

MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM

Student Policy Handbook
and
Axess Instruction Manual

2026-2027

Stanford | Master of Liberal Arts

The MLA Student Policy Handbook and ACESS Instruction Manual is a compendium of information about the Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) Program, its policies and requirements, and many of the University policies and resources that are relevant to the MLA students.

It is the responsibility of every MLA student to read this handbook and understand the policies and procedures described.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the applicable policies and other materials contained in this handbook are accurate and current at the time of publishing. The MLA program reserves the right to make changes at any time without prior notice, within Stanford University regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Bennett at michelle.bennett@stanford.edu or (650) 725-0061.

WASC Stated Learning Outcomes

The purpose of the Master of Liberal Arts Program is to address subjects that cross disciplinary boundaries; to develop an understanding of the strength and the shortcomings of disciplinary evaluation; to help students to refine their skills in writing, research, critical thinking, collaborative work, and collegial discussion. While students are not being groomed for academic careers, graduates of the program have used their experience to gain acceptance into Ph.D. programs at Stanford and elsewhere. Students who complete the MLA program are well positioned to advance in careers that require the careful analytical and rhetorical training they receive. This training is achieved through the completion of four foundations courses, which together emphasize the program's goals as stated above; seven seminars that offer a more specific engagement with interdisciplinary subject matter; and a master's thesis, accomplished under the direction of a Stanford faculty member who is expert in the subject of the thesis.

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1. MLA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Administrative Office

The administrative offices for the Master of Liberal Arts program are located in Building 460 in the Main Quad. The mailing address is

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1.2 Overview

Since its inception in 1991, the MLA program has graduated 368 students. Designed for adults who wish to pursue a broad, interdisciplinary course of study, the program aims to help students develop the intellectual methodology they need to engage in contemporary debates; to cultivate their ability to find connections among different areas of human thought; to acquire the tools to conduct original research; and, most of all, to pursue a life of ideas.

The underlying premise of the MLA program is that interdisciplinary study leads to intellectual independence and satisfaction not always found in discipline-based programs of study. As a result, we encourage our students to explore a broad range of subjects throughout the curriculum, rather than to focus narrowly on a single topic. The program begins with a foundations sequence that reintroduces entering students to the historical and philosophical framework of study in the liberal arts, and invites them to venture beyond their areas of expertise. The culmination of study for each student is the master's thesis; the interdisciplinary background in coursework provides the broad perspective from which each student conceives of and writes a tightly focused, in- depth study of a single subject. The total time to degree is four to five years.

2. COURSE INFORMATION

2.1 Distribution of Units

Students complete a total of 50 units to degree. Students may take additional units but must stay within the required time to degree. The following units are required of MLA students:

3-Quarter Foundation Sequence	12 units (4 units each)
Core Introductory Seminar	4 units
7 Graduate Seminars*	28 units (4 units each)
Master's Thesis	6 units
Total:	50 units

*At least six of the required seven seminars must be from the MLA curriculum.

2.2 Distribution Requirements

MLA distribution requirements ensure that students pursue a broad curriculum during their course of study in the MLA program. Prior to beginning work on the thesis, students must successfully complete a minimum number of units in each of the following fields:

- Humanities (HUM): **4 unit** minimum
- Science, Medicine, Engineering (SME): **4 unit** minimum
- Social Sciences (SS): **4 unit** minimum

Distribution requirements are fulfilled through regular unit-based coursework, not through additional units. These requirements should be fulfilled during the second or third year through MLA seminars. Each quarter prior to registration, MLA students will receive a list of MLA seminars and that qualify for each field. There is no guarantee that a course will be offered in all three fields every quarter; therefore students should not postpone fulfilling any of the distribution requirements until the last quarter prior to beginning work on their theses.

2.3 First Year and One Quarter of Study (Foundation and Core Courses)

Students commence their studies in the MLA program with the foundation sequence, comprised of three courses taught during the fall, winter, and spring quarters of the first year. The Foundations instructor(s) meet with the Associate Dean at the end of each quarter to review student progress. After completion of the foundation sequence, MLA students spend the autumn of their second academic year in the core introductory seminar.

In order for a student to proceed to the core introductory seminar, students must be able to write an argumentative paper, including conducting a logical argument, and be ready to advance to writing an argumentative research paper.

Students are not permitted to take MLA seminars or other departmental courses until all four required courses have been successfully completed.

2.4 Seminars

Students begin to take MLA seminars only after they have completed the four required core courses; MLA 101A, 101B, 101C, and 102. Each quarter during the regular academic year, two to three MLA seminars are offered. Two are usually offered in the fall and in the summer. MLA seminars are offered for four units each.

The details of each course can be found on [Navigator](#) and on the MLA web site. Each quarter, prior to the start of enrollment, the Associate Director will send an email with details of the courses being offered for the upcoming quarter.

Students may take a maximum of eight units per quarter, and a total of twelve units in two consecutive quarters. If a student is interested in taking more than eight units in a single quarter or more than a total of twelve units in two consecutive quarters, he or she must first obtain the permission of the Associate Dean and Director.

Students take seven seminars after the required course courses; these can be fulfilled by MLA seminars for all seven courses, or by taking six MLA seminars and one Stanford departmental graduate seminar. Students must take at a minimum of 7 seminars; within a reasonable time to degree, some students choose to take additional seminars.

2.5 Stanford Departmental Courses

To Fulfill a Seminar Requirement

Students may choose to take a Stanford departmental graduate seminar to fulfill **one** of the seven seminars that are required. For a departmental course to count towards degree, it must be a graduate-level seminar, must be taken for at least 4 units, and must be taken for a letter grade.

Students must earn a B- or better. Students are eligible for this option once they reach active status in the program. Prior to enrollment, students need to obtain permission from the course faculty, and from the Associate Dean & Director. The course should be within the liberal arts disciplines.

During Prospectus and Thesis Work

During the prospectus- and thesis-writing times, non-MLA courses may be taken if they specifically relate to the thesis topic. Permission of the Associate Dean and Director and the course faculty must be obtained before enrolling in any non-MLA course.

If students anticipate needing training in another language, they may pursue Stanford undergraduate language courses. Language courses must also have the approval of the Associate Dean before enrolling. These courses will appear on your transcript, but will not count towards degree.

2.6 Practicum

Practicum courses are one-unit, short-format courses available to MLA students after they have completed their Foundation and Core Courses. The practicum are offered 1-2 times per years, and are graded on a S/NC basis. Students may take as many practicum as they wish, but they don't count towards the credits needed to degree. Students cannot take four Practicum courses in lieu of a Seminar requirement.

2.7 Auditing

The first priority of an MLA student is to complete the requirements of the degree program. Auditing will not be approved if it is impeding a student's timely progress towards degree.

In very particular circumstances, with the invitation of the faculty, auditing may be allowed. In some cases students may wish to audit an undergraduate lecture course, or a course that is specific to their thesis needs.

Stanford allows the auditing of courses with the following guidelines:

In all cases of auditing, the instructor, department administrator, and the Office of the University Registrar's prior approvals are required.

No person shall attend any class unless he or she is a fully registered student enrolled in the course **or** meets the criteria for auditors. Auditors are not permitted in courses that involve direct participation such as language or laboratory science courses, field work, art courses with studio work, or other types of individualized instruction (i.e., labs, seminars, case study, language, and activity courses are not permitted). Auditors are expected to be observers rather than active participants in the courses they attend, unless the instructors request attendance on a different basis. Stanford does not confer credit for auditing, nor is a permanent record kept of courses audited. Students do not enroll in the course they are auditing. Students who have been suspended are not permitted to audit.

Auditors may not join classes for the first time after the University's final study list deadline.

2.8 Advising

The MLA Program has an advising program that is created to respond to student need as well as the unique nature of this student group. That is, the MLA student group is diverse in experience, expectation, and availability; we have determined that important gateway moments

in the program (finishing core courses and entering the seminar track, preparation of the thesis prospectus, work on thesis) require cohort advising meetings. Individual academic advising, however, is best accomplished one-on-one, between student and adviser, at a mutually convenient time and place. The advising structure has two stages: Pre-thesis Advising and Thesis Advising.

Pre-thesis Advising begins just before matriculation and lasts until the student has been assigned a Thesis Adviser.

- Specific pre-thesis academic advising sessions occur before students begin the program, at the conclusion of their foundations course year, as they begin to choose their seminars, and as they begin to contemplate their thesis topics. The dates for these sessions are published well before the events, and students recognize the importance of attending; when exceptional circumstances keep students away, the program offers make-up sessions in person or by phone or Zoom.

- Entering students are also assigned a faculty adviser as they enter the program. They are encouraged to meet with the adviser during the first year to establish a relationship with the faculty member; once they begin to choose seminars and to move toward thesis subject matter, we encourage students to contact their adviser once a quarter, before they sign up for the following quarter, for a meeting.

Year 1

Incoming students meet individually with the Associate Dean and Director in the summer, prior to starting the program. This meeting provides an opportunity to talk about students' and program's expectations, to clarify the administrative specifics of the program, and to pass on information about the resources available to the student. This meeting also constitutes an open invitation for students to consult the Associate Dean and Director throughout their time in the program. Before this meeting, students are sent the MLA Student Handbook for their perusal.

In October of their first year, students are assigned a Stanford faculty adviser, from among the members of the MLA Faculty Advisory Committee. These advisers are familiar with MLA program policies and the MLA curriculum; they also are familiar with the MLA Student Handbook. This adviser will work with students throughout Foundations, Core and seminar classes, until they are assigned a thesis adviser.

In their first year, students should plan to reach out to their adviser at least once. The meeting (or meetings) during their first year provide an opportunity to get to know the adviser before the students and adviser begin meeting regularly during the second year.

