

1. ENGLISH PROGRAM

2020-2021 HANDBOOK FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

KEY WEBSITES

School of Humanities: <https://www.usm.edu/humanities/>
Faculty listings, events, etc.

English Graduate Program: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-programs/english.php>
Degree plans, course descriptions, qualifying/comprehensive exam information

Graduate School: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school>
Progress to degree forms, graduation forms, deadlines for form/thesis/dissertation submission; if you are graduating within the next academic year, print out the deadlines and post them at your desk

Graduate Bulletin: <http://catalog.usm.edu/index.php?catoid=23>
Graduate School policies including time to degree, leaves of absence, grading system, probation, etc.; most relevant information can be found under “general degree requirements” and “general academic information”

Center for Writers: <https://www.usm.edu/writers/index.php>
For information about creative writing at USM, including the graduate creative writing program expectations and requirements.

SOAR: <https://info.usm.edu/soar/>
Login to SOAR to enroll in courses, drop courses, see your semester schedule, access your grades, see rosters and input grades (for classes you’re teaching)

CANVAS: <https://usm.instructure.com/login/canvas>
Some teachers may use CANVAS to post materials and grades, conduct assignments, etc.

USM English Canvas Shell: <https://usm.instructure.com/courses/49397>
An important resource for teaching and receiving announcements

USM COVID information: <https://www.usm.edu/covid-19/index.php>
Latest updates from USM regarding the current health situation

KEY CONTACTS

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Dr. Monika Gehlawat, Associate Director, School of Humanities
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Dr. Josh Bernstein, English Graduate Coordinator
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Dr. Adam Clay, Center for Writers Director
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Dr. Joyce Inman, Composition Program Director
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KEY DATES

The fall 2020 semester begins on Monday, August 17, 2020 and concludes on November 23, 2020. There will be no fall break and no classes after the Thanksgiving holiday. These changes to the fall calendar were created to minimize travel during the school semester, and we encourage you to avoid non-essential travel in order to be safe and successful in your work this term.

COMMUNICATION

USM Email: You must regularly check your USM email address since vital information from the university, school, program, administrators, faculty, and students will be sent to this address. Failure to read emails sent to this account is no excuse for missing important, and often time-sensitive, information. You are also expected to respond to all pertinent emails in a timely fashion. Please note that all USM students are required to activate and use their USM email accounts for professional correspondence.

English Grad Student Listserv: All graduate students must be subscribed to this list (english.grads@usm.edu) with a current email address that you will regularly check. Important program information (deadlines, opportunities, events/talks) will be sent to this listserv. All new students should have been added already. If you are unsure if you are subscribed or want to change the email address with which you are subscribed, email Jaide Hollingsworth. Note: this listserv is different from the C4W listserv (cent4writers@usm.edu), which is the listserv for the Center for Writers at USM; C4W listserv members must also belong to the English Grad Student Listserv (english.grads@usm.edu).

Mailboxes (please note that this is subject to change depending on the current health situation): All graduate students have mailboxes in the School of Humanities office in LAB 347; they are arranged alphabetically. If you don't have a box, notify Jaide Hollingsworth immediately. When health and safety conditions again allow it, you should check your mail regularly.

Whom to Contact: Please be proactive about communication with support staff in the English program when facing issues in academic work, teaching, or assistantship duties!

- **Jaide Hollingsworth:** questions about assistantship paperwork, HR, or issues related to SOAR and course enrollments.
- **Darcie Conrad/Emily Prehn:** reimbursement for expenses related to school events
- **Joyce Inman:** questions/concerns about your composition courses
- **Josh Bernstein:** all students with questions about career advice, assistantship duties, academic difficulties, and leaves of absence; all literature students with advising questions.
- **Adam Clay:** creative writing students with general questions, concerns, or advising questions (degree plans, career advice, assistantship duties, academic difficulties, leaves of absence)
- If you are contacted by the upper Administration (Office of Disability Accommodations, the Vice President of Student Affairs, or the Dean of Students) regarding a student in your class, please contact either Joyce Inman (if a Composition class) or Josh Bernstein (for any other class) so that the English program can support you in whatever way is necessary.

