**Murray State University**
*Department of English and Philosophy*
Master Reading List for Graduate Comprehensive Exams

Track Requirements for Comprehensive Examinations:
*Creative Writing* (31-35 works)*:* Students will cover five literary periods and a list of at least five works on creative writing.
*English Education (*26-30 works*):* Students will cover four literary periods and a list of at least five pedagogical works as well as submitting a teaching portfolio demonstrating appropriate classroom practices.
*English Studies* (26-30 works)*:* Students will cover four literary periods and a list of at least five works appropriate to the area(s) of study as well as submitting an appropriate portfolio/project.
*English with Philosophy as a Cognate Discipline* (31-35 works)*:* Students will cover four literary periods and a list of at least ten philosophical works.
*Literature* (31-35 works): Students will cover all six literary periods.

You should confer with an instructor/advisor from your program track and the Graduate Studies Director to develop a program appropriate for you.

**Note:** The great majority of the entries you select for the literature portion of your reading list should be taken from the following master list; any additions or substitutions must be approved by your comprehensive exam committee. Remember that 1) You must include at least four entries from each of the periods/areas upon which you are being tested; 2) Your list for any literary period must include at least two genres; 3) No more than two entries on your list may come from any one author; 4) For poetry and short story selections, you must include at least several major/representative works by each writer; 5)The first draft of your list, accompanied by a cover sheet to be signed by each committee member, should be submitted to your committee chair within one month of the start of classes during your final semester of course work.

(An asterisk [*] indicates that the reading counts as one work on the list.)

## *PERIOD ONE: ENGLISH LITERATURE TO 1500*

The Beowulf Poet: *Beowulf*

Anglo-Saxon Poetry: "The Wanderer," "The Dream of the Rood," "The Wife's Lament," "The Seafarer," "Wulf and Eadwacer," Bede's account of Caedmon and "Caedmon's Hymn," and a selection of three Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Latin riddles

Morality Plays: *Everyman*, *Mankind*, and either *The Castle of Perseverance* or *The Pride of Life*

Mystery Plays: four of the following Wakefield Master plays from the Towneley Cycle: *Mactacio Abel* (Murder of Abel), *Processus Noe* (Noah Play), *Prima Pastorum* (First Shepherds' Play), *Secunda Pastorum* (Second Shepherds' Play), *Magnus Herodes* (Wrath of Herod), *Coliphizacio* (Christ's Buffeting), or *Judicio* (The Last Judgement)

Morality and Mystery Plays: two morality & two mystery plays from the list above

John Gower: *Confessio Amantis*

Medieval Romances: two of the following: *King Horn*; *Havelok the Dane*; *Sir Orfeo*; *Sir Launfal*; *The Weddyng of Syr Gawen and Dame Ragnell*

Geoffrey Chaucer: **Troilus and Criseyde*; *"The Book of the Duchess," "The Hous of Fame," and "The Parlement of Foules"; *The "General Prologue" and at least four of the *Canterbury Tales*

William Langland: *The Vision of William Concerning Piers Plowman,* B Text, Passus 1-6

Marie de France: *The Lais of Marie de France*

The Pearl-Poet: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* or *Pearl*

Thomas Malory: two long or three-four shorter tales from *Morte D'Arthur*

Anonymous: *The Owl and the Nightingale*

## ***PERIOD 2: BRITISH LITERATURE, 1500-1660***

Philip Sidney: *Apology for Poetry* and 10 sonnets from *Astrophil and Stella*

16th-Century Lyric Poetry: 15 poems by at least three authors from among the following: Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Campion, Raleigh

Christopher Marlowe: two plays

Elizabethan Drama (Heywood, Mr. S., Preston, Sackville and Norton, Gascoigne, Lyle, Peele, Kyd, Greene, Nashe, Dekker): two plays by different authors

William Shakespeare: *one tragedy, one history, and one comedy/romance; **Sonnets*

Edmund Spenser: *two books of *The Faerie Queene*; *one book of *The Faerie Queene* and either *The Shepheardes Calender* or the *Amoretti*

Thomas More: *Utopia*

Francis Bacon: 10 essays

George Puttenham: *The Arte of English Poesie*

Baldassare Castiglione/Thomas Hoby: *The Book of the Courtier*

17th-Century Lyric Poetry: five poems each by Jonson, Herbert, and Marvell

Mary Wroth: 15 sonnets from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

John Donne: 15 poems, including three of at least 40 lines

Ben Jonson: two plays, at least one a comedy

Jacobean Drama (Tourneur, Webster, Middleton, Ford, Beaumont & Fletcher, Chapman, Massinger): two plays by different authors

Thomas Browne: *Religio Medici*

John Milton: *six books of *Paradise Lost*, including Books 1, 4, 9, and 12; *Books 1, 4, 9, 12 of *Paradise Lost* and any one of the following: *Samson Agonistes;* "Of Education" and "Areopagitica"; three books of *Paradise Regained*

