) Paper items should be sent directly to Admissions (Engelhard Hall, Room 101, 190 University Ave., Rutgers University, Newark NJ 07102.) Degree program applicants must also provide three letters of recommendation, original transcripts, GRE General Test Scores (do not have them sent to Rutgers-New Brunswick), and an academic writing sample of 7-10 double-spaced pages.

Students applying for non-degree status check that box and must supply a Personal Statement and official transcripts. (Some choose this option to check out the program’s fit with their goals; others buy time while getting their degree program application materials together, and may solicit fresh recommendation letters from their new Rutgers professors.) One can take up to four courses as a “NOD” student. Those subsequently accepted into the degree program can have their credits count toward the M.A. Professors’ expectations are the same for non-degree and degree students.

Application Deadlines are mid-August for fall admission, December 1 for spring: but it’s best to get materials in well ahead of these dates because students begin to register in early April and early November. Some courses fill quickly.

Tips for putting together the application:

- We suggest you write the Personal Statement, required of all applicants, in a natural manner and tell us something of who you are, what you’d like to study on the graduate level and why, and what experiences you’ve had, including academic research and writing, teaching, or study abroad, that make you a good candidate for admission. Tell us too where you think your studies might take you after graduation. You may also want to comment on writers or styles you admire (or don't) and fields of study under the generous umbrella of “English” that interest you. If there's anything in your academic record that needs explaining, you can do that in the Statement or ask your recommenders to address it. Going onto a second page is fine; but please double space between paragraphs. (FYI, the Personal Statement submitted online comes through in single-spaced small print with no paragraphing unless the writer hits the enter key twice.)
**Resumes** can give the big picture but tend to be telegraphic. They’re not required, but if you send one, be sure that you or your recommenders elaborate on items in it that make you stand out. We have no problem reading a resume that's more than a page long.

**Recommendations** can come from employers and supervisors, but applications are generally strengthened most by letters from more than one professor who can testify in detail to your knowledge of literature, abilities in research and academic writing, style as a student, and readiness for graduate study. (Recommenders often appreciate having in front of them your transcript, at least a draft of the Personal Statement, and reminders of the work you did in their classes.) Letters can be submitted online or mailed to Admissions on paper.

If you’ve been away from college so long that getting such a recommendation is difficult, consider applying to the non-degree program; if you are accepted you may be able to ask your Rutgers professors for letters—and generate a fresh writing sample for the degree application.

**The Graduate School** requires **GRE General Test scores** but leaves how they are considered largely up to the individual program. We look most at the Verbal and Writing scores rather than the Math. Instead of setting cut-off numbers, we consider the candidate holistically, weighing all his/her materials together. GRE scores a bit more than five years old are usually acceptable to the Graduate School with an original report from ETS. Results from other tests such as the LSAT cannot substitute for GRE scores. Applicants taking the GRE for the first time are wise to prepare for it. **International applicants** must submit both GRE and TESOL scores (and are usually asked to have an international agency such as WES evaluate the undergrad transcript).

**We ask degree applicants for an academic writing sample** (7-10 double-spaced pages) demonstrating their skills in literary analysis, writing, and research. Some who've been out of school for a good while, or no longer have such papers, enjoy doing fresh writing on a book or writer; for many texts, one can find relevant literary criticism, background, and useful research resources in the Norton Critical Editions. Others generate the writing sample by taking a course here first as a non-degree student.

Please don't hesitate to write me your questions. If you'd like to meet on campus, we can arrange that. We wish you the best in planning this new phase of your life!

Dr. Janet Larson, Director
Rutgers-Newark Graduate English Program

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