RESOURCES

Support/Counseling: Talk to your professors, committee members, or program coordinators if you are struggling, stressed, or overwhelmed. Please do not feel you have to go it alone—there are a variety of support systems available to you both in and out of the English program. USM’s Student Counseling Services offers students six counseling sessions each semester for free. Read more here: <https://www.usm.edu/student-counseling-services>. You can make an appointment over the phone (601-266-4829) or in-person (Bond Hall East). Contact Monika Gehlawat (monika.gehlawat@usm.edu) if you are interested in joining a weekly student and faculty meditation group.

Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA): If you have a disability and are seeking accommodations in the classroom for that disability, contact ODA: Bond Hall 114, 118 College Drive #8586, Hattiesburg, MS 39406; call (601) 266-5024; email oda@usm.edu; or visit the website: <https://www.usm.edu/disability-accommodations/index.php>. Individuals with hearing impairments can use Mississippi Relay Service at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) to contact campus offices.

Financial Aid Office: If you are receiving financial aid, you should review the policies relevant to graduate students on <https://www.usm.edu/financial-aid>. In particular:

- “Graduate students enrolled during a fall or spring semester must attempt at least four graduate-level semester hours in each of those semesters in order to receive financial aid, while graduate students enrolled during a summer semester must attempt at least three graduate-level semester hours...”
- “Graduate students will be deemed in good standing and eligible to receive federal financial assistance until they have attempted twice the number of hours normally required to complete their program of study leading to a master’s or doctoral degree. Attempted hours will include all courses on the academic transcript including grades of A, B, C, D, E, F, P, W, XF, N/A and I.”
 - The PhD in literature, for example, requires 45 credit hours; once you have applied for financial aid on 90 hours, you will potentially be prevented from receiving additional financial aid. If you apply for financial aid every fall, spring, and summer, carefully keep track of your total number of hours because you might reach the cap earlier than you imagine you will.

PROGRESS TO DEGREE

Degree Plans: familiarize yourself with your specific degree plan, which will list the courses, exams, defenses, and foreign language requirements required to complete your degree. These will be available on the English program website and in the Graduate Bulletin. **If you have any questions, speak to your academic advisor: literature students (Josh Bernstein), poets (Adam Clay), and fiction writers (Oliva Clare)**

Academic Advising: Midway through every fall and spring semester, each graduate student will be individually advised regarding their courses and degree progress. When emailed about advising, promptly sign up for an appointment with your advisor. Review your degree plan and the course descriptions for the upcoming semester before your meeting so that you are prepared with questions and plans for your progress to degree.

Grades/Probation: from the Graduate Bulletin: “A student will be placed on academic probation for the next regular semester of enrollment (fall or spring) for the following reasons: the cumulative grade point average (GPA) or program GPA falls below 3.0, a grade of "C-" or lower is awarded; a seventh hour of C+ or below is awarded; a U is earned in thesis or dissertation research. During the probationary semester(s), a student will not be allowed to engage in progress toward degree activities which include: defending a thesis, dissertation, or capstone project, and participating in qualifying or comprehensive examinations.” You are allowed to retake **one** course for a higher grade.

Exams: Every degree has specific exams. Master’s students only take comprehensive exams; Ph.D. students take qualifying and comprehensive exams. Read more about each exam on the English program website: <https://www.usm.edu/humanities/english-graduate-exams.php>. You are given two chances to pass an exam; if you do not pass the second time, you will have to be dismissed from the program.

