

English at Brooklyn College

The English major at Brooklyn College is broad, diverse, and intellectually challenging. English majors may choose a specialization from several fields of study: the **bachelor of arts in comparative literature, journalism, linguistics, or English literature**; the **bachelor of arts for English teacher**, grades 7–12 (offered in cooperation with the School of Education); and the **bachelor of fine arts in creative writing**. A **concentration in English** is offered for students majoring in early childhood education or childhood education in the School of Education. The average class size is twenty to thirty students.

The English curriculum requires a close reading of texts and includes courses in the literary history and culture of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century, the modern and postmodern periods, and American literature and culture. Electives are given in such areas as children's literature, tragedy and comedy, the literature of fantasy, teaching writing, women and literature, literary theory and criticism, and postcolonial literature and criticism. The department offers courses in Caribbean, Latin American, and African literature. Special seminars focus on the writings of a single author.

Career opportunities for graduates

A major in English is a springboard to opportunities in a broad range of professional fields—wherever good critical thinking and writing skills are needed. Graduates have pursued careers in high school or elementary school education, journalism, publishing, public relations, business, and government. Students frequently continue their studies in graduate school to prepare for a career in college teaching. Recent graduates have received fellowships to pursue advanced degrees at prestigious universities throughout the United States. Other alumni enter law school or medical school.

Course requirements

Each degree program (except linguistics) requires a two-semester Overview of Literary Study, which includes selections of world literature from the Middle Ages to the postmodern period (6 credits, which are included in the degree program credits shown below). Additional program requirements are as follows.

English literature (39 credits) One course from five of seven fields, encompassing literary periods from the Middle Ages to the present; two additional courses from one of the five fields; electives.

English teacher In addition to the major requirements, students take a sequence of courses in the School of Education.

Comparative literature (33 credits) Three courses in literary periods; three courses in genres; two advanced literature courses in a classical or modern language; a course in Asian, African, Middle Eastern, or Latin American literature.

Journalism (42–45 credits) Eight or nine courses in journalism; four electives in other subject areas.

Linguistics (27–49 credits) Interdisciplinary study, with courses in linguistics, anthropology, English, speech, mathematics, philosophy, sociology, and other areas.

Creative writing (42 credits) Five courses in creative writing, including a sequence in fiction, poetry, or playwriting; one course from four of seven fields, encompassing literary periods from the Middle Ages to the present; three advanced electives in English.

English

Course requirements (continued)

Majors seeking to graduate with departmental honors take a junior-year writing-intensive seminar that builds on the student's knowledge in a general field—for example, literature of the Middle Ages—by focusing in depth on a particular subject like Arthurian legend. In the senior year, the student works with an adviser on a two-term thesis project.

Minors

A minor in English requires 12 credits of advanced electives. Any electives may be chosen, but students may wish to concentrate in a particular area, such as genre study, literature and culture, period courses, or writing. Minors are also available in comparative literature, journalism, and linguistics.

Special events and resources

Twice each year, the English Majors Club sponsors Open Mike poetry readings. Publications include the biannual *Zine*, a magazine of student writings of all kinds, and *riverrun*, a magazine of student literary writings. A new venture is an undergraduate conference, at which English and comparative literature majors present their work to fellow students.

Research and internship opportunities

Advanced students may take independent study courses to pursue individual interests. Through an internship program, students may gain work experience in publishing, public relations, human services, alternative teaching, journalism, and Web site publishing. Students may receive up to 6 credits for internship experience.

The faculty and their specializations

The English Department faculty, numbering more than fifty, includes literary scholars, novelists, poets, playwrights, and journalists. Faculty members are engaged in many professional projects. Among notable recent achievements are the following: *Cat's-Paw* by Obie (Off-Broadway) award-winning playwright Mac Wellman was staged at SoHo Rep. Moustafa Bayoumi, who teaches postcolonial literature and critical theory, has published *The Edward Said Reader* (Vintage Books, 2000). Roni Natov is the author of *The Poetics of Childhood* (Routledge, 2003).

For additional information, please contact the Department of English, 2308 Boylan Hall, (718) 951-5195, www.brooklyn.cuny.edu.

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