

Statement of Purpose for MA, MFA, and Ph.D. Applicants

All applicants to the MA, MFA, and Ph.D. programs must submit a detailed Statement of Purpose for admission to the Department of English at SIUC. The statement consists of two or more double-spaced, typed pages (500-750 words) that address the questions below. These questions do not have to be answered in order or in equal detail. The Graduate Studies Committee views the statement of purpose as a chance for applicants to detail their future projects and intellectual interests as well as how department faculty can assist in developing these projects and interests. Although the committee is interested in applicants' broader career goals, it is most interested in their specific literary, rhetorical, and creative interests.

- In what aspect of literary or rhetorical studies are you interested? Do you have an interest in any specific literary period, critical or theoretical approach, or research topic? Do you have a research or creative project in mind? (**MFA applicants:** Also see the next section and direct your responses to reflect your creative writing interests and goals) Will you be able to satisfy these interests with the current English curricula at SIUC? What background (i.e., course training, professional or academic experience) prepares you to study English at the graduate level?
- Additional questions for **MFA applicants only:** Why are you seeking a degree in creative writing? What do you hope to gain from such a degree program? Which poets or writers, beyond the writers you have studied with as an undergraduate student, do you cite as influences upon your own writing?
- Why have you selected the English Department at SIUC? Do you, for instance, want to work with specific faculty? Are you attracted to specific programs or course offerings?
- Please discuss any connections between your scholarly interests and teaching and/or any special interest in teaching that you might have. Do you have any experience or training in teaching? Do you envision a career in teaching, if so, at what level? How do you see your scholarly interests translating into a pedagogical setting?