

**CSUSB DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
M.A. IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION**

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION PROCEDURES 2007/2008

A. Examination Components

The comprehensive examination has two required components: an on-campus component and a take-home component. Students must pass both components in order to pass the comprehensive examination.

B. Examination Dates

The comprehensive examination is offered twice a year, in Fall and Spring Quarters. The dates of the Fall examination (both the on-campus and take-home components) will be announced no later than the end of the preceding Spring quarter; and those of the Spring examination no later than the beginning of the preceding Winter quarter.

C. Procedures for the On-Campus Component

1. Day

The on-campus component will be given on a Saturday. An alternate examination day will be provided for students requiring a Saturday religious exemption. Such students must notify the graduate coordinator of their concentration upon registering for ENG 999 about their need for another examination day.

2. Place

The on-campus component will be given in a CSUSB computer lab. The specific lab room number will be announced at the beginning of the quarter in which the examination will take place.

3. Time and Length

Check-in for the on-campus component will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 9:15 a.m., at which time the examination instructions will be read. Students who have not checked in by 9:15 a.m. will not be allowed to sit for the examination. Students must present their student I.D. cards in order to check in at the examination site.

The on-campus component will be divided into two halves. The first will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 12 p.m.; the second will begin at 1 p.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. There will be a one-hour lunch break from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

During the first half of the on-campus component, **Composition and Literature Concentration students** will write a response to one question that they choose from among three questions related to the program core courses (ENG 611, 612, 650). At the end of the first half, they will turn in their response to that question.

During the second half, **Composition and Literature Concentration** students will write their response to a second question that they choose from among the same three core course questions, and turn in their response at the end of that second half. Thus, they will respond to two questions total for the on-campus component.

Composition and Literature Concentration students will be provided with the three questions at the beginning of the examination, and choose which question they answer in each half. Once they have turned in their response to a question, they cannot revise it.

During the first half of the on-campus component, **TESL Concentration students** will complete a mixed examination comprised of short answer questions, text analysis, and essay questions related to material in TESL concentration courses. At the end of this first half, they will turn in their mixed examination. During the second half, they will write a response to one question that they choose from among three questions related to the core courses (ENG 611, 612, 650). They will be given the three questions at the end of the first half, and they will turn in their response to one of them at the end of that second half. Thus, they will complete both a mixed examination **and** one core course question response for the on-campus component. Once the mixed examination or the core question response is turned in, it cannot be revised.

4. **Closed-Book Format**

The format of the on-campus component is closed-book. Students will not be permitted to consult readings, notes, the Internet, or other materials during the entire on-campus component period (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.), including the lunch hour. In addition, students are not permitted to consult with *anyone* about the examination questions or responses to them. Such consultation will constitute a violation of the Student Discipline Code and will be subject to established sanctions.

5. **Writing Mode**

Students will write their on-campus component on a computer in a computer lab. We will provide blank floppy disks or CDs at the examination site. Students will not have access to the Internet at the examination site. Students with disabilities impairing their use of a computer should request accommodation through the SSD office (see item 6 below). Students with concerns about typing their on-campus component which are not disability-related should contact the graduate coordinator of their concentration at least one month prior to the examination.

6. **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Appropriate accommodation for the on-campus component will be provided to students with disabilities who (a) are registered with the CSUSB Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office and (b) request such accommodation **through the SSD office**. Students needing such accommodation should contact the graduate coordinator of their concentration and the SSD Office (University Hall 183; 909-537-5238; <http://enrollment.csusb.edu/~ssd/>) at least one month prior to the examination.

7. Other Examination Conduct Specifications

During the on-campus component, students must turn off cell phones and beepers and refrain from talking. In addition, no eating will be permitted except during the lunch hour.

D. Procedures for the Take-Home Component

1. Days

Students will complete the take-home component during a Thursday-Monday (five-day) time period. Students whose religious observance necessitates accommodation may request an alternative five-day time period. Such students must notify the graduate coordinator of their concentration upon registering for ENG 999 about their need for this alternative time period. Composition and Literature concentrations will have their take-home component on a different set of Thursday-Monday dates in order to accommodate students completing dual concentrations.

2. Examination Pick-Up

Take-home examination questions will be made available on Blackboard beginning at 9 a.m. on the designated Thursday. Students who wish instead to pick up a hard copy of the question(s) from the English Department office (UH 334) must inform the coordinator of their concentration at least two weeks in advance of the exam.

3. Examination Return

Students must turn in the take-home component response by 4 p.m. on the Monday of their Thursday-Monday time period. Examination responses must be turned in by one of the following means: (a) in-person to the English Department Office (UH 334); (b) fax to the English Department (909-537-7086); or (c) in the Digital Dropbox portion of the Blackboard site for ENG 999.

