



# Alabama Commission on Higher Education

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## New Program Proposal

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### Primary Contact Information

**Institution:** Jacksonville State University

**Contact:** Ms. Kimberly P. Presson

**Title:** Executive Director of Accreditation

**Email:** kpresson@jsu.edu

**Telephone:** 256 782 8152

### Program Information

**Date of Proposal Submission:** 12/10/2025

**Award Level:** Other Doctoral (IPEDS 19)

**Award Nomenclature (e.g., BS, MBA):** DA

**Field of Study/Program Title:** Doctor of Arts in English

**CIP Code (6-digit):** 230101

### Administration of the Program

**Name of Dean:** Dr. Tim Lindblom

**Name of College/School:** College of Arts, Humanities, and Sciences

**Name of Chairperson:** Dr. Raina Kostova

**Name of Department/Division:** English

### Implementation Information

**Proposed Program Implementation Date:** 8/1/2027

**Anticipated Date of Approval from Institutional Governing Board:** 10/21/2025

**Anticipated Date of ACHE Meeting to Vote on Proposal:** 3/13/2026

**SACSCOC Sub Change Requirement (Notification, Approval, or NA):** Approval

**Other Considerations for Timing and Approval (e.g., upcoming SACSCOC review):**

None

## I. Program Description

### A. Concise Program Summary (one paragraph) to be included in ACHE Agenda:

The Doctor of Arts (D.A.) program in English is designed for high school English teachers who strive to advance their content knowledge in their field while continuing to teach in high schools. The D.A. degree will qualify them to teach college-level courses at their high schools while earning a significant raise in their salary based on the state of Alabama's minimum salary schedule for classroom teachers. Additionally, D.A. students will be given the opportunity to become certified by the National Board



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for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) as part of earning their degree, which would increase their annual salary by an additional \$5,000 in the state of Alabama. Therefore, with its National Board Certification and college-level instruction preparation, this degree will speak to two very large national trends.

### Extended Summary

A Doctor of Arts is a terminal degree for educators who seek to excel in teaching in a particular discipline, usually in the arts, humanities, or sciences at the secondary and post-secondary levels.

Unlike the Ph.D. degree, which focuses on original scholarly research presented in the form of a monograph-length dissertation, the D.A. degree requires a practice-oriented research manuscript (100 – 200 pages, MLA style in the field of English).

Unlike the Ed.D. (Doctor of Education), which focuses on preparing teachers for leadership or administrative positions at secondary and higher education institutions the D.A. in English prepares teachers for teaching classes at the post-secondary level in high schools or in colleges, where they could teach as instructors.

Unlike the Ed.S. (Education Specialist) degree, which usually leads to careers such as school psychologists, curriculum specialists, and special education professionals, the D.A. degree in English is rooted in specific field-based, content-oriented pedagogy and is meant for teachers who plan to continue working as teachers.

The D.A. degree does not lead to a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at colleges and universities. It is usually meant for teachers who aim to teach college-level courses at high schools and who seek further education in their teaching field and a significant salary increase.

All courses will be delivered online, through both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. International students must remain in their home country to be eligible for admission to these programs. The Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in English degree will require a total of 45 semester credit hours post-master's and 69 semester credit hours post-baccalaureate.

The credit hour requirements are based on the requirements for a Ph.D. Program in English, which is the closest in nature to the D.A. Program in English, although, as noted above, the degrees are significantly different in scope, focus, and purpose. Below is data showing the credit hour requirements for Ph.D. programs in English in the states of Alabama and Georgia, which is comparable to the proposed credit-hour requirement for the DA in English.