Students meet with the Associate Dean and Director again at the completion of their first year. This meeting provides an opportunity to go over how the year went, and discuss concerns or challenges the student is having.

Year 2

During the fall quarter, 2nd-year students are taking their final core course. One session of that course will begin an hour early, and will address the students' move into seminar choice. The Associate Dean and Director and the Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee will conduct the meeting; faculty who will be offering seminars through the rest of the academic year will be invited to the session. This meeting takes place just prior to enrollment opening for Winter quarter.

Students are encouraged to consult with their faculty adviser prior to enrolling in courses fall, winter, spring and summer quarters of this second year to keep the adviser informed of their choices, to discuss program expectations and upcoming responsibilities. These meetings can be held in person, by phone, or over email. Students are expected to initiate these quarterly meetings.

Year 3

Students are advised to contact their faculty adviser each quarter as they continue their seminar work.

Early in winter quarter of their third year (timing dependent on each students' seminar progress) , students meet as a group with the Associate Dean and Director, and the Writing Instructor. This meeting is an orientation for students as they begin to think about their thesis topic, and move into the next stage of the degree. They receive a substantial handbook of information and advice that they will consult through their thesis-writing.

As students reach the end of their seminars and begin thinking about thesis topics, they begin a conversation with the Associate Dean and Director about their thesis direction and potential faculty they should speak with as they are writing their prospectus.

Students are introduced to and encouraged to consult individual faculty members whose expertise can guide the students' building of the prospectus.

Thesis Advising

End of Year 3 and Beyond

The MLA Faculty Advisory committee responds in writing to each students' prospectus, approving it, deferring approval, or rejecting it. In each case, the response brings together the considered advice of the committee as to next steps for the student.

Once students have an approved prospectus, the MLA Faculty Advisory committee assigns them a Stanford faculty adviser.

Students with approved prospectuses (or those who are close to having their prospectuses approved) attend a day-long thesis workshop, held in August every summer. The MLA Writing Consultant and Instructor directs the workshop and the Associate Dean and Director attends, along with representative faculty advisers and recent graduates. The thesis workshop is intended to give provide insight into working with a thesis adviser, to help students to take maximum advantage of class and instructor feedback in the weekly thesis workshops, to address the necessary work of researching and then shaping and focusing the thesis, to inform students about the practices and expectations of the weekly WIP sessions and of thesis presentations, and generally to illuminate some of the ups and downs of thesis-writing. (The July thesis workshop is intended for all students who are working on their theses, not only those who are beginning their work.)

As soon as their prospectus is approved, students become a part of the thesis working group, MLA 398: Thesis in Progress. The work-in-progress group meets weekly and includes all MLA students who are working on their theses; it is led by the MLA Writing Instructor, and the Associate Dean and Director attends most meetings. The meetings provide a time for peer feedback and support as well as guidance from the writing consultants.

General Advising

For questions about degree progress, tuition, or general program policy, students can consult the MLA Handbook, or contact the MLA office.

2.9 Intellectual Journeys and Oxford

The MLA program occasionally offers two options for students who wish to engage in travel/ study opportunities.

Intellectual Journeys

Intellectual Journeys are intensive, one- to two-week seminars that include a travel element. Intellectual Journeys can be held domestically or internationally, and past seminars include stays in Stratford, England, at Cambridge University, and a trip to the Galapagos. Some Intellectual Journeys offer seminar credit. There is an additional fee for these seminars, and travel to and from the seminar is generally at the student's expense. These courses are not offered every year.

Oxford

MLA students may apply for a three-week summer program at the University of Oxford in England. Oxford's Department of Continuing Education offers three-week sessions in English Literature and in History, Politics & Society each summer. MLA students who are accepted into and successfully complete Oxford's program may receive a maximum of 4 units on their Stanford transcript. Students must receive the equivalent of a B- or higher for credit.

Students apply directly to Oxford, and enroll for Summer MLA credit during Summer enrollment. Students receive an 'S' for successful completion of units, as well as a certificate and a letter grade from Oxford. Units taken through Oxford do not count towards the seven MLA seminars that are required for the MLA degree.

Grades received from Oxford will not be reflected on the student's transcript, nor will grades from Oxford be calculated in the student's grade point average. If a student receives the equivalent of a B- or better from coursework at Oxford, the appropriate units will transfer in to the program, and the student's MLA transcript will reflect units from Oxford with a grade of "S." If a student receives the equivalent of a C+ or lower from coursework at Oxford, the units will not transfer in to the program, and the student's MLA transcript will not reflect the coursework at Oxford.

Please note that acceptance into Oxford's program is competitive and Oxford does not reserve spaces for Stanford MLA students.

2.10 Course Enrollment

Please review the Axess Instruction section of this document on page 42 for details on how to enroll in courses, drop and withdraw, and associated deadlines.

3. THESIS AND GRADUATION INFORMATION

3.1 Thesis Overview

Throughout their time in the program, students are encouraged to think about possible thesis topics that flow from their MLA coursework. Once a student is close to successfully completing the seven MLA seminars and distribution requirements, it is time to begin to develop a workable thesis topic.

(1) The first step is to attend a Thesis Information Meeting. This meeting is held once a year, in the winter. You should attend during the winter of your 3rd or 4th year, depending on your progress in the program. At the meeting you will receive a handbook with information on the ideal calendar to graduate, information on and samples of prospectuses, information on the work-in-progress group and your colloquium. An invitation to this meeting is sent to students based on their progress in the program.

(1) The second step is to schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean and Director. At this meeting you will discuss possible thesis topics and potential advisers. Students must choose a topic from work they have pursued in the MLA program. The Associate Dean and Director will help you determine a topic at this meeting and may suggest faculty for you to consult.*

(2) Once you have a topic that has been approved by the Associate Dean and Director and that you are ready to begin working on, you must complete a Declaration of Intent to Proceed and a Prospectus. The Declaration of Intent to Proceed and the Prospectus must be approved by the faculty advisory committee before you may register for the Work-in-Progress group or begin working on the thesis.

(3) Attend a Work-in-Progress Workshop. This daylong workshop takes place once a year, usually in the middle of summer. You should participate in the first one following the approval of your prospectus, and any subsequent sessions.

The deadlines to submit the Declaration of Intent to Proceed and the Prospectus are in September, January, and April. Submit them to both via the Prospectus Google form. The MLA Advisory Committee will review prospectuses submitted by these deadlines; students will receive feedback within one month of the submission deadline.

*Please note that you cannot select a thesis topic that requires significant work in another language unless you are already fluent in that language. The 1-2 years you spend working on your thesis does not allow time to become proficient enough in a language to do graduate-level work.

3.2 Work-in-Progress Group

Once your Declaration of Intent to Proceed and your Prospectus have been approved, you will be invited to begin attending meetings of the Work-in-Progress (WIP) group. The WIP group meets most Friday nights through the academic year from 5:30 to 7:00 pm or 7:30 pm. Each week one or two students present a part of their theses and receive feedback from the group. Attendance at a minimum of 75% of all WIP meetings from the time the student is invited to begin attending through graduation is a program requirement. You must also enroll in MLA 398: Thesis in Progress each quarter. During the student's final quarter prior to graduation, he or she must enroll in MLA 399: Thesis Final Quarter.

3.3 Colloquium

The colloquium is an opportunity to share with others the results of thesis research and writing. The colloquium consists of a 35-minute talk about your thesis, followed by a 10-minute response from a pre-selected respondent, and a 15-minute question-and-answer session.

Everyone in the MLA community is invited to MLA colloquia. It is a good idea to attend as many as you can so that you can support your fellow students, hear about the work they have been doing, and get a sense of what the colloquium process is about.

3.4 Final Submission

Following your colloquium, you may need to do more research, and may have additional edits. Once you have your penultimate draft, you will submit copies to the Associate Dean and Director and your adviser. They will review it and go over with you any final comments and edits. Finished theses are expected to be between 75-100 pages.

3.5 Bound Theses

Once you have a final version of your thesis that has been approved by your advisor and the Associate Dean and Director, you will need to decide how many copies of your thesis you would like to have bound. The MLA program will pay for three bound copies: one for the student, one for the adviser, and one for the Associate Dean and Director.

If you would like to receive more than one copy for yourself, the cost is currently \$60-\$70 per bound thesis. Each student is responsible for having the page copies made and bringing those copies to the MLA office. The theses will be sent out to be professionally bound. The process will take several weeks; so, most students will not receive their bound

theses until late in the summer after graduation.

Submitting Thesis to Stanford's Online Repository

Students also have the option to have their thesis available and searchable online through Stanford's Repository. Instructions will be provided at the time of graduation.

3.6 Graduation

“Graduation” is a term used loosely to refer to two distinct events: the official conferral of the degree, which can occur at the end of any term when degree requirements are completed, and the annual Commencement Ceremonies, which take place once a year in formal public celebration of degrees earned during the preceding 12 months.

For information about commencement ceremonies, visit the Commencement site at <http://commencement.stanford.edu>.

Conferral of Degrees

Students must apply for conferral of their degree by filing an Application to Graduate in the beginning of the quarter in which they plan to graduate. You apply via Axess; information will be sent to all students outlining the process. Students with unmet financial obligations to the University resulting in the placement of a hold on their records will not receive a transcript, statement of completion, degree certificate, or diploma until the hold is released.

Students who withdraw their applications to graduate or who fail to complete degree requirements for conferral must file a new Application to Graduate in a subsequent quarter when they are ready to graduate.

Theses are due to your advisor and the MLA office by May 1st in order to graduate the following June.

