Guidelines for the M.A. Examination  
Saint Louis University  
Department of English  
(for those entering the master’s degree program in the fall of 2014 or 2015)

All candidates for a master’s degree in English must pass a one-hour oral examination covering a list of 12 literary works at the conclusion of their programs of study. This list is developed biannually by the department as a whole and represents a variety of periods and genres. The outstanding candidate will move with dexterity among close readings of texts, the texts’ critical heritage, and the list’s cultural and historical contexts. The examining committee for an M.A. examination consists of three faculty members of the candidate’s choice; master’s candidates, in their second year of study, are responsible for approaching faculty members to serve on their exam committees, with the objective of assembling examiners covering a range of areas. A 13th work, to be chosen by the student, will consist of an influential theoretical or critical text selected from a list of 10, compiled by the department as a whole and reviewed and revised biannually.

**Reading List for the M.A. Exam** (exclusive of the theoretical/critical text):

- *Beowulf* (8th-11th C.)
- Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Knight’s Tale, The Miller’s Prologue & Tale, The Wife of Bath’s Prologue & Tale,* and *The Tale of Melibee* (late 14th C.)
- Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (1668)
- John Ruskin, *Stones of Venice* (1851-1853)
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)
- Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (1918)
- Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (1928)

**Theory and Criticism List for the M.A. Exam** (each candidate selects one text):

- Kenneth Burke, *Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941)
- Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (1990)