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Table 1: Comparison of Ph.D. Program Credit Requirements in English (Alabama and Georgia)

University & State	Program Name	Credit Hours With M.A.	Credit Hours Without M.A.	Source Link
Auburn University (AL)	Ph.D. in English	60 hours beyond the B.A.; up to 30 M.A. hours may transfer; typically 30 additional hours at Auburn (incl. 10 dissertation hours).	60 hours beyond the B.A. (10 dissertation + 50 coursework).	<a href="https://cla.auburn.edu/english/programs/graduate-degrees/phd-in-english/">https://cla.auburn.edu/english/programs/graduate-degrees/phd-in-english/</a>
University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) (AL)	Ph.D. in English	42 coursework hours (normally 18 from M.A. + 24 at UA) + 24 dissertation hours + 2 scholarly writing hours ≈ 50 hours beyond the M.A.	68 total hours beyond B.A. (42 coursework + 24 dissertation + 2 practicum).	<a href="https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/arts-sciences/english/english-phd/">https://catalog.ua.edu/graduate/arts-sciences/english/english-phd/</a>
University of Georgia (UGA) (GA)	Ph.D. in English	27 hours of program-of-study coursework for students entering with M.A., plus dissertation hours as required by UGA.	36 hours of coursework for students entering without M.A., plus dissertation hours.	<a href="https://bulletin.uga.edu/Program/Details/43854?IDc=ARTS">https://bulletin.uga.edu/Program/Details/43854?IDc=ARTS</a>
Emory University (GA)	Ph.D. in English	31 graduate coursework hours beyond M.A., within Laney Grad School's required 54 total graduate hours before candidacy.	43 graduate coursework hours for students entering with B.A., within the same 54-hour minimum.	<a href="https://english.emory.edu/documents/English%20Graduate%20Handbook%202025-2026.pdf">https://english.emory.edu/documents/English%20Graduate%20Handbook%202025-2026.pdf</a>
Georgia State University (GSU) (GA)	Ph.D. in English (Literary Studies)	30 graduate coursework hours + 20 dissertation hours = 50 hours beyond the M.A.	No B.A.—direct entry; M.A. required.	<a href="https://www.gsu.edu/program/literary-studies-phd/">https://www.gsu.edu/program/literary-studies-phd/</a>

### Strategic Benefit to the State of Alabama

The Doctor of Arts in English is a strategic and urgently needed program for the State of Alabama. It directly addresses statewide literacy challenges by equipping high-school English teachers with advanced, discipline-specific expertise that improves reading, writing, and analytical instruction. With integrated National Board Certification, dual enrollment instructor preparation, and fully online delivery, the D.A. strengthens teacher retention, expands college-level opportunities for high-school students, and elevates Alabama's educational outcomes. By



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filling a statewide gap in advanced English teacher training, while simultaneously improving college readiness, supporting workforce development, and enhancing JSU's statewide impact, the D.A. in English offers significant educational, economic, and social benefits for Alabama.

The D.A. program student learning outcomes (SLOs) closely align with [ACHE's mission](#), as expressed in this statement: "The Commission seeks to provide reasonable access to quality collegiate and university education for the citizens of Alabama." The program also adheres to the [ACHE Strategic Plan](#) 2018-2030 items:

- 1) "Increase the Number of High School Students Prepared for College in the Institution's Service Area," and more specifically, "**assure teachers have the subject knowledge needed to improve student outcomes.**" (p. 17)
- 2) "Increase Access to College and University Offerings," and more specifically, "Expand **the delivery of coursework online**, in the evenings, weekends, and at off-campus locations in under-served areas of the state." (p.17)

Additionally, [Governor Kay Ivey's education priorities](#) as cited on her official website are increasing "proficiency in reading and math" and increasing teacher salaries, both of which are key objectives of the proposed D.A. Program in English.

The proposed Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in English directly addresses some of the most urgent educational needs in the State of Alabama—particularly the critical need to strengthen high-school students' reading, writing, and analytical skills, which have shown persistent weaknesses across both state and national assessments. Alabama's own data indicate that only [28–30% of 11th-grade students](#) meet the ACT English Language Arts benchmark for college readiness, meaning roughly **seven out of ten Alabama juniors** enter postsecondary education underprepared for college-level reading and writing.

[An Associated Press News article from September 9, 2025](#), reports that the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) recorded the lowest score in the history of reading assessment since 1992: "In reading, the average score in 2024 was the lowest score in the history of the assessment, which began in 1992. Thirty-two percent of high school seniors scored below "basic," meaning they were not able to find details in a text to help them understand its meaning."

Moreover, NAEP data shows that Alabama ranks near the bottom nationally in 8th-grade reading performance, and U.S. 12th-grade reading scores have reached [their lowest levels in more than two decades](#). These trends reflect long-term literacy challenges that accumulate before and during high school—challenges that cannot be solved without substantially improving the advanced content expertise of the teachers who teach English in grades 9–12.