Commencement Ceremonies

Important information regarding Commencement activities and the distribution of diplomas is emailed in mid-April to all those eligible to receive a diploma at the ceremonies. Please review these materials carefully to make sure you don’t miss any deadlines.

Commencement ceremonies are held each June for students who have received degrees at the end of the previous autumn and winter terms and for students whose degrees are conferred in June. On graduation day, all graduates attend two ceremonies. One is the University ceremony, which is held in the football stadium for all Stanford graduates; the other is the department ceremony, where diplomas are awarded.

3.7 Transcripts

Students may request a copy of their official transcript through Axess. Transcript requests are free.

4. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

4.1 Attendance

Attendance at all seminar meetings is expected. If a student must miss one session, he or she must notify the professor in advance. Attendance at a minimum of 75% of all Work-in-Progress meetings from the time the student enrolls in Work-in-Progress through graduation is a program requirement.

The MLA program does not have a distance learning component or option. If a student moves out of the area prior to graduation and is unable to attend classes or meetings on campus, he or she will not be eligible to complete the degree.

4.2 Grading System

A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, NP			
CR	Credit	S	Satisfactory
I	Incomplete (see below)	NGR	No grade reported
L	Pass, letter grade to be reported	W	Withdrew
NP	Not passed	N	Continuing Course

The grading system listed above is applicable to all students. All courses intended to fulfill the 50-unit requirement or any other program requirement must be taken for a letter grade*; only courses with a B- or better may be used to fulfill program requirements. Please note, however, that grades below a B- will count toward the student's grade point average. The thesis work is graded on an S/NC basis.

**For the academic year 2020-21, students could choose to take courses for a letter grade or CR/NC. If a student takes a course for CR/NC, the student's work must still be at a B- or better level to fulfill MLA program requirements.*

4.3 Incompletes

Each instructor has the right to determine whether or not a student may take an incomplete in his or her course. If an instructor allows a student to take an incomplete, the student must do the following **before the end of the quarter**:

- Make appropriate arrangements with the instructor regarding the new deadline for completion of all coursework, and
- Notify in writing the Associate Dean and Director and Associate Director of the new deadline.

Incomplete agreements are arranged on an individual basis between the instructor and the student. The instructor will determine the length of time allowed to complete the course requirements, up to **a maximum of three quarters** (e.g., for a course taken in autumn 2026, the latest a professor may allow a student to turn in the coursework would be the last day of the summer 2027 quarter). If the work is not completed by the end of the agreed-upon time period, the student will automatically receive an NP and that course will not count towards degree.

Please note, however, that the NP will count toward the student's grade point average.

If a student has not arranged an incomplete with the instructor, but fails to complete the coursework, the instructor will report an NP grade.

4.4 Enrollment Requirements and Active Status

MLA students must enroll for each academic year, **and for each academic quarter from the time of original matriculation until conferral of the degree.**

To remain active, students must either:

- Successfully complete a minimum of two MLA courses (eight units) in one academic year (defined as the beginning of autumn quarter through the end of the following summer quarter), or
- Be actively working on their theses and regularly attending the Work-in-Progress meetings (defined as attending a minimum of 75% of all Work-in-Progress meetings from the time the student enrolls in Work-in-Progress through graduation).

Please note that if a student completes only two courses in one academic year, he or she will need to take extra MLA courses the following year in order to complete the program within five academic years. See the Sample Timelines Chart below for recommended courses of study. If a student in this situation has taken an incomplete in one or both of the classes, he or she may be placed on probation.

Students who are unable to complete the requirements for maintaining active status are considered inactive, and either must request and be granted a leave of absence or will be terminated from the program. For information about leaves of absence, see page 22. See also the section on Minimum Progress, on page 25.

The University requires students to enroll in a course, or turn in an MLA Services Status request for every quarter. If the student is not enrolled and has not submitted a Services request by the Preliminary Study List Deadline for each quarter, they will be **automatically discontinued** from the program. Once discontinued, if the student wishes to return to study in that same quarter, there is a \$200.00 fee for reinstatement. If they wish to return after 2 or more quarters have passed, they must apply for reinstatement.

Find the 2026-27 study list deadlines on page 46.

4.5 Timeline to Degree

Students have a maximum of five years to complete the degree. This is a Stanford policy. With careful planning, it is possible to complete the degree in four years.

If extraordinary circumstances prevent completion within five years, a student may submit a written petition to the Associate Dean and Director explaining why he or she is requesting an extension and outlining their plan for completion. This petition will be reviewed by a committee, and they will recommend that it be granted or denied. To be considered, the petition must be submitted on or before May 1 of the student's fifth year in the program. If an extension is granted, it will be for a maximum of one extra year. Tuition assistance is not available for this extra year tuition payment.

Accepted students may request to defer beginning the program for one year. These students will be subject to the following year's policies (as those policies may change from time to time) and tuition.

Sample Timelines

The following charts show sample coursework schedules. The first sample timeline leads to a degree in four years; the second leads to a degree in five years. Once a student has completed the first four required courses, the quarters during which a student decides to take one or two seminars or an elective, or to take the quarter off, will vary depending on the student's personal schedule.

Degree in Four Years		Degree in Five Years
Quarter	Coursework	Coursework
Autumn Year 1	Foundations I	Foundations I
Winter Year 1	Foundations II	Foundations II
Spring Year 1	Foundations III	Foundations III
Summer Year 1		
Autumn Year 2	Core Introductory Seminar	Core Introductory Seminar
Winter Year 2	1 st Seminar	1 st Seminar
Spring Year 2	2 nd Seminar	2 nd Seminar
Summer Year 2	3 rd Seminar	
Autumn Year 3	4 th and 5 th Seminar	3 rd Seminar
Winter Year 3	6 th Seminar	4 th Seminar
Spring Year 3	7 th Seminar and file prospectus	5 th Seminar
Summer Year 3	Begin working on Thesis	
Autumn Year 4	Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress	6 th Seminar
Winter Year 4	Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress	7 th Seminar and file prospectus
Spring Year 4	June Graduation	Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress
Summer Year 4		Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress
Autumn Year 5		Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress
Winter Year 5		Enroll in Thesis-in-Progress
Spring Year 5		June Graduation
Summer Year 5		

4.6 Leaves of Absence

Various factors may make it desirable or even imperative for students to interrupt their studies. Among these are maternity, family emergencies, illness or injury, job-related necessities, and financial difficulties. For this reason, the University makes it possible for students to petition for a leave of absence for a specified period and, if approved, to regain their student status at the end of the period.

With a “leave of absence,” a student leaves the University temporarily, neither paying tuition and fees nor receiving any of the privileges, instruction, or services associated with being a registered student. Leaves of absence may be available to MLA students who have been or will be unable to complete the requirement of two MLA courses (eight units) during one academic year.

Procedure to Request a Leave of Absence: A leave of absence request must be submitted in advance of the quarters for which leave is requested. Students should confer with the Associate Dean & Director prior to submitting a leave request. The leave request is made via form in Axxess;

the Associate Director will provide guidance on submitting the form. The granting of a leave of absence is at the discretion of the program; in ruling on that request, the program may take into account the applicant’s academic status when last enrolled, the length of the absence, the perceived potential for successful completion of the program, and the ability of the program to support the student both academically and financially, as well as any other factors or considerations regarded as relevant by the program.

Once a leave is granted, the student does not have the right to use University facilities (e.g., libraries, etc.) as “student standing” will not be activated during the leave. Therefore, a student is advised to weigh all options before requesting such a leave, but should one be necessary consult with the Associate Dean and Director.

Students on leaves of absence are not registered at Stanford, and, therefore, do not have the rights and privileges of registered students. They cannot fulfill any official department or University requirements during the leave period. Students on leave may complete course work from which an incomplete grade was awarded in a prior term and are expected to comply with the usual three-quarter limit for resolving incompletes.

Leaves of absence are granted for a maximum of one calendar year (4 quarters), with leaves for longer periods approved only under exceptional circumstances. The maximum allowed leave time is 8 quarters total. During the leave, the student may apply for an extension of the leave, if needed; all requests for extension must be filed before the end of the originally approved leave.

The time during a leave of absence does not count toward the five-year maximum allowed to degree. If a leave is required during an academic year when a student has already paid tuition and attended one course, the tuition will be refunded according to the published tuition refund schedule on page 31.

4.7 Reinstatement

MLA students who fail to enroll by the start of the term, and are not approved for a leave of absence, or have not submitted a Services Status request, will be discontinued. If the student wishes to return to the program during that same academic year, he or she is required to apply for reinstatement before returning to the program. The decision to approve or deny

reinstatement is made by the MLA program. The program is not obliged to approve reinstatements of students. Reinstatement decisions may be based on the applicant's academic status when last enrolled, the length of the absence, the perceived potential for successful completion of the program, and the ability of the program to support the student both academically and financially, as well as any other factors or considerations regarded as relevant by the program.

Reinstatement applications must be submitted 30 days prior to the term for which reenrollment is requested if the student is registering for courses. A \$200 fee is required.

4.8 First Year and One Quarter of Study (Foundation and Core Courses)

Students commence their studies in the MLA program with the foundation sequence, comprised of three courses taught during the fall, winter, and spring quarters of the first year. The Foundations instructors meet with the Associate Dean at the end of each quarter to review student progress.

After completion of the foundation sequence, MLA students spend the autumn of their second academic year in the core introductory seminar.