- **For literature M.A. students:** you will take a written comprehensive exam after the first and before the second year of the program (or after 18 hours of coursework if you are a part-time student). You will receive a sample exam and guidance in how to prepare for this exam. The exam is held in August or December, depending on when you matriculated to the program.
- **For creative writing M.A. students:** your master’s thesis defense serves as your comprehensive exam. You do not take a separate test.
- **For literature Ph.D. students:** you will take a written qualifying exam after the first and before the second year of the program (or after 18 hours of coursework if you are a part-time student). You will receive a sample exam, and guidance in how to prepare for this exam. The qualifying exam is strenuous but manageable with adequate preparation and regular dedication to courses. The exam is held in August or December, depending on when you matriculated to the program. After you have completed coursework, you will take your comprehensive exams; these include a written exam and an oral exam about your two reading lists: a field area/historical period and a dissertation area.
- **For creative writing Ph.D. students:** your qualifying exam takes place in your second semester. You will be assessed on the critical and creative work completed in your first year of coursework. Your faculty will review your work and conference with you to determine if you qualify to move forward in the program. The qualifying exam is strenuous but manageable with adequate preparation and regular dedication to courses. In the fall of your third year, you will take your comprehensive exams, which consist of a written exam about your three reading lists: creative writing, historical period, and special area/single author.
- For questions, creative writing students should contact Adam Clay and literature students should contact Josh Bernstein.

Incompletes: The Graduate School is reluctant to grant incompletes to students; incompletes will only be considered when the student has been regularly completing work all semester and an unforeseen emergency occurs at the end of the semester that prevents the student from submitting the final assignment. Incompletes are granted at the discretion of the faculty member of the course. You should, therefore, plan to finish all work for your courses by the deadlines stated in the course syllabi. In the very rare case you are given an incomplete, you must submit the remaining work to the professor before the end of the next semester (not counting the summer); otherwise, the incomplete automatically becomes an F, and you will be placed on probation.

Time to degree: M.A. students have 5 years to complete their degrees; Ph.D. students have 8 years. The clock starts when you begin the program; the clock only stops if you are on an official leave of absence (which requires paperwork and approval). Note that these numbers are *not* the years of funding available to you—they are simply the maximum number of years you have to complete your degree. If you take longer than the above times, you must submit an extension request to the Graduate School. If approved, you will have to revalidate coursework that falls outside the time window. The professor who taught the course that needs to be revalidated (or a faculty member in a similar field if the original faculty member no longer works at USM) will decide how the course will be revalidated, but methods can include an oral exam, written exam, paper, or other project. You also must pay a revalidation fee for each revalidated course. So, in short, finish within your allotted time. You can read more about time to degree and revalidation in the Graduate Bulletin under “General Degree Requirements.”

Graduate School Forms/Deadlines: All graduate school forms and deadlines can be found here: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school>

Please note that all graduate forms and paperwork, including dissertations and theses, are handled digitally. Forms and materials are not accepted in hard copy.

- Your faculty committees will fill out and submit all exam result forms, prospectus approval forms, and defense (thesis/dissertation) forms to the Graduate School.
- It is your responsibility to determine, in consultation with your committee chair, the members of your committee and to email all of them together (including the chair) to confirm their participation. Your chair will then fill out and submit all committee request forms (for your MA thesis committee or PhD dissertation committee). If your committee makeup changes, you must notify your chair to submit a new form.
- It is your responsibility to fill out and submit your application for degree the semester **before** you intend to graduate and by the Graduate School’s stated deadline; note, there are graduation fees. If you were admitted to the program prior to fall 2017, you must also submit a plan of study with your application for degree—these are found on the English program website, not the Graduate School website. If you applied to graduate in a certain semester but then need to push graduation back a semester, you must fill out a new application and select the “postpone/defer application” choice. You will complete the application for degree through SOAR: <https://soar.usm.edu/login.html>