Although the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA) [reported a slight increase of 0.13 points in the ACT composite score](#) for the class of 2024 (from 17.72 to 17.85), "scores remain lower than before the pandemic, when the class of 2021 averaged 18.58." ACT data below from the PARCA website show that only [30% of students in Alabama meet the benchmark for reading](#).

Table 2: Percent of Students That are College Ready by Subject

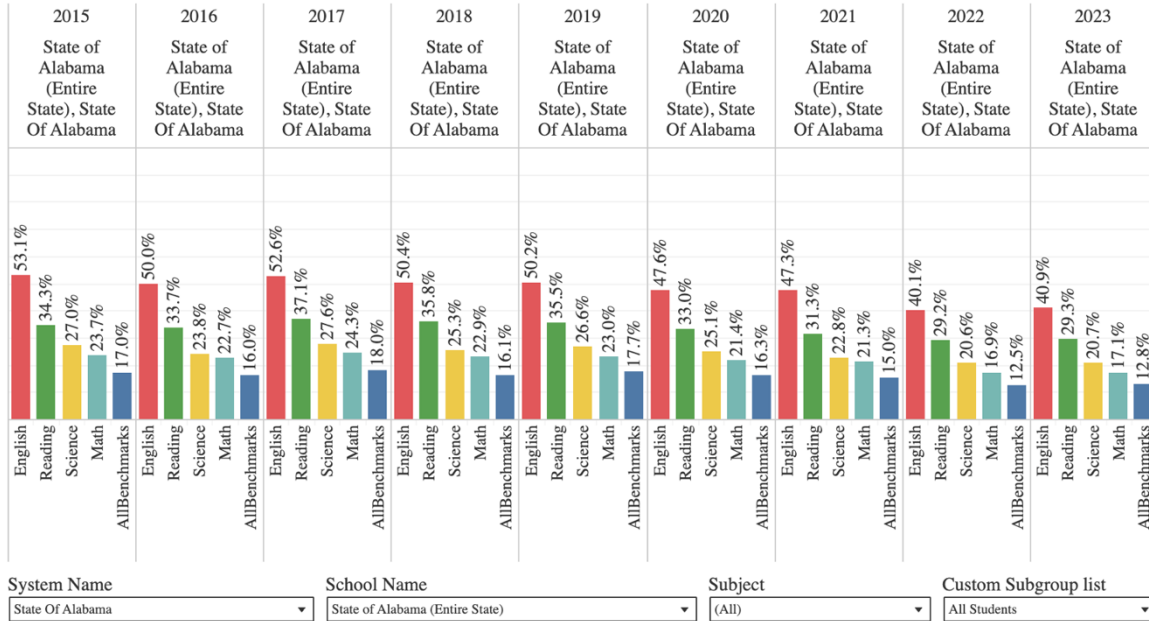


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Percent College Ready, by Subject



View on Tableau Public

Share

Source: PARCA website: <https://parcalabama.org/alabama-act-scores-climb/>

The program’s design also aligns with several of Alabama’s most pressing educational priorities:

### 1. Strengthening Literacy and ELA Outcomes Statewide

Alabama’s middle- and high-school reading performance shows clear evidence of need: NAEP Grade 8 Reading scores place Alabama near the bottom nationally, and only a minority of high-school students meet ACT English proficiency benchmarks. The D.A. equips teachers with high-level training in textual analysis, composition theory, multimodal literacy, and evidence-based reading–writing instruction, enabling them to address the documented gaps in students’ comprehension, reasoning, and writing abilities. As the rationale notes, the D.A. directly aims to improve “students’ reading, analytical, and critical thinking skills,” addressing concerns raised by recent state assessments.

### 2. Expanding Dual Enrollment and College-Level Instruction in High Schools

The degree prepares teachers to **teach college-level English courses in Alabama high schools**, thereby increasing access to dual-enrollment opportunities for thousands of students—especially those in rural or underserved regions. This promotes college readiness, reduces the cost of higher education for families, and supports ACHE’s statewide goal of strengthening postsecondary attainment. The Executive Summary emphasizes that the D.A. qualifies teachers to teach college-level classes while remaining in their schools.



