Emory’s doctoral program in English offers an environment that is both intellectually rigorous and collegial, a place where graduate students become researchers and teachers in their own right by learning from faculty who are reshaping their fields.

Intellectual Community
Our thriving intellectual community supports rigorous work in fields across English and in conversation with other areas and disciplines.

With approximately 30 faculty members, we are large enough to support a full range of interests in literary and cultural studies, and small enough that our students enjoy ample access to faculty. We accept 7 – 9 new doctoral students each year. In our program, students work closely with faculty members to craft programs of study that reflect their own individual interests. We encourage you to visit the faculty section of our website, http://english.emory.edu/people/faculty/index.html, where you will find information about all of our faculty members, including research and teaching interests as well as publications.

We strongly support innovative work that crosses disciplinary boundaries. Our graduate students frequently enroll in courses in other programs such as Comparative Literature, Film and Media Studies, History, Psychoanalytic Studies, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and Bioethics. Several of these programs offer organized sequences of courses that lead to a graduate certificate in the field.

We offer our students opportunities for intellectual and professional development that go far beyond traditional literary and cultural studies. Our pedagogy program includes both formal coursework and individual faculty mentoring to train students carefully as they begin their teaching careers. We offer innovative opportunities for digital scholarship and pedagogy. Students attend workshops on professional matters throughout their careers and receive extensive support during their search for academic employment. Moreover, all students are
guaranteed significant funding to present research at conferences and finance summer research at archives.

Our size allows students to take an active role in the graduate student community, especially through the Graduate English Advisory Committee (GEAC). GEAC runs the Department Colloquium, in which students present their research to one another and to faculty. In the student-run Works in Progress series, students respond to faculty research presentations, and faculty attend student talks. GEAC also oversees the Brown Bag Lunch Series, in which guest speakers discuss professional matters with graduate students. In the annual Graduate Student Colloquium, three students invited by GEAC present their work to prospective graduate students. GEAC members also develop peer-mentoring initiatives in coursework and teaching, sponsor conferences and lectures, and plan social events.

Emory hosts a wide range of speakers from-disciplinary import. The English graduate students run the Kemp Malone lecture series, which has featured luminaries and emerging scholars such as Bruce Robbins, Stephen Greenblatt, Siân E. Ngai, and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. Other recent speakers at Emory include Michael Hardt and Amy Kaplan (both keynote speakers at a conference organized by English graduate students), Lauren Berlant, Gerald Graff, and John Carlo Rowe. The English Department also hosts the Richard Ellmann lecture series, which brings to Emory major figures in world literature for a series of lectures and other public events. Seamus Heaney, Wole Soyinka, Helen Vendler, David Lodge, Mario Vargas Llosa, Margaret Atwood, and Paul Simon (yes, that Paul Simon) are among past Ellmann lecturers. Sir Salman Rushdie, who delivered the lectures in 2004, subsequently served as University Distinguished Professor. He donated his archive to Emory’s Manuscripts and Rare Books Library, where it continues to draw scholars interested in probing one of the richest and most intimate records of contemporary literature’s fraught engagement with global politics.

Strengths

Our doctoral program offers training in all traditional fields of literary study, as well as in as well as in rhetoric and composition, cultural studies, and other theoretical and interdisciplinary approaches that cross national and chronological boundaries. Our students benefit from faculty strengths in a variety of areas, including modern poetry and poetics, post-colonial literature and theory, African American literature, nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature and cultural studies, early modern studies, disability studies, and studies in literature, science, medicine, and the mind. Many of these fields are supported by extensive collections in the Woodruff Library’s Manuscripts and Rare Books Library. We also offer sustained training in the pedagogy of composition and literature. And we have piloted Domain of One’s Own, an innovative program linking the teaching of writing to new digital media environments.