These four courses are the beginning of the student's probationary period in the program. Students must complete the Foundation and Core courses with a minimum B+ (3.3) grade point average. Students with a GPA lower than 3.3 at the end of the four courses will be asked to withdraw from the program. Students must successfully complete (earn a B- or better) in each Foundations course before moving on to the next Foundations or Core course. Students may not move on to the next course with an outstanding incomplete grade. Note that if more than one of the Foundations courses are completed with a B-grade, it may be difficult to ultimately obtain the required 3.3 GPA in all four courses. In order for a student to proceed to the core introductory seminar, students must be able to write an argumentative paper, including conducting a logical argument, and be ready to advance to writing an argumentative research paper.

Students are not permitted to take MLA seminars until all four required courses have been successfully completed.

4.9 End of Probationary Period and Application for Active Student Status

The first nine quarters constitutes a probationary time for each MLA student. After successful completion of the four core courses, students are eligible to register for MLA seminars. Students must apply for active status following the completion of their second MLA seminar following the core courses. **The application should be filed within one month of receipt of the second MLA seminar grade.** When the application is received, the Associate Dean and Director will review the student's progress. Granting active student status is at the discretion of the program. Students will be notified of the result of their application in writing.

To be eligible for active student status, within nine quarters a student must have successfully completed the foundation sequence, the core introductory seminar, and the first two MLA seminars with no incompletes, with a minimum of a B+ grade point average, and must have complied with all University policies and procedures.

Only classes where a B- or better grade is achieved are considered successfully completed.

4.10 Policy on Minimum Progress Requirements

MLA students must maintain minimum progress toward degree as defined below.

During Probationary Status

MLA students must complete the first six courses of study within nine quarters (i.e., students beginning Foundations 101A in autumn 2026 must have completed the foundations sequence, the core introductory seminar, and their first two MLA seminars by the end of fall 2028-2029). If a student has not made this minimum progress toward degree by the end of the fall quarter of his or her third year in the program, the program at its discretion may decide to allow the student a further period of probation (up to a maximum of one year) or may decide to terminate the student from the program.

During Active Student Status

MLA students must have completed a minimum of 30 units toward degree by the end of their third year in the program. If by the end of the third year, a student has fewer than 30 units, he or she must meet with the Associate Dean and Director to propose a plan (for approval by the Associate Dean and Director at her discretion) to complete the degree within five years. If the student does not meet the set goals in the approved plan, he or she may be terminated from the program.

If by the end of the fifth year in the program a student has only 44 units toward degree, he or she must meet with the Associate Dean and Director to submit a sixth-year petition, and to propose a plan (for approval by the Associate Dean and Director at her discretion) to complete the degree within six years. If the student does not meet the set goals in the approved plan, they may be terminated from the program.

In addition, MLA students must maintain a B+ (3.3) grade point average overall in courses applicable to the degree.

4.11 Guidelines for Dismissal of Students for Academic Reasons

Admission to Stanford's Master of Liberal Arts is highly selective. It is anticipated that every admitted student will have the ability to fulfill the requirements for the advanced degree.

Following are the guidelines to be used in the unusual circumstances that the program must consider dismissal of an MLA student for academic reasons.

The principal conditions for continued registration of a student are the timely completion of the University and MLA program requirements for the degree, and fulfillment of minimum progress requirements. The guidelines that follow specify procedures for dismissal of MLA students who

are not meeting these conditions. In such cases, the Associate Dean and Director in consultation with the MLA Advisory Committee will:

1. Where possible and as early as possible, warn the student, in writing, of the situation and deficiency. A detailed explanation of the reason for the warning should be provided.
2. Consider extenuating circumstances communicated by the student.
3. Decide the question of dismissal by majority vote of a committee including the Faculty Director and at least one member of the MLA Advisory Committee, and communicate the decision to the student in writing.
4. Place a summary of program discussions, votes, and decisions in the student's file.
5. Provide students the opportunity to examine their program files, if requested.
6. Provide students with information on their rights to appeal under the Student Academic Grievance Procedures.

Careful records of program decisions safeguard the rights of both students and faculty.

During Probationary Status

At its discretion, the program may decide to dismiss a student who is not yet eligible to apply for, or who has been denied, Active Student Status if the student is not making minimum progress or completing requirements in a timely manner. Before considering dismissal, the Associate Dean and Director in consultation with the MLA committee should communicate with the student (which may include a meeting with the student) concerning his or her academic performance and how to correct deficiencies, where such deficiencies are deemed correctable.

At the Time of the Application for Active Student Status

In a review for admission to Active Student Status, if the Associate Dean and Director, in consultation with the MLA Committee, decides not to admit the student to Active Student Status, the decision may result in the dismissal of the student from the program. The Associate Dean and Director will communicate the decision to the student in writing and orally. The student may submit a written request for reconsideration. The MLA Committee will respond in writing to the request for reconsideration; it may decline to reconsider its decision.

During Active Student Status

When an MLA student who has been admitted to Active Student Status is not making minimum progress or is not completing University or program requirements in a timely manner, the Associate Dean and Director will meet with the student. A written summary of these discussions shall be sent to the student and the adviser and added to the student's program file. The summary should specify the student's academic deficiencies, the steps necessary to correct them (if deemed correctable), and the period of time that is allowed

for their correction (normally one academic quarter). At the end of the warning period, the Associate Dean and Director in consultation with the MLA committee will review the student's progress and notify the student of the proposed actions. If the student has corrected the deficiencies, he or she should be notified in writing that the warning has been lifted.

If the deficiencies are not deemed correctable (for example, if the student has failed a required course or examination, or the student has shown a pattern of unsatisfactory performance) or if, at the end of the warning period, the student has not corrected the noted deficiencies, the program may initiate proceedings for dismissal. The student shall be notified, in writing, that the case will be considered at an impending committee meeting. The student has the right to be invited to attend a portion of the scheduled meeting to present his or her own case; a student may also make this case to the committee in writing.

After full discussion at the committee meeting, the committee, without the student present, will review the case and vote on the issue of dismissal. The student will be sent a written summary of the discussion, including the committee's decision and the reasons for it. The student may submit a written request for reconsideration. The committee's response to the request for reconsideration will be made in writing; it may decline to reconsider its decision.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of Stanford's Honor Code, and in the MLA program, plagiarism of any sort is not tolerated.

5. TUITION AND FEES

5.1 Tuition and Fees

	2026-2027 Tuition
MLA Tuition	\$13,089*

*This is not a guarantee of future tuition rates.

Tuition invoices are emailed to the student's @stanford account two months prior to the tuition due date. Unpaid tuition will incur late fees and accounts with outstanding balances over 30 days will be put on hold. A hold on an account blocks future enrollment, transcripts, and diplomas from being issued.

The annual tuition is billed in three equal statements in October, January, and April. The tuition paid in October, January, and April cover any classes taken Summer quarter. It is not a quarterly tuition—just a quarterly bill.

If a student is on leave fall quarter, and returns to active status to take two or more courses Winter through Summer quarters, the full annual tuition will be charged in three equal installments in January, April, and June.

If a student takes two or more courses over fall and winter quarters only, they are still responsible for the full annual tuition.

Students should anticipate the possibility of a tuition increase each academic year.

Additional fees include a one-time document fee of \$250 charged fall quarter of each student's first year in the program, and ASSU fees of \$69 charged Autumn, Winter, and Spring of each year the student is in the program.

5.2 Tuition Coverage

Tuition while a student is taking courses

Students taking two or more courses in one academic year are considered active and are responsible for the \$13,089 tuition. Students who are unable to complete two courses in an academic year are considered inactive and must officially request a leave of absence or will be terminated from the program. If a student requests a leave of absence after the academic year has begun, tuition will be refunded according to the Tuition Refund Schedule.

Payment of the 2026-2027 MLA tuition will cover the cost of all courses toward degree taken during the academic year (autumn through summer). (Any Intellectual Journey courses will have additional fees.)

Tuition must be paid for each year the student is in the program.

Students enrolled in Thesis-in-Progress are considered active and are responsible for the \$13,089 tuition.

Students enrolled in MLA 398 do not concurrently enroll in courses except in extraordinary circumstances. If there is one particular course that is related to the student's thesis work, the Associate Dean and Director, at her discretion, may grant approval for the student to enroll in one and only one course. If approved, this seminar will be included in the regular MLA tuition.

5.3 STRP Funds

Stanford employees who are eligible to receive STRP funds may apply those funds towards MLA tuition costs. Each quarter Stanford employees apply for STRP through EdAssist and forward their approval letters to the MLA office. The MLA Associate Director will provide guidance for the application process. The funds will be applied to their student account through Axxess. After the quarter, course grades must be uploaded to EdAssist to confirm eligibility for STRP funds. Please note that *STAP* funds may not be applied toward the same degree program as STRP funds.

5.4 Tuition Assistance

A limited amount of tuition assistance may be available to MLA students. Application forms are available online late Spring quarter, through the Financial Aid Office, and generally due mid-June; specific deadlines will be provided in advance. Incomplete and late applications will not be considered. Applicants will be notified of the result of their application by the end of July. Tuition assistance awards that are not used during the academic year for which they were awarded revert back to the MLA program.

Awards are made at the discretion of the Financial Aid Office and solely on the basis of demonstrated financial need. Students for whom full MLA tuition would create a significant financial hardship may receive a grant from the MLA program to cover a percentage of the annual tuition. Tuition assistance is not available for students who apply for and are granted a sixth year in the program.

The MLA program has limited tuition assistance funds, and we expect students receiving aid to stretch their financial resources as much as possible to fund their education. Students receiving tuition assistance from the MLA program must disclose any other assistance they may receive toward their educational expenses. Any outside funding received toward any part of the student's educational expenses (including books, supplies, and transportation costs) will be considered in the determination of aid as though it were applied directly toward MLA tuition.

Students must reapply and provide all required documents by the stated deadline to assure tuition assistance consideration each year.