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### 3. Improving Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Professional Advancement

Alabama faces ongoing teacher shortages, especially in high-need subjects like ELA. The D.A. offers:

- A **doctoral-level salary increase** under the Alabama Minimum Salary Schedule
- An additional **\$5,000 annual increase** through the program’s integrated National Board Certification
- A fully online structure that allows working teachers to progress without leaving their communities

These features make the program financially and professionally attractive, improving both recruitment and long-term retention. The Executive Summary highlights the substantial salary benefits for D.A. graduates and the unique combination of doctoral study plus National Board Certification.

### 4. Meeting the Needs of High-School English Teachers with Providing Advanced Content Training

The D.A. will provide **advanced English content specialization**—literature, rhetoric, composition, linguistics, digital writing, and research—responding to what teachers consistently identify as a missing option.

### 5. Supporting Alabama’s National Leadership in National Board Certification

Alabama ranks among the top states in the nation for National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCTs), and the D.A.’s integrated NBC preparation elevates this work even further. Letters of support from ALSDE leaders affirm that NBCTs contribute significantly to student learning gains and teacher effectiveness. Embedding NBC into the D.A. builds professional excellence into the degree while directly aligning with statewide policy and teacher-quality initiatives.

### 6. Enhancing Alabama’s Educational Pipeline and Workforce Readiness

Higher literacy achievement is essential not only for college readiness but also for workforce competitiveness. ACT and NAEP literacy deficits signal long-term economic challenges if not addressed at the instructional level. By preparing more highly qualified ELA teachers and expanding access to rigorous English coursework in high schools, the D.A. contributes directly to stronger college-going rates, higher completion, and a more prepared workforce.

Table 3: References for Alabama’s Most Pressing Educational Priorities

Document	Quote & Page	Link
<i>2025 Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan</i>	“Increase reading achievement on state and national assessments.” – p. 6	<a href="#">2025 Strategic Plan PDF</a>
<i>2025 Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan</i>	“The 2021 Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts ... prepares them to function as highly skilled communicators, critical thinkers, and effective problem-solvers.” – p. ii	<a href="#">2021 ELA COS PDF</a>
<i>Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide</i>	“Every child. Every chance. Every day.” – inside cover, emphasis on implementing the strategic plan	<a href="#">Blueprints PDF</a>



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Document	Quote & Page	Link
<i>Blueprints for Achievement (ALSDE)</i>		

### B. Specific Rationale (Strengths) for the Program

List three (3) to five (5) strengths of the proposed program as specific rationale for recommending approval of this proposal.

The purpose of the D.A. program is to help increase high school students' proficiency in reading and writing by training secondary and post-secondary English teachers who seek:

1. To advance their content knowledge and teaching expertise in the field of English, while continuing to teach high school- or college- level English courses at the high schools where they may be currently employed.
2. To become National Board certified.
3. To earn a significant increase in their annual salary depending on their years of service in the Alabama Public Schools. For example, a teacher in their 12<sup>th</sup> year of tenure with a D.A. degree will receive \$9,894 more in their annual salary than a teacher with a Master's degree. An additional annual increase of \$5,000 will result from earning a National Board certification, which will be part of the D.A. Program in English. Please see the attached document with salary data of the state of Alabama teacher salaries for FY 2024-2025.

### C. External Support (Recommended)

List external entities (more may be added) that may have supplied letters of support attesting to the program's strengths and attach letters with the proposal at the end of this document.

The following have provided letters of support which are attached at the end of the proposal:

#### 1. **Melissa Shields, Ed.D, NBCT, Assistant State Superintendent, Alabama State Department of Education**

In her letter Dr. Shields wrote, "I believe the Doctor of Arts in English will be an invaluable addition to Jacksonville State University's graduate offerings and a significant asset to the educational landscape in our state. I strongly urge its approval and implementation."

#### 2. **Valerie Curtis, Director of Region 6 Inservice Center**

In her letter Mrs. Curtis wrote, "Given these findings, the D.A. program's integration of National Board Certification (NBC) makes it uniquely powerful."