- It is your responsibility to submit all graduation paperwork and fees, including your finalized and properly formatted thesis/dissertation, as well as the embargo form (<https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/internalportal/progress-degree-and-graduation-forms.php>), to the Graduate School by their deadlines. The Documents Specialist (Jonathan Snyder, jonathan.snyder@usm.edu) will NOT allow you to submit your thesis/dissertation late; if you submit it late, you will have to postpone your graduation. The Graduate School website provides thesis/dissertation templates and instructions for formatting your thesis/dissertation. Additionally, follow the Graduate School's "Steps to Completion": <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/internalportal/steps-completion.php>
- You are strongly urged to embargo your dissertation or thesis for the maximal allowance of time. This is for a number of reasons, and it's especially important for creative writers, who may be precluded from publishing the work elsewhere if the thesis or dissertation is not embargoed.
- Please note that the dissertation and thesis proposal forms (<https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-school-attachments/approval-form-06-05-2020.pdf>) are only required for literature students, not creative writing students. Creative writing students do not need to submit a proposal form.
- Prior to your graduation, the Graduate School Degree Auditor, Sue Fayard, will email you a list of everything you still need to do to graduate on time. Pay close attention to this email!
- For further questions, literature students can contact Josh Bernstein and creative writing students can contact Adam Clay.

Transfer Credit: If you previously took relevant graduate coursework that did *not* lead to a degree, you can potentially transfer 6 hours into your current degree program. Transfer credit is not guaranteed and must always be cleared by the Graduate Program Coordinator. Additionally, applying transfer credit would affect your time-to-degree clock; your new "starting date" in the program would be the date you took the courses you want to transfer. It might not be worthwhile, therefore, to transfer old credits.

PROFESSIONALIZATION

The English Graduate Organization (EGO): a resource for graduate students in English, offering opportunities for professional development, academic and community service, financial support, networking, and advice on how to thrive in graduate school. Email the co-presidents, Kayla Schreiber (kayla.schreiber@usm.edu) and Jana Ishee (jana.ishee@usm.edu), to get involved.

C4W: an organization for creative writing students that supports publishing, hosts readings, and provides other professional resources. Email the co-presidents, Corinne Dekkers (corinne.dekkers@usm.edu) and Jordan James (jordan.james@usm.edu) to get involved.

Job Placement: The English program offers informational sessions, workshops, and guidance to help you prepare for and succeed on the job market. This year's job placement coordinators will be in touch through the listserv with a schedule for fall and spring meetings. It is crucial that you begin the process of professionalization from the moment you begin your graduate study. That means participating actively in professionalization events at an early stage (more so as you continue) and working with the placement coordinators and other faculty to help plan and manage your career goals. For example, if you get an "A" on a research paper in a graduate seminar or workshop, you should speak with the professor about the possibility of readying the paper for publication, finding suitable venues, and submitting it according to a defined timeframe. Our professionalization program also stresses non-academic career options and will work with you to help you plan and manage your goals. You should also stay apprised of professional opportunities, some of which are made available at the Academic Jobs Wiki (https://academicjobs.wikia.org/wiki/Academic_Jobs_Wiki), and submission and conference opportunities (for literary studies, see the *Penn Call for Papers Website*: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/>; for creative writing, see websites like *NewPages*: <https://www.newpages.com/> and *Entropy Magazine*: <https://entropymag.org/category/where-to-submit/>)

Faculty Relations: If you are a literature student, you will normally ask a professor to chair your graduate committee. You may also speak with the Director of Graduate Studies, Josh Bernstein, for help in finding a chairperson. If you are a creative writing student, you will normally be assigned a committee chair, though you may also consult with the Director of the Center for Writers, Adam Clay, or with individual faculty. For both literature and creative writing students, you will consult with your committee chair to determine additional committee members. Face-to-face or video contact with faculty is the best way to approach professors if you would like to ask them to serve on committees, write letters of recommendation, or advise you in any other way. Faculty's time and energy should not be taken for granted. You should be respectful in the manner and scope of your requests to any professor from whom you seek support. Visit during office hours when possible and email to arrange an appointment otherwise. Please also remember that if a faculty member takes the time to give you feedback on writing or other materials, you are expected to address that feedback, especially mechanical corrections, in subsequent versions or drafts. Remember that these are the individuals who will one day be writing your recommendation letters, so the responsiveness and respect shown towards them will have a positive impact on your future success.