## ***PERIOD 3: BRITISH LITERATURE, 1660-1832***

John Dryden: **All for Love* or *Marriage a la Mode* and any two of the following: "Essay of Dramatic Poesy"; "Absalom and Achitophel"; "Mac Flecknoe"; "Religio Laici"; "To the Pious Memory of Anne Killigrew"; "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day"; *The essay and five poems listed above but no play

Restoration Comedies: two of the following: *The Man of Mode* or *The Plain Dealer*; *The Country Wife*; *All for Love*; *The Way of the World*; *The Rover*

Jonathan Swift: *Gulliver's Travels* or *A Tale of a Tub*

Alexander Pope: Any three of the following: "Essay on Man"; "The Dunciad"; "Essay On Criticism"; "The Rape of the Lock"; any 3 moral essays; "Windsor Forest"; "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot"

Daniel DeFoe: *Robinson Crusoe* or *Moll Flanders*

Samuel Richardson: *Pamela* or *Clarissa*

Henry Fielding: *Joseph Andrews* or *Tom Jones*

Tobias Smollett: *Humphrey Clinker*

Laurence Sterne: *Tristram Shandy*

Richard Sheridan and Oliver Goldsmith: *School for Scandal* and *She Stoops to Conquer*

Samuel Johnson: *R*asselas*; *Any two of the following: "The Vanity of Human Wishes"; "Preface to Shakespeare"; two essays from *Lives of the Poets*; six essays from *The Rambler* and/or *The Idler*

James Boswell: *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*

*Poetry:* *15 poems by any one of the following authors, or five poems by each of any three authors:

Ann Yearsley; Robert Burns; William Blake; Anna Laetitia Barbauld; Felicia Hemans; William Wordsworth; George Gordon, Lord Byron; Percy Bysshe Shelley; John Keats; Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Cowper, "The Cast-Away"; Swift, "The Lady's Dressing Room"; Thomson, "Winter," from *The Seasons*; Goldsmith, "The Deserted Village"; and Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"

William Cowper: *The Task*

William Wordsworth: *The Prelude*

Stephen Duck: *The Thresher's Labour*

Ann Radcliffe: *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

Walter Scott: one novel

Jane Austen: one novel

Joanna Baillie: *Count Basil*

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* or *The Last Man*

### ***Period 4: British Literature, 1832-Present***

*Drama:* two plays by any one of the following authors:

George Bernard Shaw; Carol Churchill; Tom Stoppard; Samuel Beckett

*Poetry*: 15 poems by any one of the following authors, or five poems each by any three authors:

Alfred, Lord Tennyson; Matthew Arnold; Elizabeth Barrett Browning; Robert Browning: John Clare; Rudyard Kipling; Gerard Manley Hopkins; Christina Rossetti; Thomas Hardy; A. E. Housman; William Butler Yeats; D. H. Lawrence; Wilfred Owen; W. H. Auden; Eavan Boland; Thom Gunn; Edward Kamau Brathwaite; Robert Graves; Dylan Thomas; Seamus Heaney; Ted Hughes; Philip Larkin; Derek Walcott

*Novels:* one major novel by any of the following authors:

Charlotte Bronte; Emily Bronte; George Eliot; Charles Dickens; Wyndham Lewis; Anthony Trollope; Thomas Hardy; D. H. Lawrence; James Joyce; Robert Louis Stevenson; Joseph Conrad; James Joyce; E. M. Forster; Virginia Woolf; Graham Greene; Doris Lessing; Iris Murdoch; John Fowles

*Victorian Non-Fictional Prose*: Three major essays by each of any two of the following authors: Arnold, Carlyle, Mill, Pater, Newman, Ruskin

A. S. Byatt: *Possession*

Joseph Conrad: **Heart of Darkness* and 1 additional short novel; **Heart of Darkness* and three short stories; *six short stories.

James Joyce: *Dubliners*

D. H. Lawrence: six short stories

Ford Madox Ford: *The Good Soldier*

## ***PERIOD 5: AMERICAN LITERATURE TO 1900***

*Sermons*: Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God" and at least one major sermon by Cotton Mather and by Edward Taylor

William Bradford, "On Plymouth Plantation," and Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative Of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*

Benjamin Franklin: *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*

Thomas Paine: *Common Sense* and "The Crisis"

James Fenimore Cooper: one major novel

*Poetry:* 15 poems by any one of the following authors, or 5 poems each by any 3 authors:

Anne Bradstreet ; Wm. Cullen Bryant; Emily Dickinson; R.W. Emerson; Edward Taylor; Phyllis Wheatley; Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman: *"Song of Myself" *or* * "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed," and "Passage to India."