Students receiving tuition assistance must maintain minimum progress toward degree (see above). If a student is not maintaining minimum progress, they may cease to be eligible to receive further tuition assistance.

Tuition assistance can only be used to cover tuition. Tuition assistance will not cover the document fee, ASSU fees, late fees, or books.

5.5 Tuition Refund Schedule

Tuition is refunded on a per diem basis starting with the first day through the first 60 percent of the term for each quarter. The per diem rates for 2026-2027 are listed below. Example: a student requests a leave of absence or withdraws from the program on the 17th day of the autumn quarter would be assessed \$1002.32 ($17 \times \$58.96/\text{day}$) in tuition for that academic year. The student would be eligible for a refund of \$3360.68 ($\$4,363 - \1002.32) minus any tuition assistance received or any payment plan payments not yet received.

If a student is not able to complete two courses in one academic year and requests a leave of absence or withdraws from the program late in the academic year, tuition will be refunded at the rate of 50 % for the quarters during which the student was not enrolled in a course. Example: a student who completes one course in autumn, then requests a leave of absence on the third day of the spring quarter would be assessed \$6759.06 ($\$4,363 + (\$4,363 \times .5) + (\$71.52 \times 3)$) in tuition for that academic year. The student would be eligible for a refund of \$6329.94 ($\$13,089 - \$6,759.06$) minus any tuition assistance received or any payment plan payments not yet received.

2026-2027 Tuition Refund Schedule		Last Day for a Refund
Fall	\$58.69	11/3/26
Winter	\$64.16	2/17/27
Spring	\$71.52	5/10/27

Summer* \$82.32 7/23/27 *Summer refund is only if the student was on LOA in fall quarter

6. LIFE AS AN MLA STUDENT

6.1 Email

All Stanford students are assigned an @stanford.edu email address. Stanford University, and the MLA program will use this email address as the primary means of reaching you. **MLA students must use, and check regularly their @stanford addresses.** Students may use Stanford's email service to receive these messages, or can have emails forwarded to a personal address of their choice.

For more information on the email programs you can use to view your mail go to <https://uit.stanford.edu/emailcalendar/config>.

To have your email forwarded to your personal account:

- a. Log in to your Accounts page: <https://accounts.stanford.edu>
- b. Click on Email Management

Check your email on a regular basis or you will miss important announcements from the MLA office and the University, including tuition and enrollment information. In order to get information out to large groups, we will frequently use email distribution lists. Your presence on some distribution lists may be optional; on most it will be mandatory.

6.2 Contact Information Updates

It is important to make sure that the MLA office and the University have your current contact information. Any time you have a new phone number, email, or mailing address, please alert the MLA office as soon as possible. To update your information, use the Contact Information Update link in the Students section of the MLA website.

In addition to alerting the MLA office, you will also need to update your information in Axxess; we are not able to do this for you.

- c. Log in to Axxess
- d. Go to the My Information drop down
- e. Update your information under the Personal Information tab.

6.3 Stanford University ID Card

Tresidder Memorial Union, 2nd Floor (650) 498-2273

MLA students receive Stanford ID cards, which allow library and email privileges.

To get your Stanford ID card, upload your photo via the Campus Card Services site <https://uit.stanford.edu/service/campuscard>. To pick up your card, contact the ID Card office to check when it will be available, and when their open hours are.

The card is free; however, there is a cost for replacing a lost card. Current Stanford staff do not need to obtain a new ID card.

6.4 SUNet ID

The SUNet ID provides access to the Stanford University Network (SUNet) and its services, and identifies authorized users of these services. Each member of the Stanford electronic community creates a unique SUNet ID and password for themselves.

All students are sent information on obtaining a SUNet ID at the time of their acceptance to the program. For questions about your SUNet ID, contact the MLA office.

6.5 Student Privileges

MLA students enjoy access to all regular University libraries and academic services. If you experience a lapse in your student privileges, please contact the MLA office right away at (650) 725-0061 or michelle.bennett@stanford.edu.

6.6 Stanford Bookstore

519 Lasuen Mall

<https://www.bkstr.com/stanfordstore/home>

(650) 329-1217

The Stanford Bookstore provides textbooks, a diverse selection of books, Stanford apparel, and gifts. There is also a small cafe and a computer section. The computer section is only open to Stanford affiliates, and offers an affiliate discount.

6.7 Tresidder Memorial Union

Tresidder Memorial Union serves as a hub for community activities on the Stanford campus. The union features various dining options and ample patio seating on both sides of the building, along with a bike center, convenience store and banking services. Tresidder is also home to several administrative offices, including the Dean of Student Life, the Office of Community Standards, the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs, and Student Affairs Meeting Services.

Located on the second floor of Tresidder Memorial Union is the Student Services Center. The SSC is where you can receive assistance with your University bill, enrollment, and refunds. For assistance, please visit <https://studentservices.stanford.edu/get-help>

6.8 Publications of General Interest

The *Stanford Daily* is a student newspaper published each weekday during the academic year except during final examination periods and breaks. There are many distribution points on campus. During the summer it is published weekly. Subscribe to receive it by email: <https://stanforddaily.com>

The *Stanford Report* is the University's daily news email. It includes a number of articles of interest to graduate students. To subscribe to the *Stanford Report*, go to <https://news.stanford.edu/subscribe>.

6.9 Stanford Alumni Association

Stanford students are eligible to join the Stanford Alumni Association once they have successfully completed three quarters as a Stanford student. Membership in the alumni association has many benefits including discounts on and off campus, and access to University recreation spaces, including the golf course.

The cost of lifetime membership is currently \$695 for current students.

For details on member benefits and to sign up go to: <https://alumni.stanford.edu/membership/>

6.10 Eating on Campus

Stanford has many on-campus dining options. Tresidder Memorial Union has the largest concentration of dining options, but there are other choices across campus. This map shows locations and details for the many eateries.

<https://storage.googleapis.com/su-mobile-x-uat/views/dining-map-LBRE/index.html>

6.11 Transportation to Campus and Parking

<https://transportation.stanford.edu>

Parking

Parking in the Visitor and Permit lots is permissible and free after 4 pm on weekdays and anytime during the weekend (note—'A' permit spaces around The Oval are available after 6pm). If you need to visit campus earlier than 4 pm on a weekday, you must park in a Visitor lot and pay the hourly fee, or purchase a daily parking permit to park in A or C lots. Day passes are virtual and can be purchased through the Transportation website.

Public Transportation

Stanford University partners with public transit agencies to facilitate car-free access to campus, local communities, and the Bay Area. The complimentary Marguerite shuttle connects the Palo Alto and Redwood City Transit Centers to various campus locations, providing essential car-free circulation and first-mile and last-mile transportation.

<https://transportation.stanford.edu/getting-stanford/public-transit>

Students coming to campus via Caltrain should look into the University [GoPass](#), a free Caltrain pass for eligible graduate students (through 26-27).

Note that the Marguerite, the free shuttle that runs to/from campus to the rail station, doesn't always run late in the evening when the MLA classes typically get out.

7. CAMPUS RESOURCES

7.1 Libraries

<https://library.stanford.edu>

MLA students are entitled to full use of the Stanford Libraries. MLA students will generally use the Cecil B. Green Library, which is located just east of the Main Quad between Galvez Mall and Lasuen Mall.

Information regarding scope of collections, physical facilities, and services (such as general borrowing regulations, reserve books, inter-library loans and cooperative borrowing agreements, photocopiers, scanners, and assigned study spaces and lockers) is available on the Libraries' website. The Libraries website also provides links to a wealth of print and digital resources, and to subject specialists.

Library hours vary throughout the year and can be verified through their website.

Library Workshop

Stanford MLA students in their second year, as part of their Core course, participate in a library workshop in Green Library. During this workshop you will be introduced to the wealth of resources available at the library, instruction on how to access them, and instruction on conducting library research.

SearchWorks

SearchWorks, the libraries' online catalog, is available at (<http://searchworks.stanford.edu>). Using SearchWorks you can search the full catalog record, including publisher, place of publication, and content notes. Within SearchWorks you can request materials from Stanford Auxiliary Libraries or the Hopkins Marine Station, and place recalls on items that are checked out. New features in SearchWorks allow you to text records to yourself, browse electronically, and search for databases.

If you experience any problems with your library privileges, be sure to let the MLA office know immediately.

7.2 Computer Resources

For computer help and loans, students can visit The Hub @ Lathrop. <https://thehub.stanford.edu> Services at The Hub include:

- Borrowing equipment and poster printing from the Tech Desk
- Access to crafting machines -- including 3D printers -- and tools in create:space
- Desktop computers and access to Stanford-licensed software
- Places to study and work
- Support for technical issues and questions from Student Technical Support

Stanford provides computers for on-campus use by Stanford students, faculty, and staff. They provide "public" clusters of computers, printers, laptop support, and specialized equipment for multimedia projects that members of the Stanford community can use for course work, email, academic research, and other related purposes. (Commercial or political use is prohibited.)

- Tech Lounge on first floor of Lathrop Library, and the Lathrop 24 hour space has computers and printers for use
- The Tech Desk at Lathrop has laptops that can be checked out
- Green Library has print capability from library cluster machines or from your own device
- The 2nd floor of the Old Union has print capability

7.3 Cardinal Print

<https://uit.stanford.edu/service/cardinal-print>

Cardinal Print is Stanford University's managed print service, allowing anyone with a SUNet ID to securely print, copy, or scan materials with their Stanford ID, Mobile Key, or by entering their SUNet ID and password at any Cardinal Print device.

Cardinal Print Devices in Student Areas

<https://uit.stanford.edu/service/cardinal-print/student-printer-locations>

7.4 UIT (University IT)

<https://uit.stanford.edu>

UIT is the starting place for most things tech-related, from help with email access, SUNet ID issues, connecting to the network, and more.