During your coursework, try to keep in mind your future committees, who you might want to work with, and what kind of dissertation or thesis you hope to write. While our faculty reflects a broad range of academic interests, there may only be one or two people who specialize in the area you hope to focus on; thus, it is best to begin early to foster relations with faculty by taking their classes.

Electronic Presence: Keep your web presence professional and appropriate. Failure to do so could negatively affect your career. Finally, be aware of how you communicate with both faculty and your own students via email and learning management systems (LMS),

such as Canvas. Your emails and LMS communications may be shared with others, particularly if you are an instructor and a student raises concerns about his/her grade in your class.

IF YOU'RE ON ASSISTANTSHIP

Terms and Conditions: When you signed your contract, you agreed to a list of terms and conditions that, among other things, stipulated that to maintain your assistantship and stipend you must maintain a 3.0 GPA, perform your assigned duties professionally and responsibly, and be enrolled in at least 9 hours in the fall and 9 in the spring. I encourage you to review the whole list.

Assistantship Renewal: Renewal of assistantships is not automatic. Renewal is contingent on your satisfactory performance: making satisfactory progress in your coursework and degree, performing your assistantship duties well, receiving positive evaluations, and consistently acting professionally. We expect that you will attend all classes in which you are enrolled, teach all classes that you are assigned and/or perform the tasks assigned to you as a grader, research assistant, office worker, or tutor in the Writing Center, and adhere to USM's standards of conduct. If you have any questions about the specific expectations of your position, it is your responsibility to clarify your job description and respond accordingly. Indeed, we expect you to conduct yourself professionally and in accordance with university policies in all your interactions with colleagues, students, faculty, and staff.

Every spring, all graduate assistants will be asked to submit a current CV, as well as a one-page narrative that reflects upon their academic and professional progress and goals since the previous year. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of the Center for Writers will review these materials to confirm the renewal of your assistantship. If you submit these materials and conduct yourself satisfactorily, then your assistantship can be renewed the number of times indicated in your original offer letter.

Assistantship Assignments: While we do our best to provide students with a variety of professional experiences and to accommodate preferences for time and type of work, it is impossible to give everyone what they want when they want it. This is a large program that must serve many students, and GA assignments are made at the discretion of the School of Humanities Director.

Summer: If you are planning to take a summer course and want to apply for a summer tuition waiver, be on the lookout for emails from Jaide or Josh on this topic in the spring.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS (Please note that the policies in this section are all subject to change depending on the current health situation)

Office Assignments: Most TA offices are located in LAB 344 and LAB 336. If you requested one this term, you have likely been assigned a room and desk—your assigned space will not be changed. Let Jaide Hollingsworth know if you can't find your desk.

You and another TA may share a desk; if so, it's a good idea for the two of you to get in touch about schedules and office hours so that the desk isn't needed by both of you at the same time. Some people personalize their space; just be respectful of your desk-mate. Please remember this is a public space, so keep it clean and clutter-free. Be aware that there is no security to protect your belongings so avoid leaving valuables at your desk. Finally, remember to maintain a standard of professional behavior and respect for your peers and their students when sharing office space. While casual conversations and a relaxed environment are certainly acceptable in the graduate offices, it is important that you not interfere (directly or indirectly) with the instructional meetings that take place between teachers and students.

During the fall 2020 semester, these office spaces will be available to you, although you will conduct office hours with students online. If you are not alone in the office space, you should practice social distancing and wear a mask.

Classroom Security: Given the expensive multi-media equipment in the Liberal Arts Building, the Dean's office requires us to turn out lights and lock doors of classrooms after teaching (LAB classrooms usually include a schedule indicating which class is the last one of the day). The lights in the GA offices should also be switched off when no one is using them. Doors in classrooms now lock on the inside as well as the outside.