*Slave Narratives*: Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an African Slave* AND one of the following:
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Olaudah Equino, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, *Or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself*
*Charlotte: A Tale of Truth*

Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Nature" and two other major essays

Henry David Thoreau: **Walden*; *three major essays

Henry Adams: *The Education of Henry Adams*

Edgar Allan Poe: *six major short stories; *"The Philosophy of Composition," "The Poetic Principle," "A Review of Twice-Told Tales," and six poems; **The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and three major short stories or six poems

Nathaniel Hawthorne: **The Scarlet Letter* or *The House of the Seven Gables*; *six major tales

Herman Melville: **Moby Dick*; *Billy Budd and *Typee*

Harriet Beecher Stowe: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Kate Chopin: *The Awakening* and two short stories

William Dean Howells: *The Rise of Silas Lapham or A Hazard of New Fortunes*

Mark Twain: *one major novel; **The Autobiography of Mark Twain*; *six major short stories

Henry James: *one major novel and "The Art of Fiction"; *two shorter novels and "The Art of Fiction"

Frank Norris: *The Octopus* or *McTeague*

Stephen Crane: **The Red Badge of Courage or *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and two short stories

**PERIOD 6: AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1900-PRESENT**

W. E. B. DuBois *The Souls of Black Folk*

*Drama:* two plays by any of the following authors:
Edward Albee; Lillian Hellman; Langston Hughes; David Mamet; Arthur Miller; Eugene O'Neill; Sam Shepard; Tennessee Williams

*Novels:* one major novel by any of the following authors:
Margaret Atwood; James Baldwin; Saul Bellow; Don DeLillo; James Dickey; Ralph Ellison; William Faulkner; F. Scott Fitzgerald; Ernest Hemingway; John Hawkes; Joseph Heller; Linda Hogan; John Irving; Jamaica Kincaid; Maxine Hong Kingston; Norman Mailer; Bernard Malamud; Paule Marshall; Cormac McCarthy; Toni Morrison; Gloria Naylor; Joyce Carol Oates; Tim O'Brien; Thomas Pynchon; Wallace Stegner; John Steinbeck; Amy Tan; John Updike; Kurt Vonnegut, Jr; Alice Walker; Robert Penn Warren

Sherwood Anderson: *Winesburg, Ohio*

Theodore Dreiser: *Sister Carrie* or *An American Tragedy*

Edith Wharton: **The House of Mirth*; **Ethan Frome* and *Summer*;
**The Age of Innocence*

Willa Cather: **O, Pioneers* and *My Mortal Enemy*; **My Antonia*;
**Song of the Lark*

Jean Toomer, *Cane*

Thomas Wolfe: *Look Homeward, Angel*

Katherine Anne Porter: *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* and "Noon Wine" or "Old Mortality"

Ralph Ellison: *Invisible Man*

Zora Neale Hurston: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Ken Kesey: *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest or Sometimes a Great Notion*

Richard Wright: *Black Boy* or *Native Son*

Gertrude Stein: *Three Lives* or *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*

William Gaddis: *The Recognitions*

Nash Canelaria: *Memories of the Alhambra*

Sherman Alexis: *Indian Killer*

Audre Lorde: *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

E.L. Doctorow: *Ragtime*

Leslie Marmon Silko: *Ceremony*

Louise Erdrich: *Love Medicine*

E. Annie Proulx: *The Shipping News*

Jane Smiley: *A Thousand Acres*

Maya Angelou: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and five poems

*Poetry:* 15 poems by any one of the following authors, or five poems each by any three authors:

A. R. Ammons; Maya Angelou; John Ashbery; John Berryman; Elizabeth Bishop; Robert Bly; Louise Bogan; Gwendolyn Brooks; Lucille Clifton; Billy Collins; e. e. cummings; James Dickey; H.D.; Rita Dove; T. S. Eliot; Lawrence Ferlinghetti; Robert Francis; Robert Frost; Louise Gluck; Jorie Graham; Joy Harjo; Robert Hass; Robert Hayden; Langston Hughes; Randall Jarrell; Robinson Jeffers; Donald Justice; Galway Kinnell; Etheridge Knight; Kenneth Koch; Yusef Komunyakaa; Stanley Kunitz; Denise Levertov; Philip Levine; Lee-Young Li; Audre Lord; Amy Lowell; Robert Lowell; James Merrill; W. S. Merwin; Edna St. Vincent Millay; Marianne Moore; Sharon Olds; Mary Oliver; Robert Pinsky; Sylvia Plath; Ezra Pound; Adrienne Rich; Theodore Roethke; Muriel Rukeyser; Anne Sexton; Charles Simic; Gary Snyder; Gary Soto; William Stafford; Wallace Stevens; James Tate; Robert Penn Warren; Richard Wilbur; C. K. Williams; William Carlos Williams; James Wright

T. S. Eliot "The Wasteland" and two critical essays

Allen Ginsburg: "Howl" and nine other poems

*Short Stories:* *six short stories by any one or two of the following authors:

F. Scott Fitzgerald; Ernest Hemingway; John Steinbeck; Flannery O.Connor; Raymond Carver

*Essays*: eight essays by two or more of the following writers: Edward Abbey; Wendell Berry; Annie Dillard; Robert Wood Krutch; Aldo Leopold; John McPhee; Scott Russell Sanders; Wallace Stegner