Web Pages

Information Technology services provides free web services files to students, faculty, and staff; anyone with a SUNet ID can publish web pages. If you are interested in developing your own home page or using web-based documents in a class, go to <https://uit.stanford.edu/services/category/web-development-and-hosting> for instructions and information.

Wireless Access

For information on wireless access on campus, visit:

<https://uit.stanford.edu/service/wirelessnet>

7.5 Disability Resources

Office of Accessible Education (OAE)

563 Salvatierra Walk

Stanford, CA 94305

<https://oae.stanford.edu>

(650) 723-1066 voice

oae-contactus@stanford.edu

The mission of the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) is to promote an accessible and inclusive environment for all students with disabilities. MLA students who need to arrange accommodation should visit the OAE site and register with the OAE to begin the conversation.

7.6 Stanford Career Education

<https://careered.stanford.edu>

Stanford Career Education partners with students and recent alumni to find internships and jobs, explore careers, establish connections, and so much more. Campus partners and employers work with us to provide opportunities and resources to support students and recent alumni in their career endeavors.

7.7 Student Academic Grievance Procedures

Any Stanford undergraduate or graduate student who believes that they have been subjected to an improper decision on an academic matter is entitled to file a grievance to obtain an independent review of the allegedly improper decision, followed by corrective action if appropriate. A grievance is a complaint in writing made to an administrative officer of the University concerning an academic decision, made by a person or group of persons acting in an official University

capacity, that directly and adversely affects the student as an individual in his or her academic capacity. The University's Academic Grievance Procedures are found on the University Bulletin at <https://bulletin.stanford.edu/academic-polices/grievances/academic-grievance-procedure>

7.8 The Office of the University Ombuds

Kingscote
Gardens 419
Lagunita Drive
3rd Floor, Room 302 (650) 497-1542
<https://ombuds.stanford.edu>

The University Ombuds is a safe and confidential place for faculty, students, staff and postdocs to discuss their Stanford-related concerns. The Ombuds will listen without judgment; provide information on Stanford policies and procedures; connect you to other resources, and work with you to develop a plan to address your concerns, or manage a conflict you are experiencing.

8. STANFORD UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As a general proposition (and subject to some exceptions due, for example, to programmatic difference), MLAs students are subject to Stanford University policies and procedures applicable to other students. Many of these policies and procedures are found in the Student Conduct and Rights section of the [Stanford Bulletin](#). Please familiarize yourself with this section of the Stanford Bulletin. In addition, a number of particularly important policies and procedures are summarized below.

8.1 Fundamental Standard

<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-guidance/fundamental-standard/fundamental-standard-may-1-2023>

The Fundamental Standard has set the standard of conduct for students at Stanford since it was articulated in 1896. It states:

Students at Stanford are expected to show both within and without the University such respect for order, morality, personal honor and the rights of others as is demanded of good citizens. Failure to do this will be sufficient cause for removal from the University.

8.2 Honor Code

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the Stanford academic community, individually and collectively. Its purpose is to uphold a culture of academic honesty.

Students will support this culture of academic honesty by neither giving nor accepting unpermitted academic aid in any work that serves as a component of grading or evaluation, including assignments, examinations, and research.

Instructors will support this culture of academic honesty by providing clear guidance, both in their course syllabi and in response to student questions, on what constitutes permitted and unpermitted aid. Instructors will also not take unusual or unreasonable precautions to prevent academic dishonesty.

Students and instructors will also cultivate an environment conducive to academic integrity. While instructors alone set academic requirements, the Honor Code is a community undertaking that requires students and instructors to work together to ensure conditions that support academic integrity.

Examples of conduct that have been regarded as being in violation of the Honor Code include:

- Copying from another's examination paper or allowing another to copy from one's own paper
- Unpermitted collaboration
- [Plagiarism](#)
- Revising and resubmitting a quiz or exam for regrading, without the instructor's knowledge and consent
- Giving or receiving unpermitted aid on a take-home examination
- Representing as one's own work the work of another
- Giving or receiving aid on an academic assignment under circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that such aid was not permitted

The Interpretations and Applications of the Honor Code, the Student Judicial Charter of 1997, the Student Conduct Penalty Code, statistics, and other documents related to Judicial Affairs are available at the Office of Community Standards website:

<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu>

8.3 Use of Generative AI

The MLA program follows the University's guidelines about the use of generative AI: Absent a clear statement from a course instructor, use of or consultation with generative AI shall be treated analogously to assistance from another person. In particular, using generative AI tools to substantially complete an assignment or exam (e.g., by entering exam or assignment questions) is not permitted. Students should acknowledge the use of generative AI (other than incidental use) and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt.

8.4 Computer and Network Usage Policy

Stanford has a Computer and Network Usage Policy which covers the appropriate usage of University computers and networks with respect to issues such as intellectual property rights, privacy, and information belonging to others, and the integrity of information resources. A key piece of the policy is that your campus identifiers (user ID and SUNet ID passwords) are not to be shared with anyone.

We urge you to read and become familiar with the policy:

<https://adminguide.stanford.edu/chapters/computing/computer-and-network-usage/computer-and-network-usage-policy>.

8.5 Privacy of Student Records

The University's policy on the confidentiality of student records conforms to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, and is explained in detail in the Stanford Bulletin: <https://bulletin.stanford.edu/academic-polices/student-conduct-rights/student-privacy>

8.6 Nondiscrimination Policy

<https://bulletin.stanford.edu/academic-polices/student-conduct-rights/nondiscrimination>

Stanford University admits qualified students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or marital status to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the University. Consistent with its obligations under the law, in the administration of the University's programs and activities, Stanford prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, marital status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law; Stanford also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence. Race, color, or national origin includes shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. This policy applies to Stanford programs and activities both on and off-campus, including overseas programs.

8.7 Harassment and Discrimination

Stanford University strives to provide a place of work and study free of discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and other forms of sexual misconduct. For additional details visit the Harassment & Discrimination section of the Admin Guide:

<https://adminguide.stanford.edu/chapters/guiding-policies-and-principles/harassment-discrimination/sexual-harassment>

or visit the SHARE Title IX website at

<https://share.stanford.edu>.

8.8 Accreditation

<https://wasc.stanford.edu>

Stanford University is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission.

9. CAMPUS SAFETY

The Stanford campus is a beautiful and relatively safe environment. However, residents and visitors must not forget that it is part of a larger community, and the normal precautions should be exercised to safeguard persons and property.

9.1 Department of Public Safety

233 Bonair Siding, Stanford

(650) 723-9633 Main Office

(650) 329-2413 Non-emergency line

911 Emergency
9-911 Emergency (from a campus phone)
<http://police.stanford.edu>

9.2 Emergencies

9-911 (on campus) or 911 (off campus)

The Department of Public Safety provides law enforcement, security, safety, crime prevention, and emergency services 24 hours a day at Stanford. Contact SUDPS with any questions about safety-related issues on the Stanford campus.

9.3 Suggested Travel Routes

[Stanford's Suggested Travel Routes map](#)

This map shows the routes considered safest for pedestrian and bicycle travel, as well as the location of campus pay phones and emergency phones.

Although the Suggested Travel Routes may not be the shortest distance between two points, the Department of Public Safety strongly recommends their use. They do not absolutely guarantee your safety but are preferable to other routes because they are well-traveled, adequately lighted, located in open-space areas, and extend from most of the student living areas to the academic areas.

9.4 Safe Travel at Night

(650) 725-SURE (7873)

Stanford has a service that will provide safe rides to/from parking lots and campus buildings. The service runs from 8:00pm to 2:00am.

9.5 Sexual Assault Support and Resources

24-hour hotline (650) 725-9955

[Department of Public Safety Sexual Assault Resources](#)

9.6 Department of Environmental Health and Safety

(650) 723-0448

<http://ehs.stanford.edu>

Students should contact the Department of Environmental Health and Safety if they have questions regarding safety in campus offices and departments (e.g. personal injury, chemical spills).

9.7 Fire Safety

(650) 725-3268

<https://ehs.stanford.edu/about-us/fire-safety>

9.8 Lost and Found

(650) 723-9633

<https://police.stanford.edu/lost-found.html>

The Department of Public Safety operates a lost and found service during normal business hours. Tresidder Information, the libraries, and the *Stanford Daily* classified ads may also be helpful in recovering lost items.

9.9 Earthquake and Wildfire Preparedness

<https://emergency.stanford.edu> Information:

(650) 723-0569

Campus information after a major earthquake: (800) 89-SHAKE (within the U.S.), or 01-602-241-6769 (outside the U.S.)

Stanford University Emergency Information Hotline: (650) 725-5555

In an emergency or disaster affecting the Stanford community, you can view important updates and instructions on the emergency.stanford.edu site.

9.10 AlertSU

Students are encouraged to opt-in to AlertSU emergency alerts by downloading the Stanford Mobile app and enabling the app notifications.