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Our center stands ready to support D.A. candidates in their pursuit of NBC through our established cohort model. We are confident that graduates of this program will strengthen teaching and learning in Alabama by bringing together advanced content expertise, college-level instructional preparation, and the professional distinction of National Board Certification.”

### **3. Charissa Lambert, Literacy Specialist, Office of School Improvement, Alabama State Department of Education.**

Dr. Lambert wrote, “I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Doctor of Arts (DA) in English program at Jacksonville State University. This innovative program addresses a critical need in Alabama’s educational landscape and represents an excellent opportunity for high school English teachers seeking advanced content knowledge and pedagogical development.”

## **D. Student Learning Outcomes**

List four (4) to seven (7) of the student learning outcomes of the program.

Upon completion of the D.A. degree in English, students should be able to:

1. Use advanced pedagogical expertise in the field of English to effectively teach at the secondary and post-secondary levels, specifically DE (dual enrollment) and AP (advanced placement) courses.
2. Carry out original research by applying advanced research methods used in the field of English.
3. Design new courses, curricula, and assessments for high school English courses and programs.
4. Critically engage with texts and perspectives from a variety of worldviews and cultural experiences.
5. Develop and deepen their understanding of equitable, culturally responsive, and sustaining teaching practices, and support them as they use these tools to create learning environments where all students can excel.

## **E. Similar Programs at Other Alabama Public Institutions**

List programs at other Alabama public institutions of the same degree level and the same (or similar) CIP codes. If no similar programs exist within Alabama, list similar programs offered within the 16 SREB states. If the proposed program duplicates, closely resembles, or is similar to any other offerings in the state, provide justification for any potential duplication.



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There are no programs of this kind in the State of Alabama: however, there is a similar program at Murray State in Kentucky. Information on that program is shown in the table below.

CIP Code	Degree Title	Institution with Similar Program	Justification for Duplication
23.0101	D.A. in English Pedagogy	Murray State University	This program is in the State of Kentucky, which is geographically removed from the State of Alabama, so our DA program will not be a duplicate in our region.

### F. Relationship to Existing Programs within the Institution

Nearly all new programs have some relationship to existing offerings through shared courses, faculty, facilities, etc. Is the proposed program associated with any existing offerings within the institution, including options within current degree programs? **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, please describe these relationships including whether or not the program will replace or compete with existing offerings: (**Note:** If this is a graduate program, list any existing undergraduate programs which are directly or indirectly related. If this is a doctoral program, also list related master's programs.)

If **not**, please describe how the institution plans to support a program unrelated to existing offerings.

- 1) Master of Arts in English

The D.A. program will include some of the courses offered in the Master of Arts degree in English at JSU

- 2) Teaching College Literature Certificate

Two graduate courses from the Teaching College Literature Certificate Program will be offered as electives.

- 3) Teaching College Writing Certificate

Two graduate courses from the Teaching College Writing Certificate Program will be offered as electives.

- 4) Master of Science in Education in English Language Arts

- 5) Bachelor of Science in Education in English Language Arts

- 6) Bachelor of Arts in English



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### 4) The College of Education and Professional Studies

Two courses offered in the Doctor of Education (EDD) are considered to be included as electives in the DA Program in English: EFD 8501 Data Collection and Management and EFD 8507 Applied Educational Research. There are no other overlapping courses or programs in our institution.

## G. Collaboration

Have any collaborations **within your institution** (i.e., research centers, across academic divisions, etc.) been explored?    **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, provide a brief explanation of the proposed collaboration plan(s) for the program:

We will be partnering with two entities located at Jacksonville State University:

#### 1. The College of Education and Professional Studies

Two courses offered in the Doctor of Education (EDD) may be included as electives in the DA Program in English: EFD 8501 Data Collection and Management and EFD 8507 Applied Educational Research.

#### 2. JSU Regional Inservice Center

As noted in Mrs. Valerie Curtis's letter, the JSU Regional Inservice Center will partner with the DA Program in English to facilitate the National Board Certification of DA students.

Have collaborations with **other institutions or external entities** (i.e., local business, industries, etc.) been explored?    **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, provide a brief explanation of the proposed collaboration plan(s) for the program:

## H. Programmatic Accreditation

Select the appropriate program accreditor from the drop-down menu below:

None

There is no programmatic accrediting body in the field of English.