SCANNING AND OFFICE SUPPORT

You may request office staff to scan the documents and provide you with a PDF file for electronic distribution, posting on Canvas, or library e-reserve. You will need to come to campus to make these requests by placing the material in the copy room for staff to access, scan, and send back to you. Please allow at least 24 hours for requests to be completed. If you will not be in Hattiesburg in fall 2020, you will be responsible for scanning documents you wish to share with your students electronically.

SELECT INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Sexual Misconduct Policy: The University of Southern Mississippi prohibits sexual misconduct in any form, including sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and intimate partner violence. This policy describes prohibited sexual conduct, establishes procedures for responding to reports of sexual misconduct, and provides information on the resources available to the campus community. Read the full policy here: <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-pres-aa-001>.

Rebecca Woodrick Malley is USM's Title IX Coordinator. You can contact her by phone (601.266.4466) or email (rebecca.malley@usm.edu).

If you are subject to or witness sexual misconduct, you can report it to English program faculty; however, we are mandatory reporters. We are required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on USM's campus with certain University officials responsible for the investigation and

remediation of sexual misconduct. The information will remain private and will only be shared with those officials necessary to resolve the matter. If you would like to speak in confidence, resources available to students include Confidential Advisors with the Shafer Center for Crisis Intervention, the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, and Clergy. More information on these resources and University Policies is available at <https://www.usm.edu/sexual-misconduct>.

Consensual Relationships Policy: There are special problems in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals where one party possesses direct academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority over the other party. Such positions include, but are not limited to, teacher and student or assistant, supervisor and employee, senior faculty and junior faculty, mentor and trainee, advisor and advisee, counselor and client, teaching assistant and student, coach and athlete, and the individuals who supervise the day-to-day student living environment and student residents. A unique problem occurs when a consensual relationship takes place between a teacher and the student is enrolled in one of the teacher's courses, or when the student is likely to be enrolled in such a course in the future. Such relationships are of significant concern to The University because of the ethical and administrative problems they can pose. Because of the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, harassment and bias, such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation provided, and the trust inherent particularly in the teacher-student context. There are special problems in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals where one party possesses direct academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority over the other party. Such positions include, but are not limited to, teacher and student or assistant, supervisor and employee, senior faculty and junior faculty, mentor and trainee, advisor and advisee, counselor and client, teaching assistant and student, coach and athlete, and the individuals who supervise the day-to-day student living environment and student residents. A unique problem occurs when a consensual relationship takes place between a teacher and a student and the student is enrolled in one of the teacher's courses, or when the student is likely to be enrolled in such a course in the future. Such relationships are of significant concern to the university because of the ethical and administrative problems they can pose. Because of the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, harassment and bias, such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation provided, and the trust inherent particularly in the teacher-student context. Read the full policy here: <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-pres-aa-007>.

Click here to see a list of all policies: <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/current-policies>

ACADEMIC HONESTY (from the Graduate Bulletin)

Academic Integrity Policy: All students at the University of Southern Mississippi are expected to demonstrate the highest levels of academic integrity in all that they do as stated in the university's Academic Integrity Honor Code:

As a member of the Southern Miss community, I will act with honor and integrity at all times. I will not engage in any act of academic misconduct, and I understand that such acts violate the Academic Integrity Policy and Student Honor Code and undermine the community of trust so important to the integrity of the University.

Forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

- Cheating (to include copying from others' work)
- *Plagiarizing, which includes representing another person's words or ideas as your own and failure to properly cite the source of your information, argument, or concepts
- Falsifying documents
- Fabricating data
- Disclosing test or other assignment content to another student
- Submitting the same paper or other assignment to more than one class without the explicit approval of all faculty members
- Collaborating with others on work without authorization

Plagiarism: One of the most common acts of academic misconduct is plagiarism. The following description may aid students in understanding what constitutes plagiarism.