Modern Poetry and Poetics

Emory University is a world center for the study of poetry and poetics. The Woodruff Library’s Danowski Collection of Twentieth-Century Poetry is believed to be the world’s largest ever assembled by a private collector, with some 60,000 books and tens of thousands of periodicals, broadsides, and ephemera. Furthermore, Woodruff’s manuscript collections feature an impressive archive of American, English, and Irish poets, including the papers of Seamus Heaney, Anthony Hecht, Ted Hughes, and Paul Muldoon. The University’s commitment complements the work of our faculty in a variety of fields, including Walter Kalaidjian’s expertise in transnational modern and contemporary literature, Geraldine Higgins’s expertise in twentieth-century Irish literature, and Mark Sanders’s critical and archival work on twentieth-century African diasporic poetry and aesthetics, and Nathan Suhr-Sytsma’s work on post-colonial African and Irish poetry. Our acclaimed scholar of post-colonial literatures, Deepika Bahri, has also published extensively on twentieth-century aesthetic theory. Additionally, three celebrated poets on our faculty—U.S. Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey, Kevin Young, and Jericho Brown—work with graduate students who combine critical studies of poetry with their creative work as poets. Young also serves as curator of the Danowski Collection, in which capacity he helps to train our graduate students in archival research. The graduate program in English enjoys a productive relationship with the Creative Writing Program, and several of our students are affiliated with top-ranked MFA programs.

Post-Colonial Literature and Theory

With the recent arrivals of Nathan Suhr-Sytsma, Emory’s Graduate Program in English has become a major research center for world Anglophone literature and post-colonial studies. Deepika Bahri investigates hybridity, aesthetics, and representations of affect in postcolonial literature and culture. In addition, she maintains the Post-Colonial Studies website: http://postcolonialstudies.emory.edu. Suhr-Sytsma takes a trans-national approach to poetry, comparing the literatures and cultures of Ireland and Nigeria. Mark Sanders’ work on Cuban poetry and Lawrence Jackson’s explorations of African diasporic intellectual networks round out a deep team of scholars in this area. Recently, the English Department has launched the “Postcolonial and Minority Discourses” initiative, which includes many scholars from various humanities and social science departments at Emory. This program organizes three of four colloquia per semester, featuring the work of graduate students, Emory faculty, and eminent scholars working in postcolonial and American ethnic studies.

African American Literature and Culture

Our faculty includes Lawrence Jackson, whose recent books The Indignant Generation and My Father’s Name have won numerous awards. Jackson is known for his studies of Ralph Ellison and his original perspective on twentieth-century African American literature in a global context. Mark Sanders conducts path-breaking studies linking twentieth-century African American and Afro-Cuban literature. Valérie Loichot explores connections between Afro-Caribbean literature and literatures of the American South; and Barbara Ladd and Benjamin Reiss’s work makes connections between African American and other strands of American literary culture. Our students regularly take courses in the department of African American Studies, which includes such distinguished scholars as Leslie Harris and Nathan McCull. The African American literary collections at Emory include the archives of James Weldon Johnson and Alice Walker, as well as significant collections related to Langston Hughes and the papers of Georgia-born novelist John Oliver Killens. The Camille Billops and James V. Hatch collection of African American performing arts includes hundreds of playscripts by authors including Amiri Baraka, Zora Neale Hurston, and August Wilson.

Disability Studies

Emory English is a national leader in disability studies, a program of study that explores how societies draw lines between “normal” and “abnormal” minds and bodies, and the consequences of those distinctions. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, a pioneer and world-renowned authority in the field, joined the department in 2014. She and Benjamin Reiss are co-directors of the Emory Disability Studies Initiative (www.disabilitystudies.emory.edu), which offers a wide range of intellectual and cultural programming, much of it run by Emory graduate students. Paul Kelleher, a specialist in eighteenth-century British literature, is also
an active member of this program, Sari Altshuler, who studies connections among literature, medicine and disability in the early American republic joins the faculty this year. Additionally, students have many opportunities to work with Emory scholars of disability in other departments, including University Professor Sander Gilman.