Provide a detailed timeline for gaining accreditation (i.e., when will full candidacy be reached?):

## I. Professional Licensure

Will the program be considered a Professional Licensure Program based on the following definition:    **Yes**  **No**



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**Professional Licensure Program:** As defined in federal regulations, an instructional program that is designed to meet educational requirements for a specific professional license or certification that is required for employment in an occupation or is advertised as meeting such requirements.

If **yes**, please explain:

Select the appropriate licensure body from the table below:

Choose an item.

No licensure is required for this degree.

Select the appropriate license from the table below:

Choose an item.

### J. Professional Certification

Will students earn industry certifications while completing the degree or be prepared for industry certifications upon graduation?      **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, please explain:

### K. Admissions

Provide any additional admissions requirements beyond the institution's standard admissions process/policies for this degree level. Include prerequisites, prior degrees earned, etc.

There are no additional admissions requirements beyond the institution's standard admissions process and policies. To be considered for admission, applicants must hold a degree from a regionally accredited institution or its foreign equivalent.

The D.A. in English at Jax State will provide for two entrance options:

- 1) Students who already hold a master's degree in English, English Language Arts, or a related field will be required to complete forty-five (45) credit hours (twelve hours of core; twelve hours of D.A. research project; and twenty-one hours of electives)
- 2) Students who already hold bachelor's degree in English, English Language Arts, or a related field will be required to complete sixty-nine (69) credit hours (twelve hours of core; twelve hours of D.A. research project; and forty-five hours of electives).

### L. Mode of Delivery



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Provide the planned delivery format(s) of the program as defined in policy (i.e., in-person, online, hybrid). Please also note whether any program requirements can be completed through competency-based assessment.

The delivery format for the DA in English will be 100% online.

Can students complete the entire degree program through distance education (100% online) based on the following definition?      **Yes**  **No**

**Distance Education:** An academic program for which required instructional activities can be completed entirely through distance education modalities. A distance education program may have in-person requirements that are non-instructional (e.g., orientation, practicum).

### M. Instructional Site(s)

Provide the planned location(s) where the program will be delivered (i.e., main campus, satellite campus, off-campus site.) If the program will be offered at an off-campus site, provide the existing site name or submit an **Off-Campus Site Request** if new.

Will more than 50% of this program be offered at an off-campus site(s) **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, which sites?

### N. Industry Need

Using the federal **Standard Occupational Code (SOC) System**, indicate the top three occupational codes related to post-graduation employment from the program. A full list of SOCs can be found at <https://www.onetcodeconnector.org/find/family/title#17>.

SOC 1 (**required**): 25.2030 Secondary School Teachers

SOC 2 (optional): 25.2031.00 Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education

SOC 3 (optional):

Briefly describe how the program fulfills a specific industry or employment need for the State of Alabama. As appropriate, discuss alignment with Alabama's Statewide or Regional Lists of In-Demand Occupations (<https://www.ache.edu/index.php/policy-guidance/>) or with emerging industries as identified by [Innovate Alabama](#) or the [Economic Development Partnership of Alabama](#) (EDPA).

In addition to the information provided in the "Strategic Benefit to the State of Alabama" section above, the following is provided for additional consideration.



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As indicated in the table from the Alabama Demand Occupations ACCCP 2024-2025 below, there are 1,115 average annual openings for Secondary School Teachers (Except Special & Career/Technical Education.)

Table 4: Alabama Demand Occupations ACCCP 2024-2025

SOC	Occupation Title	2022 Employment	Avg Annual Openings	Median Annual Salary	Median WorkKeys Scores		
					Applied Math	Workplace Documents	Graphic Literacy
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	4,660	350	\$95,787	5	5	5
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Education	11,000	810	\$58,491	4	6	5
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Educatio	24,690	1,815	\$57,262	4	6	5
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, & Career Counselors & Adviso	5,010	425	\$59,585	4	4	4
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Education	16,310	1,115	\$57,929	4	6	5
25-1000	Postsecondary Teachers	26,430	2,510	\$72,760	5	7	6
11-9032	Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secon	3,950	290	\$85,482	5	5	5
27-2022	Coaches & Scouts	3,810	550	\$36,609	4	4	4
25-4022	Librarians & Media Collections Specialists	2,780	280	\$59,572	4	5	4
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	1,850	175	\$65,438	3	6	4
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Teachers	8,350	1,085	\$35,742	4	4	5
25-3041	Tutors	1,330	240	\$33,491	4	6	5