- Plagiarism is scholarly theft, and it is defined as the unacknowledged use of secondary sources. More specifically, any written or oral presentation in which the writer or speaker does not distinguish clearly between original or borrowed material constitutes plagiarism.
- Students, as scholars, must make frequent use of concepts and facts developed by other scholars. Plagiarism occurs when students present the work of other scholars as if it were their own work. Students may refer in their own words to generally known and widely accepted ideas or theories without fear of plagiarism as long as they do not copy the plan or organization scheme used by another scholar.
- Plagiarism is committed in a number of ways including the following: (1) reproducing another author's writing as if it were one's own; (2) paraphrasing another author's work without citing the original; (3) borrowing from another author's ideas, even though those ideas are reworded, without giving credit; and (4) copying another author's organization without giving credit.
- Plagiarism is avoided when appropriate citations are used giving credit to the original source in the following instances: (1) when quoting directly from someone else's writing (a direct quotation must always be enclosed in quotation marks); (2) when paraphrasing someone else's writing (to paraphrase means to restate a passage from someone else's writing in one's own words); or (3) when following the outline or structure of another author's argument, explanation, or theory, even though the material is summarized in one's own words.
- When in doubt about how widely known ideas are, a student should observe these steps: (1) ask his/her instructor; (2) provide credit to the original source.

Consequences: Academic dishonesty of any kind is a serious offense. An act of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, may lead to a failing grade on the assignment and in the course, as well as dismissal from the graduate program. The English program also prohibits dual submission: you can't submit a paper for one course that is the same as or

significantly similar to a paper submitted for another course. The only exception to this rule is if both professors involved explicitly give you permission to revise and reuse an essay written for another class.

For more information on USM's academic integrity policy, visit:

<https://www.usm.edu/provost/internalportal/academic-integrity-policy-reporting.php>

English-Specific Matters: To ensure your growth in the graduate program, you are expected to produce new and original writing for each course, unless a course professor tells you otherwise. This means you should not submit writing (creative or critical) that has been produced for another class, either at USM or elsewhere. In the case of creative writing workshops, this means that you should not submit material that has been previously workshopped at any stage in a for-credit class. If you have questions about this policy or wish to seek an exception, ask your professor in advance.

Note for instructors: The best bet, especially for grad student instructors, is to immediately reach out if you suspect academic misconduct among one of your students. A facilitator is necessary if you're giving the student a grade of XF or if your initial conversation with the student does not have a clean resolution.

NUTS AND BOLTS REMINDERS

Class Registration: If you are on assistantship, you need to be registered for at least 9 hours of coursework to receive your tuition waiver and stipend. You cannot fall below 9 hours during the whole semester. I encourage you to check your semester schedule (as well as course dates/times/locations) before the semester starts. If you're registered in thesis (ENG 698) or dissertation (ENG 898) hours, make sure those hours are in your thesis/dissertation chair's section. Please note that graduate creative writing workshops are limited to graduate students in creative writing studying the pertinent area. If you have any questions about this policy or are a creative writing student seeking to enroll in a workshop outside your main area (e.g., if you're a fiction writer looking to take a workshop in poetry), you must consult with and receive permission from the Director of the Center for Writers, Adam Clay, prior to enrollment. Out-of-genre study is occasionally permitted for advanced-stage creative writing students, depending on availability.

Parking: If you park on university property, you need a parking permit. You may purchase one here: <https://www.usm.edu/parking-transit-services/index.php/online-parking-permit-registration>. You can purchase a semester or full-year permit. Please remember that we are online for the fall of 2020, that future plans are still evolving and subject to change, and that parking permits are not normally refundable.

Health Insurance Waiver: Since USM requires that all graduate assistants have a qualified healthcare plan, you must enroll in the offered USM plan or provide evidence of comparable coverage and submit a Waiver Form. If you submitted a waiver last year and want to waive coverage again, you must submit another waiver this year. As a USM GA,

you are *automatically* enrolled in the policy with Wellfleet. If you want to keep your insurance, you do not need to enroll yourself. You *do* need to create an account, but it should not charge you anything up front. To create an account:

1. Go to <https://go.gallagherstudent.com/Universities/Mississippi%20Institutions%20of%20Higher%20Learning/Home> and click the enroll button.
2. Click on the USM Logo.
3. On the top right, there are three bars. Click the drop-down menu and select “My Account” to create a new account.
4. You will be prompted to enter your last, student ID number (type just the number without the “w”), and your date of birth. Your last name has to be in all caps or it won’t be recognized as correct.
5. After filling out a few more pieces of information, it will take you to your account page where you will see that you’ve already been enrolled.