<https://uit.stanford.edu/stanford-mobile>

9.11 Clery Act

Stanford University complies with the Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crimes Statistics Act.

https://police.stanford.edu/clery_act.html

10. AXESS, ENROLLING, CANVAS, MAP

10.1 Introduction to Axess

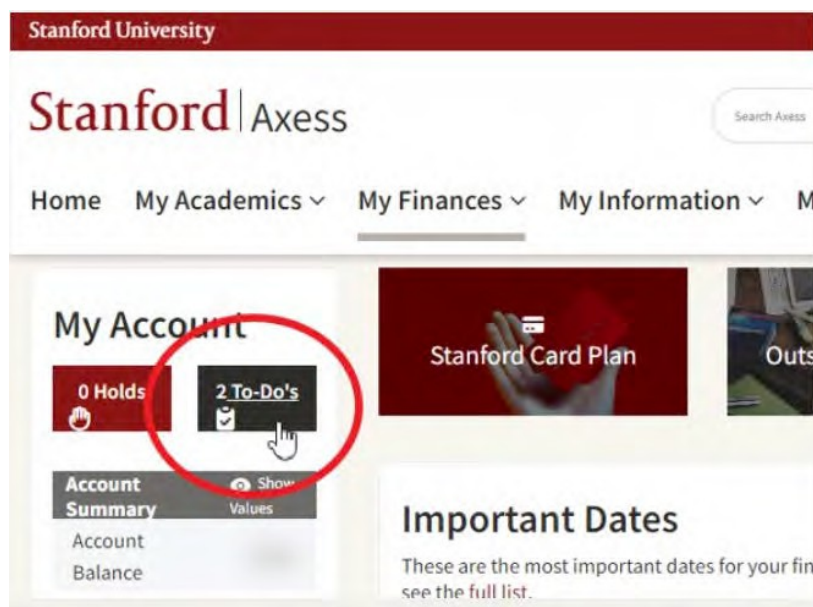
You'll find most of your Stanford student academic and financial applications via Axess, Stanford's central online platform. Using Axess, students are able to complete the following tasks:

- Review your grades
- Request an official transcript
- Print a history of your courses and grades
- Update your address and other contact information
- See your account with Student Financial Services
- See your tuition assistance awards
- Online course evaluations

Study List

'Study List' is a term you will see often in Axess. Study List refers to the courses you have enrolled in. The first day of classes each quarter is the Study List Deadline. Students must have enrolled in classes or have submitted their MLA Services Status request by that deadline each quarter or they will be discontinued. For more information on this process see page 18 of the MLA Handbook.

➡ To log in to Axess go to <http://axess.stanford.edu> and use your SUNet ID and password.



11. ENROLLMENT

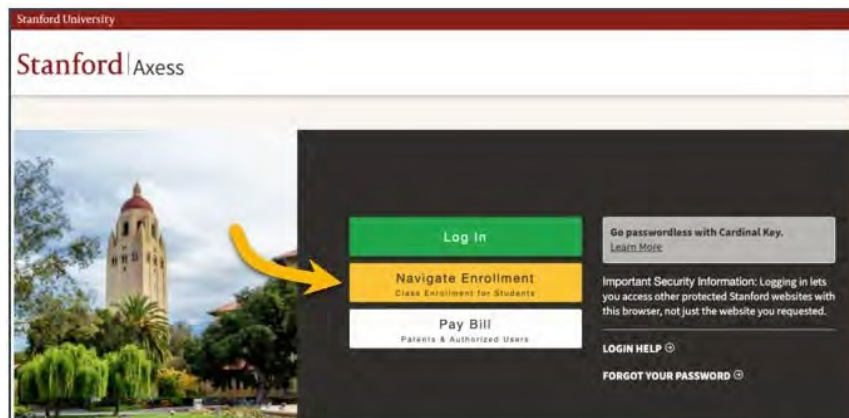
11.1 Enrolling (also known as filing a study list)

Prior to the start of enrollment each quarter, the MLA office will let you know when the course details are available on the MLA site.

These enrollment instructions can be found at

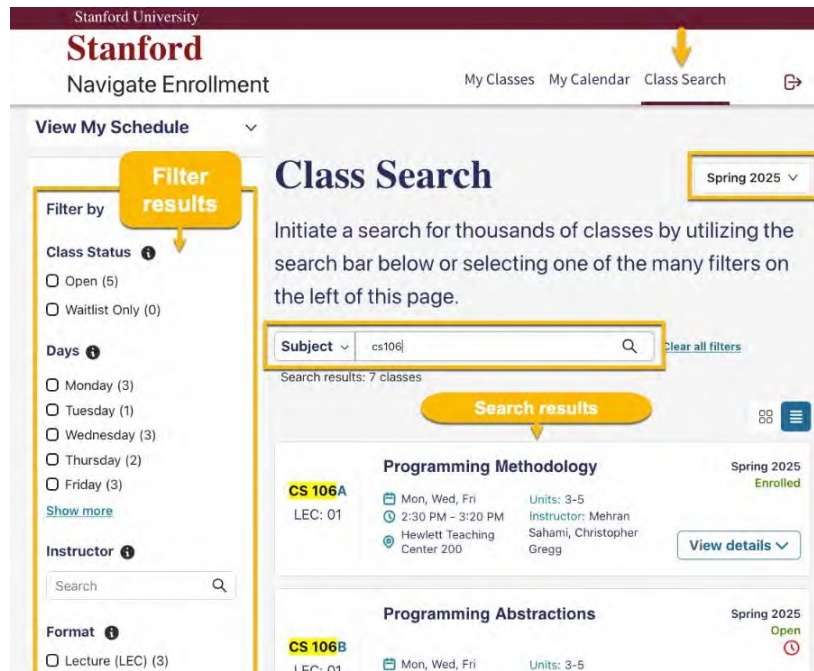
<https://studentservices.stanford.edu/my-academics/enroll-classes/how-do-i-enroll/enroll-class>

Navigate directly to enrollment.navigators.stanford.edu or select the Navigate Enrollment button from the Axxess log in page.

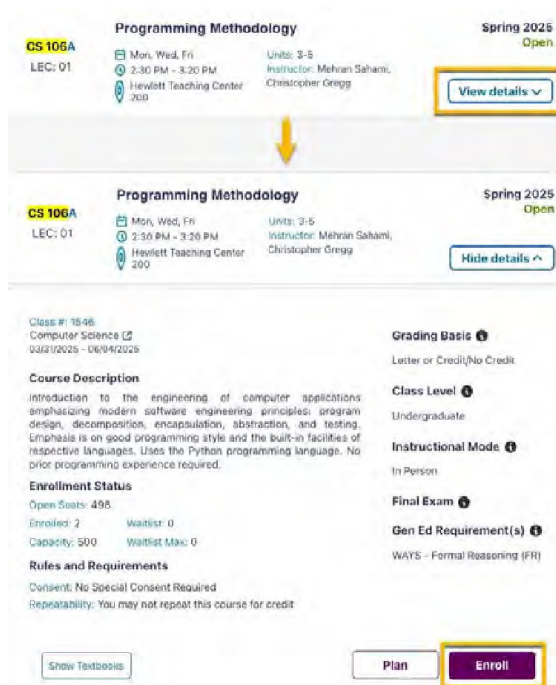


1. Search for Classes

- In the top right corner, select **Class Search**.
- Make sure you've selected the **correct term** from the drop down menu
- Use the **search bar** to find classes by subject: MLA



2. Once you've found the correct class, select the **View Details** button.
 - If everything looks good, select **Enroll**.



3. Respond to prompts (grading basis, number of units. Note that for MLA classes, these details will be auto-filled; there won't be any choices to make. Select **Next**.
4. Confirm your selection.
 - A summary of your enrollment choices will appear.
 - If everything looks correct, select **Submit**.

5. Receive Confirmation

- Once you've submitted, you'll receive a **confirmation message** indicating whether you've been **successfully enrolled** in the class.
- If you're enrolled, select **Finish** to complete the process.



11.2 Drop or Withdraw from a Course

Dropping a course

If a student drops a course, the course will not be reflected on the student's transcript. Students may drop a course any time prior to (a) the point at which 25% of the class meetings have taken place, or (b) the drop deadline, whichever comes first).

- If you are enrolled for more than 4 units, you drop/withdraw from a class through Navigate Enrollment.
- If you are enrolled in less than 4 units, and are adding another class, you must add the other class first, and then you can drop the original class.
- If you are enrolled in less than four units, and are not adding another class, the system will not allow you to drop online. Contact Michelle Bennett at michelle.bennett@stanford.edu and she will submit the drop for you. You will also need to submit a MLA Services Status Request form. See page 18 of the MLA handbook for details.

Withdrawing from a course

If a student does not drop a course prior to the drop deadline, but later wishes to withdraw from the course, the transcript will list the course with a grade of "W." The grade of "W" is not calculated in the student's grade point average, and the student will not be granted units for the course.. Students may withdraw from the course any time prior to the point at which 75% of the class meetings have taken place or (b) the withdraw deadline, whichever comes first.

Follow the instructions for how to drop/withdraw from a course here:

<https://studentservices.stanford.edu/my-academics/enroll-classes/how-do-i-enroll/drop-class>

11.3 Enrollment Deadlines

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Preliminary Study List (date to be enrolled by)	9/22/26	1/4/26	3/29/27	6/21/27
Class Drop Deadline (Final Study List Deadline)	10/9/26	1/22/27	4/16/27	7/2/27
Class Withdraw Deadline	11/13/26	2/26/27	5/21/27	7/30/27

11.4 Class Location

You can find the location of your class in Axxess, or through Navigate Enrollment. In the example on the left below, the class is in Hewlett Teaching Center, Room 200. In the example on the right, the class is in Building 300, Room 303.

CS 106A
LEC: 01

Programming Methodology

Mon, Wed, Fri
2:30 PM - 3:20 PM
Hewlett Teaching Center
200

Units: 3-5
Instructor: Mehran Sahami,
Christopher Gregg

ANTHRO 1S
LEC: 01
Units: 3
Class#: 23537

Summer 2025

Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology

Lecture
6/23/25 - 8/14/25
Tues, Thurs
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
300-303
Instructor: Salmon Perrilliat, E. Salovaara, I.

