

University of Saskatchewan  
Department of English  
Ph.D. Field Examination

Ph.D. candidates take this examination to establish that they have sufficient understanding to do advanced research and teaching in a specific field.

Field examinations are conducted twice yearly: in October and May. At least four months before examination, students must inform the Graduate Chair in writing of their intention to sit the examination.

Ph.D. students are to take this examination in May of the second year of the program or October of the third. The examination will be set and marked by three faculty specialists in the area that has been chosen by the candidate.

The following lists comprise the areas in which the Department of English has set readings for Ph.D. candidates: American, Commonwealth/Postcolonial, English-Canadian, Literary Theory, Cultural Studies, Literature by Women, Medieval, Modern British, Nineteenth-Century British, Renaissance, and Restoration/Eighteenth Century. Each candidate is either to select one of the areas listed here or to propose an examination in an area for which a list is not already set. The set lists themselves are not exhaustive; each is to be taken as two-thirds of the reading to be undertaken for the examination, the final third to be drafted by the candidate in consultation with the supervisor. At least three months before examination, this list will be submitted to the candidate's Examining Committee for approval.

A candidate may choose to be examined in an area for which there is no list. Should this option be chosen, the candidate (in consultation with the supervisor) will propose an area to the Graduate Committee at least six months before the examination is to be taken. If the Graduate Committee accepts the proposal and if three faculty members are willing to serve as examiners, the candidate (in consultation with the supervisor) will prepare a reading list comparable in dimensions to those in areas for which set lists exist. At least three months before the examination is to be taken, this reading list is to be submitted to the Examining Committee for approval.

The candidate may write the examination either on one day (9:00–12:00, 1:30–5:00) or in two three-hour blocks on successive days. No less than a week and no more than two weeks after writing this examination, the candidate will attend an oral examination of no more than two hours' duration. This oral examination will be convened by the Graduate Chair, and conducted by the three faculty examiners who set the written portion. In this oral examination, special attention will be paid to the candidate's own contributions to the reading list, especially as they relate to the candidate's dissertation topic.

The written and oral components of the Ph.D. Field Examination are of equal value, and a composite grade is given. The grade will be given as one of the three following: Pass with Distinction, Pass, and Fail. If a Fail is given, the candidate must take the examination at the next time scheduled. If repetition of the examination is necessary, usually both the written and oral parts are required; the examining committee has discretion to require, however, that only the oral be retaken.

## Medieval

All candidates must have read the items in lists 1-3, either list 4 *or* 5 in consultation with the supervisor, and list 6 in consultation with the supervisor.

Appropriate editions (or, where necessary, translations) of all texts should be chosen in consultation with the supervisor.

Candidates who have chosen to specialise in Old English should read Old English items in the original language. Candidates who have chosen to specialise in Middle English may read Old English texts in translation. Examiners may require evidence of familiarity with Old English on the examination if they deem it appropriate.

### 1. Core English list

- *Beowulf*
- 3-4 short Old English prose pieces: Alfred's Preface to Gregory, a homily (Wulfstan or Ælfric), selections from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Bede's account of Cædmon
- 5-6 shorter Old English poetic texts: *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Dream of the Rood*, *The Battle of Maldon*, *The Wife's Lament*, *The Phoenix*
- *The Owl and the Nightingale*
- 1 Middle English verse romance: e.g. *King Horn*, *Sir Orfeo*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- 1 devotional work, e.g. the *Boke of Margery Kempe* or Julian of Norwich's *Revelations*
- Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*
- Langland, *Piers Plowman*, B-text
- Selections from Malory's *Morte Darthur*
- 1 early medieval play

### 2. Core non-English list (read in translation)

- Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*
- Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*
- *Le Chanson de Roland*
- Chrétien de Troyes: any one of the romances
- Marie de France: 3 lais
- the *Mabinogion*
- Dante, any one of the three books of the *Commedia*
- *Njals saga*

### 3. Core secondary sources

- J. A. Burrow, *Ricardian Poetry* (London: Routledge, 1971)
- Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990)

- M. C. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 3rd ed (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012)
- Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007)
- E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York: Pantheon, 1953)
- Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al, eds. *The Idea of the Vernacular* (University Park: Penn State UP, 1999)

#### **4. Old English supplementary list**

- The rest of the contents of the four major poetic codices (the Exeter Book, the Vercelli Book, the *Beowulf*-MS, the Junius MS)
- *Apollonius of Tyre*
- At least 4-5 more homilies
- The Old English Boethius

#### **5. Middle English supplementary list**

- *Ancrene Wisse* (Prologue, parts 2-4, part 7)
- The rest of the poems in MS Cotton Nero A.x
- Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*, *House of Fame*, *Parliament of Fowls*, *Troilus and Criseyde*
- Henryson, *The Testament of Cresseid*
- At least 2 more medieval plays

#### **6. Additional texts set by the candidate in consultation with the supervisor.**