Source: Alabama Demand Occupations, ACCCP 2024-2025: [https://www.ache.edu/wp-content/Instruction/2025\\_Statewide\\_InDemand\\_Occ.pdf](https://www.ache.edu/wp-content/Instruction/2025_Statewide_InDemand_Occ.pdf)

National statistics from [Fullmind show that Alabama is one of the 10 US states](#) with the highest rates of teacher vacancies, with ELA teachers (along with Math, Physics, and Early Childhood teachers) being one of the top teacher shortage areas. [Alabama Achieves also lists ELA Teachers \(6-12 grade\) as one of the areas with greatest shortages](#)



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Image 1: Alabama Teacher Vacancies in 2025

### Alabama Teacher Vacancies in 2025

- **Unfilled teacher vacancies:** 1,350+
- **Range of reported teacher vacancy:** 3,000+
- **Relative teacher shortage/Vacancies by 10,000 students:** Very high (4th quartiles)
- **Teachers not fully certified for their teaching assignment:** 6,125
- **Total number of teachers:** 42,022
- **Average elementary school teacher salary:** \$50,270
- **Average secondary school teacher salary:** \$51,950
- **Teacher shortage areas:** Early Childhood Education, Language Arts, Mathematics, and Physical Science

Alabama is among the 10 US states with the highest rate of teacher vacancies. This is a long-standing problem in the state caused by a decreasing number of graduates in the education field and a high turnover among teachers. Not all areas are equally impacted, and some subjects face more shortages than others.

To address the challenge, Alabama has resorted to hiring teachers with emergency certificates and working with long-term substitutes. While there has been a slight improvement over the course of the last couple of years as a result of these measures, there is still a significant number of available K-12 teaching positions.

Source: 2025 Teacher Vacancies by State in the US:

<https://www.fullmindlearning.com/blog/teacher-vacancies-by-state-us>

### O. Additional Education/Training

Please explain whether further education/training is required for graduates of the proposed program to gain entry-level employment in the SOC occupations selected above.

No further education or training is required for DA graduates to gain entry-level employment. Most of the graduates would already have started their employment as high school teachers before entering the program.

### P. Student Demand

Please explain how you projected the student enrollment numbers in the **Business Plan, Lines 24-27** and provide evidence to substantiate student demand (i.e., surveys, enrollments in related courses, etc.).

#### 1. Success of D.A. in English at Murray State

In initiating the program, we are inspired by the extraordinary success of [the D.A. program in English at Murray State, which since its conception in 2016 grew five-fold, starting with a cohort of 23 students and reaching to 117 students in September of](#)



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2024. With dedicated marketing efforts, we will strive to achieve similar, if not, higher growth.

Following Murray State’s example, we expect to start with a cohort of 10 students and progressively increase each following cohort by 5 students. We estimate that each student will be able to take two courses per semester, plus two courses in the summer, as the summer is a prime time for high school teachers to work on their professional development. This is a realistic estimate based on our two graduate certificate programs, Teaching College Writing and Teaching College Literature, which are for the same type of students—namely, high school English teachers.

### 2. Dual Enrollment Faculty Survey

In April 2025, we conducted an anonymous survey of nine of our Dual Enrollment English teachers who teach in local high schools. Four of them reported that they are extremely interested in earning a D.A. in English at Jax State, while three others indicated they were interested at a high- to moderate-level. The ones who indicated that they are not interested mentioned that they are near retirement and wished that the degree had been available a decade ago so that they could have had a chance to earn it. Below is a screenshot of their comments.