American Literature and Cultural Studies
Our deep faculty strength in American literary and cultural studies includes clusters of faculty working on Southern literature, Native American Studies, popular culture, technology, history of medicine, and disability studies. Michael Elliott, Benjamin Reiss, Sari Altshuler, Catherine Nickerson, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson pursue cultural studies of the nineteenth century. Craig Womack and Michael Elliott have done innovative work on Native American studies. Barbara Ladd’s research expands the traditional notion of Southern literature, making links to African American, Caribbean, and Latin American literature. Similarly, Valérie Loichot’s study of literature of the Americas includes investigations of Faulkner, Caribbean literature and culture, creolization theory, transatlantic studies, feminism and exile, and Southern food. Craig Womack also situates Native cultures within a broader regional frame. John Johnston and Walter Kalaidjian explore contemporary literary formations, including the impacts of media theory, psychoanalysis, and trauma theory. Associated Americanist literature scholars in other departments across Emory regularly mentor our students: these include the renowned scholar of nineteenth-century literature and sexuality, Michael Moon, in the department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and Allen Tullos - an American Studies scholar who is the editor of the journal Southern Spaces.

Early Modern Studies
Our outstanding faculty members in Early Modern Literature offer guidance to students in a wide range of innovative projects. Jonathan Goldberg, whose work on queer theory has transformed the field, has contributed to a distinguished group including Patricia Cahill, Sheila Cavanagh, and Harry Rusche. Cahill’s studies of early modern drama have opened a new perspective on performance. Cavanagh’s World Shakespeare Project uses digital technology to share and discuss Shakespearean performances in England, Africa, and North America: http://www.worldshakespeareproject.org/. Rusche’s website, Shakespeare Illustrated, makes Shakespearean plays and studies available to scholars worldwide: http://shakespeare.emory.edu. Joining the department this year, Ross Knecht is a scholar whose research addresses the history of pedagogy, the history of the emotions, and early modern literature.

Literature, Science, Medicine, and the Mind
Several of our faculty members explore the ways that literature addresses questions pursued by scientists, medical researchers, and psychologists. Laura Otis, a MacArthur grant awardee who has a background in neuroscience, compares the ways that literary and scientific writers develop ideas. With Emory neurologist Krish Sathian, Otis taught “Images, Metaphors, and the Brain” and organized the symposium “Metaphors and the Mind,” in which Salman Rushdie and other Emory authors exchanged ideas with neuroscientists. Walter Kalaidjian investigates the dialogic relations between the languages of psychoanalysis and modern literature in clinical discourse and literary representations. John Johnston examines the ways that twentieth-century American fiction intersects with media theory and studies of artificial intelligence. Benjamin Reiss studies representations of mental illness and disability in nineteenth-century American literature and culture. He is currently writing a cultural history of human sleep, which was inspired by a course he co-taught with an Emory neurologist. Johnston, Otis, and Reiss are affiliated with Emory’s Center for Mind, Brain, and Culture, where renowned scientists and humanities scholars engage in dialogue. Emory’s graduate program in English enjoys close connections with the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department, whose faculty includes the leading feminist science studies scholars Deboleena Roy and Elizabeth Wilson.

Curriculum
Coursework
Students normally take a full load of courses during their first and second years, and some additional courses during their third year. (Students who have completed a Master’s degree elsewhere usually complete their coursework in less than two years.) All students enroll in a core course on theories, methods, and histories of the discipline in their first year, and then complete modest distribution requirements. Students are encouraged to enroll in related courses offered in other departments.

Ph.D. Exam
During the third year, students prepare for a Ph.D. examination with both written and oral components. The exam covers three areas of study designated by the students and covers primary and secondary works selected by the student and his or her advisory committee. The examination is designed to demonstrate the student’s mastery over the chosen fields of study and to prepare him or her for the dissertation that follows.