11.5 Grades and Transcripts

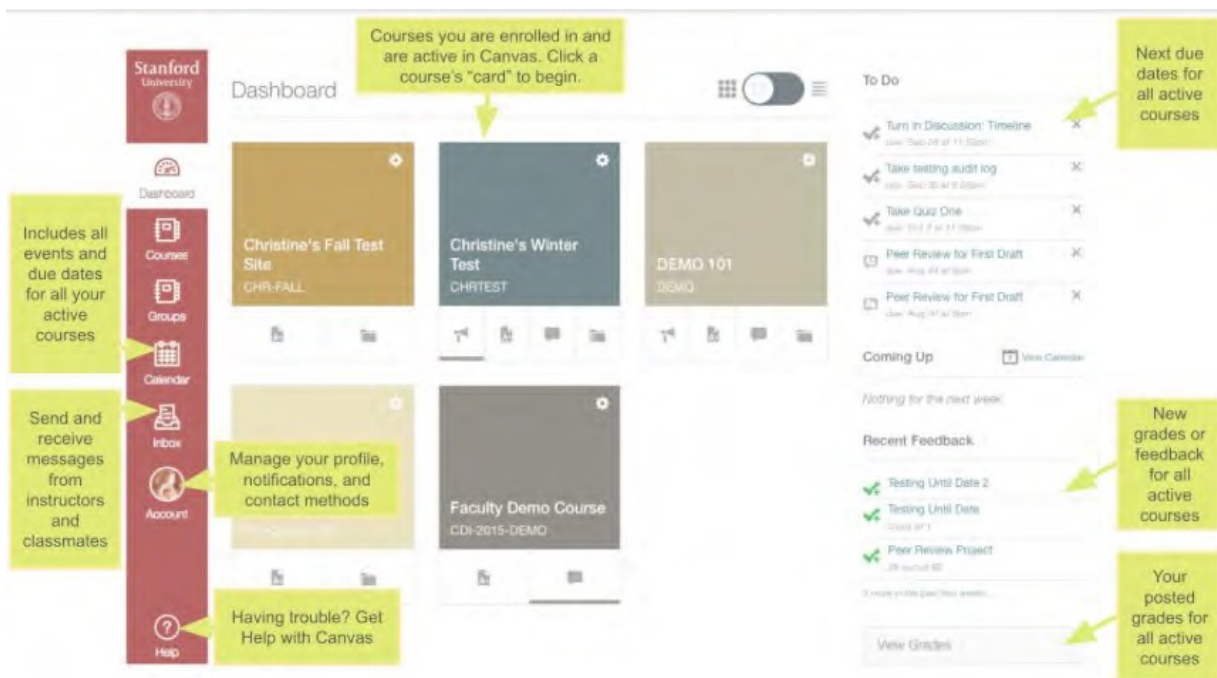
You can view your grades several ways. Go to Academics—click on the Other Academics drop-down menu. Choose View My Classes or Unofficial Transcript.

The screenshot shows the 'My Academics' dropdown menu. The 'Request Transcript' option is highlighted, and the 'Official Transcript' link is circled in red. Other options in the menu include 'Visit Academics Home Page', 'Apply To Graduate', 'Course & Section Evaluations', 'Declare a Major or Minor', 'Enroll in Classes', 'My Locker', 'NameCoach', 'Petition & Forms', 'Program Summary', and 'Request Certification'.

12. CANVAS

Canvas is the cloud-based learning management system that faculty use to communicate with their students. Once you enroll in a course, you will be automatically added to the Canvas site for that class. The faculty will use the Canvas site to send announcements about the class, post readings and syllabi, and may use the Canvas discussion feature. Canvas is very user-friendly, but students should visit the Canvas Student Resources page for information about Canvas and a brief Canvas video tutorial at gocanvas.stanford.edu/for-students/.

To log in to Canvas go to canvas.stanford.edu and select the Stanford University SUNet Sign In (do not use the Continuing Studies sign in). Your dashboard will look like this (but with fewer classes).



12.1 Reading List and First Assignment

You will find the reading list and first assignment (if there is one) on the class Canvas site. Click on the course 'card' to access that class. In the left side navigation for your course you'll find tabs for Syllabus and Files.

12.2 Announcements

You will receive email updates to your @stanford address whenever the faculty posts an announcement on their Canvas site. However, if you enroll after the faculty has posted something you will not receive that alert. You will need to check the canvas site for any notices you may have missed.

13. CLASS EVALUATIONS

You can link to course evaluation through Axxess under My Academics, or through the course's Canvas site. The evaluation opens to students one week prior to the end of class, and closes three days after the end of finals. Your grade for the class will not be released until you have submitted an evaluation (provided the faculty has submitted their grades). Opening the evaluation and then selecting to 'Opt Out' counts as evaluating the course. You may want to review the [frequently asked questions](#) about the evaluation process.

14. MAP (My Academic Path)

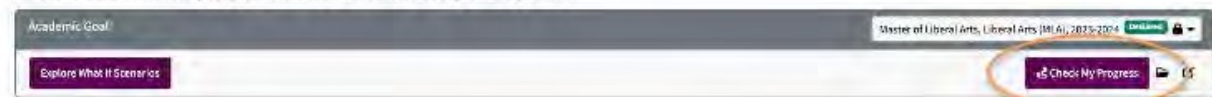
<https://map.stanford.edu>

MAP is your passport to degree progress. After logging into the tool, you can view your completed courses, run a detailed progress report towards graduation, monitor your milestones, set a path to degree conferral, and more.

The MAP system is for all students, which means that some of the features won't be used by MLA students. The videos provided are good to get you started, and MLA-specific tips and explanations are listed below.

Quick Start:

From the main page, select Check My Progress

**Degree Audit**

1 Goal Type: this is the year you entered the program.

2 Expected Grad Date: the system automatically puts in a 4-year expected grad date. This does not mean you have to graduate in 4 years, it is simply a reference point—it will be adjusted as you proceed in the program.

Select the **+** button to expand your degree audit; this is the easiest way to view the audit—otherwise you have to expand each section as you go through it.

As you scroll down the Audit, you will see the requirements of the MLA program (including GPA requirements) essentially in chronological order: Foundation Courses (MLA 101A, B, C), Core Seminar (MLA 102), MLA Seminars, Master's Thesis.

A few things to note:

- In Progress courses will be listed in teal with a grade of IP.
- Completed courses are in black with the actual grade listed.
- An uncompleted requirement will have a  symbol.
- A completed requirement has a  symbol.

MLA Seminars Section

Humanities			
CLASSES	UNITS	GPA	
0	0		

1 class required. You need 1 more class.

1 Class Options: MLA 295, 298, 347, 357, 360, 361, 363, 365, 366, 368, 370, 371, 372, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 382 (show course titles)

1 Class Options: This lists classes that have already taken place, or are currently offered by the program. It does not mean that all of these will be options for you to fulfill the requirement. Because this list has to span 7+ years of MLA offerings, some of them will not be offered during your time in the program.

Approved Non-MLA Seminars: If you have approval to take a grad seminar for degree credit, that course will show up in University Electives while it is in progress. Once the course is successfully completed, Michelle Bennett will manually move it to the MLA degree requirement that it meets.

MLA Department Milestones Section

This section is for non-course requirements.

Department Milestones			
CLASSES	UNITS	GPA	
0	0		

1	Active Status Review		
	CLASSES	UNITS	GPA
	0	0	

Status Review has not been completed.

2	Prospectus		
	CLASSES	UNITS	GPA
	0	0	

Prospectus has not been completed.

3	Colloquium		
	CLASSES	UNITS	GPA
	0	0	

Colloquium has not been completed.

1 Active Status Review: Students submit their Active Status application after they have completed their second MLA seminar. When approved, this will show as completed.

2 Prospectus: When students have an approved thesis prospectus, this will show as completed.

3 Colloquium: Once students hold their thesis colloquium, this will show as completed.

NOTE: if you entered in 2018-2019 or 2019-2020, the Department Milestones section does not show on your audit. This does not mean that you haven't completed or don't need to complete these items. We are working to have them shown in your audit.

University Electives Section

This section includes MLA Practicum courses, and any University courses you took outside the MLA curriculum.

Classes Not Applied to Degree Section (Satisfactory Classes):

This section will include the MLA 398 Thesis in Progress courses.

15. TUITION AND FEES

15.1 Calendar

Quarter	Statements Emailed	Tuition Due
Autumn	August 25, 2026	October 20, 2026
Winter	November 25, 2026	January 20, 2027
Spring	February 25, 2027	April 20, 2027
Summer	NA	The tuition you pay in A, W, S covers MLA classes you take in the summer.

15.2 Billing

The annual MLA tuition is split into three installments, due at the beginning of Autumn, Winter, and Spring quarters. You are not able to pay the total annual tuition in one payment.

Tuition invoices will be sent you via email to your @stanford email address. You can also view them in Axess, under My Finances. To see an itemized bill, in the Finance Section, click the link to View Financial History by Term, and then select the current term.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of your bill. Review your bill immediately upon receipt--if you have questions or concerns about your tuition bill, you must bring them to Michelle Bennett's attention **prior to the tuition due date**, so that we have enough time to correct it before the deadline. The MLA office is not responsible for late fees on your account if you wait to address any issues on your bill.

15.3 Discounts, Tuition Assistance, STRP

If you receive any discounts, MLA tuition assistance, or STRP funds, please note that those amounts will not be applied to your bill until **10 days prior to the start of the quarter**. You are welcome to pay your bill prior to that, but you will have to do the math yourself.

15.4 Payment

The preferred payment method is by echeck through your Axess student account. For details, please visit: <https://studentservices.stanford.edu/my-finances/understand-your-student-bill-and-payment-system/make-payment>