No late responses will be accepted. Students are responsible for confirming receipt of their component response, and if using Blackboard, should retain a printed copy of the Blackboard receipt showing the day and time of their submission. Students are responsible for allowing sufficient time (depending upon their method of submission) to assure receipt of their component response by the deadline. If students do not receive an e-mail confirming receipt of their component response within 24 hours, they should immediately contact the coordinator of their concentration.

4. Open-Book Format

The take-home component is open-book. Students may use readings, notes, Internet resources, and other materials for completing the take-home component. However, students are not permitted to consult with *anyone* about the examination questions or responses to them. Such consultation will constitute a violation of the Student Discipline Code and will be subject to established sanctions.

5. Incorporating Source Materials

Students should integrate source materials within their responses. However, they should avoid quoting or paraphrasing large segments of others' texts without accompanying analysis, interpretation, and/or explanation. In addition, students are advised to read the section on "Plagiarism and Cheating" in the CSUSB *Bulletin of Courses*. Please make note that "plagiarism" does not simply refer to the act of representing somebody else's words or ideas as one's own, but also to the act of paraphrasing an author's idea or quoting even limited portions of his/her text without proper citation. Plagiarism constitutes a violation of the Student Discipline Code and will be subject to established sanctions.

6. Length and Form of Response

The take-home component response is a maximum of 3500 words. It must be typed, double-spaced, and formatted in 12-point Times or Times New Roman with one-inch margins and numbered pages. Composition and Literature Concentration students must attach an MLA-style Works Cited page (not included in the 3500-word limit), and TESL Concentration students an APA-style References page (not included in the 3500-word limit). Within students' examination responses themselves, in-text citations should also follow MLA style for Composition and Literature exams, and APA style for TESL exams.

E. Honor Policy Statements

Students will be required to read and sign Honor Policy statements for the on-campus and take-home components of the comprehensive examination.

F. Grading of the Examination

Both the on-campus and take-home components will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Students must pass both components in order to pass the comprehensive examination. Students who pass the examination will receive a grade of CR (Credit) for ENG 999. Those who fail will receive a grade of NC (No Credit). Each examination will be read by a committee consisting of two English faculty members and a Graduate Coordinator. Approximately two weeks after the examination (both on-campus and take-home components), students will be notified of their grade by the Graduate Coordinator of their concentration; examination results will not be publicly posted.

Important note regarding the grading of the TESL on-campus mixed exam: the different sections of the TESL mixed exam will be weighted as follows:

Short Answer Concept Explanations: 30%

Essay Question #1: 35%

Essay Question #2: 35%

In order to receive a "Pass" on the TESL mixed exam, students must receive a minimum of 80% on it overall.

G. Repeat of the Examination

The examination cannot be taken more than twice, and a retake of the examination must be done within one calendar year of the original taking of the examination (for example, if the examination is first taken in Fall, it must be repeated no later than the subsequent Fall). If students fail one component of the examination and pass one component, they need only retake the component that they failed. For example, if students pass the on-campus component but fail the take-home component, they need only retake the take-home component (and vice-versa).

For the on-campus component of the examination, if students fail one of the two halves (i.e., for Composition and Literature concentrators, one of the two core course questions; for TESL concentrators, the TESL mixed examination or the core course question), they need only retake the half that they failed. If students fail the examination the second time, they will not receive the M.A. degree.

H. Rescheduling the Examination

In case of documented emergency, students may petition to reschedule their examination.

I. Dual Concentrators

1. Comprehensive Examination Requirements for Dual Concentrators

Students pursuing a dual concentration (Composition-Literature, TESL-Composition, TESL-Literature) must do the following for their comprehensive exam: (a) take the on-campus component for their dual concentration; and (b) take the take-home components for both of their concentrations.

For Composition-Literature dual concentrators, the on-campus component is the same as that for single Composition or Literature concentrators, that is, two questions chosen from three questions related to the core courses (ENG 611, 612, 650; see Time and Length of on-campus component under C.3. above).

For TESL-Composition dual concentrators, the on-campus component consists of the TESL mixed and either the 611 or 612 question. For TESL-Literature dual concentrators, the on-campus component consists of the TESL mixed and one question chosen from 611, 612, or 650.

2. Passing and Failing for Dual Concentrators

Dual concentrators must pass both the on-campus component and their two concentration take-home components to pass the comprehensive examination with a dual concentration. The same policies regarding repeat of examination (see section E. Repeat of Examination) apply here to dual concentrators.

If dual concentrators pass the on-campus component, fail one of their take-home components, but pass their other take-home component, they have a choice of one of two options:

- (a) retake and pass the failed take-home component within one calendar year, and therefore pass the comprehensive examination with a dual concentration; or
- (b) *not retake* the failed take-home component, and therefore pass the comprehensive examination with a single concentration (that of the take-home component that the students passed), and thus be eligible for the M.A. degree in a single rather than a dual concentration.