Dissertation
The capstone of the Ph.D. curriculum is the writing of the dissertation, which the student undertakes under the guidance of an advisor and at least two other committee members. Students also receive support for this process by participating in a dissertation colloquium, and they are eligible to apply for funds for archival research elsewhere. Numerous recent alumni have transformed their dissertations into scholarly books, including two this past year that were published with Cambridge University Press.

Training in Teaching
All Emory doctoral students receive training in pedagogy through the following programs:

- English 790: Composition Theory, and English 791: Composition Pedagogy, offered in the spring of their first year and the fall of their second year, respectively
- A summer workshop, run by the Laney Graduate School, held in August before the second year of graduate study
- Service in their second year as teaching assistant in major lecture courses, in which they run their own discussion sections
- Required workshops on the teaching of writing, taken during their third year while students teach undergraduate writing courses of their own design
- Individual faculty teaching mentorships, starting in the third year and continuing through the student’s teaching career at Emory
- A Pro-Seminar in the Teaching of Literature, usually taken in the fourth year of graduate study
- Teaching a literature or writing course of their own design in their fifth year of study

As they progress through this training sequence, students are assigned as teaching assistants or teaching associates and then teach their own courses in the third and fifth years of the program.

Administrative Faculty
WALTER KALAIDJIAN
Professor and Chair of the English Department

Catherine Ross Nickerson works mainly in crime fiction studies, specializing in the work of American women writers. She is the author of The Web of Iniquity, Early Detective Fiction by American Women (Duke University Press, 1999). She is editor of Metta Fuller Victor's The Dead Letter (1866) and The Figure Eight (1869) (reprinted as a single volume) and Anna Katharine Green’s That Affair Next Door (1897) and Lost Man’s Lane (1898) (reprinted as a single volume), both from Duke University Press (2003). She also served as editorial advisor for the Emory Women’s Writer’s Project on Transatlantic Genre Fiction, a project in digitizing Emory’s collection of American and British popular novels that was funded by a grant from the NEH (2001 – 2004). Most recently, she edited The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction, (2010). She teaches a variety of courses in popular culture and American Studies, including crime fiction studies, the gothic novel, children’s literature, the history of childhood, Asian American literature, and crime-genre television. Her fundamental interests are in narrative structure and storytelling. She has been at Emory since 1992, as member of the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts and of the English Department.

Students
The program typically has about 50 students in residence. Their interests range broadly across English and related fields.

See a complete list of recent dissertations at www.english.emory.edu/graduate/placement_alumni/alumni.html.

All graduate students admitted to the English doctoral program are funded for five years, either through departmental fellowships or one of the Graduate School Fellowships (Diversity Fellowships, Woodruff Fellowships, and Arts and Sciences Fellowships). All fellowships carry tuition remission and a partial health care subsidy. Students who remain longer than five years are eligible for a number of Emory fellowships, and the Graduate School offers a Grant Writing Program that supports students’ efforts to apply for external funding.

Placement
We are committed to helping our students secure the best positions available in their fields. More than half of our students who conduct national searches find tenure-track placements in college and universities, and many others develop rewarding careers in higher-ed administration, research libraries, writing centers, business, and the arts. Each year, two faculty members serve as job placement officers, and one faculty member coordinates an “alternative academic” career search workshop. These faculty members guide students seeking professional success by holding workshops, reviewing materials, and staging mock interviews.

Our efforts—and the quality of our program—are reflected in our students’ success in academic and professional employment. Recent graduates are now teaching at Harvard University, Georgia Tech, the University of Alabama, Drexel University, Bryn Mawr College, Davidson College, Williamette University, and San Francisco State University. Additionally, our graduates have found exceptional opportunities in libraries and archives, college and university administration, publishing, and digital technology.

Contact Information
For more information, please visit our website (www.english.emory.edu), where you can find detailed information about the graduate program, the requirements for the doctoral degree, and the application process. You may also contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, Melanie Tipnis (mtipnis@emory.edu) for answers to specific questions.