You may not have access to your ID card until Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020, when the policy goes into effect. If you had GA health insurance last year, the monthly premium will remain at \$129. The monthly cost will be \$167 for new GAs and those new to the plan.

For those waiving the policy,

visit <https://go.gallagherstudent.com/Universities/Mississippi%20Institutions%20of%20Higher%20Learning/Home> and click on Enroll or Waive. You will also have to create an account with Wellfleet to complete the process. **The deadline to waive the policy is September 11, 2020.** Wellfleet’s customer service can be reached at 1-877-657-5030 if you have any issues with the site.

Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program (also known as CITI): All graduate students and faculty are required to complete training in how to research responsibly. You **MUST** complete this online training before you graduate, but it is best to do it as soon as possible. Once you have completed the program you must send a copy of your completion log to the Graduate School Degree Auditor, Michael Howell (michael.howell@usm.edu). Read the instructions here: <https://www.usm.edu/research-integrity/citi-training-requirements.php>

Hiring Forms: Please see Jaide Hollingsworth if you haven’t submitted the HR hiring packet that she emailed new students over the summer.

ID Card: Your student ID card can be obtained at the Copy Services, Thad Cochran Center, ground floor: <https://www.usm.edu/image-center/student-id-card.php>

Payroll: **Your first paycheck will be disbursed on the last working day of September.**

We know this can pose financial challenges; please plan accordingly, and please see the Director of Graduate Studies, Josh Bernstein, if you find yourself in unusual difficulty. On the bright side, you might also remember that your final paycheck will come in the spring after what will seem like a period of relative inactivity. You must submit a voided check to HR to sign up for direct deposit of your paycheck into your bank account (though your first check will always be a paper check). Payroll disperses your stipends

monthly from September through May. Official policy is that paychecks are disbursed on the last business day of the month.

Tuition Waivers: For those of you on assistantship, your tuition waivers will be posted to SOAR by the tenth day of classes in the fall and spring semesters. So, if SOAR is currently showing that you have a tuition balance, wait until the tenth day of classes; if SOAR is still posting a tuition balance after that date, contact Jaide Hollingsworth.

Time Management: Always remember that your priority as a graduate student must be your academic or creative work. Although it can be tempting to devote undue amounts of time to teaching assistantship tasks, serving on committees, or engaging in other (often fruitful) activities, and although these roles often make you a better student, your primary responsibility must be to your own academic and/or creative work. That is the main reason you are enrolled in this program, and it is vital for furthering your career. Please do not lose sight of this imperative. In the event you are finding yourself overwhelmed by your assistantship duties or other obligations, please come talk to Josh Bernstein, the Director of Graduate Studies, so that we can help you achieve the right balance.

Proactiveness and Professionalism: Remember that your opportunities after graduate study will depend heavily on how you make use of your time as a graduate student. While it is crucial that you take breaks and remain committed to your own mental health and wellbeing, it is also crucial that you devote the required time to your learning and growth. Being a graduate student, as you may already know, requires a tremendous amount of responsibility and self-initiative. Those who succeed in graduate school tend to be those who cultivate a strong work ethic and dedicate themselves to improving, receiving feedback critically and positively, and responding well to suggestions. Most graduate students confront innumerable crises during graduate study, some of them avoidable, some of them not. The best advice we can give you is to stay positive and communicative, work hard, remain professional, and try your best to improve. If you follow this course of action from the start, the odds are very good that you will succeed in our graduate program and in the years ahead. Please also don't hesitate to get in touch with your mentors and advisors if you have any questions or concerns.