Image 2: Dual Enrollment Faculty Survey at JSU, 4/2/2025

## DE FACULTY SURVEY 4/2/2025

8. Do you have any additional thoughts or questions about the D.A. program?

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I'm already teaching 100-200 level courses, but I would like to expand my ability to teach upper level coursework at JSU. I also recognize the value of being a life-long learner and how being involved in professional development benefits not only myself but also my students.
2	anonymous	I would absolutely love to pursue a Doctorate degree, but I am to the point where I am about to be paying tuition for my children before I could complete the Doctorate degree.
3	anonymous	It sounds like a good idea. I would like to have been involved had I been younger.
4	anonymous	This should have been done years ago. I definitely would have taken advantage of this even ten years ago.

Source: Digital Survey Conducted by the Graduate Faculty in the English Department at JSU.



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### 3. Success of Jacksonville State University's Existing Graduate Programs in English

We plan to build on our consistent success with our current graduate programs by developing the new D.A. Degree in English. In the past four years, our graduate programs in English have experienced significant growth. This is the result of converting our M.A. Program in English into 100% online and adding two micro-credentials separate from the M.A. Program: one in Teaching College Writing (TCW) and one in Teaching College Literature (TCL). Since 2021, 62 students have graduated from our M.A. Program; 36, from TCL, and 36 from TCW. Students in these programs praise the rigor of our programs and the quality of our faculty. They also testify to the high value of our graduate programs compared to other institutions.

Most of our current students live in Alabama, but over the past five years, we've also had MA, TCW, and TCW students from other states.

- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Louisiana
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Virginia

### 4. Feeder Programs will include all institutions in Alabama that offer BSE and MSE in Secondary Education. None of these institutions offers a D.A. Degree in English.

Alabama A&M University (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
Auburn University (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
Auburn University at Montgomery (B.S. Ed)  
Faulkner University (B.S. Ed)  
Jacksonville State University (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
Troy University (B.S. Ed)  
Tuskegee University (B.S. Ed)  
University of Alabama at Birmingham (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
University of Alabama in Huntsville (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
University of North Alabama (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
University of South Alabama (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)  
University of West Alabama (B.S. Ed and M.S. Ed)

### 5. Other universities and colleges in the country, which offer B.S. Ed and/or M.S. Ed degrees, will serve as feeder institutions.



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- In view of the sharp decline of reading skills of high school students in Alabama and nationwide, our D.A. program will prepare high school teachers to use innovative methods and assignments to improve students' reading, analytical, and critical thinking skills. See attached articles.

### Program Resources and Expenses

#### a. All Proposed Program Personnel

Provide all personnel counts for the proposed program.

Employment Status of Program Personnel		Personnel Information		
		Count from Proposed Program Department	Count from Other Departments	Subtotal of Personnel
Current	Full-Time Faculty	14	0	14
	Part-Time Faculty	0	1	1
	Administration	1	0	1
	Support Staff	1	0	1
**New To Be Hired	Full-Time Faculty	0	0	0
	Part-Time Faculty	0	0	0
	Administration	0	0	0
	Support Staff	0	0	0
<b>Personnel Total</b>				<b>15</b>

**Provide justification that the institution has proposed a sufficient number of faculty (full-time and part-time) for the proposed program to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review:**

As provided in the faculty roster table below, the English Department at Jacksonville State University currently has fourteen (14) full time faculty with Ph.D. degrees in English or a related field (Rhetoric and Composition, Applied Linguistics, Humanities, and Comparative Literature). These faculty have the necessary credentials, training, and experience to teach the doctoral-level courses for the D.A. Program in English. Each faculty member will cover courses in their area of specialization. They have already taught M.A. courses to high school English teachers who have completed Jax State's two certificate programs Teaching College Writing (TCW) and Teaching College Literature (TCL). As mentioned above, since 2021, 62 students have graduated from our



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M.A. Program; 36, from TCL, and 36 from TCW. Students in these programs praise the rigor of our programs and the quality of our faculty. They also testify to the high value of our graduate programs compared to other institutions. Adding a Doctor of Arts program will naturally be the next step to the expansion of the programs in the English Department at our university.

Jacksonville State University has been [recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education as one of the top producers of new teachers in the State of Alabama](#). Most of the English Language Arts teachers who graduate from the Teacher Education Department at Jax State take their content courses at the English Department. Most high school teachers in our region who teach English dual enrollment courses also take their graduate content hours at the English Department in a 100% online format. These facts contribute to the feasibility of the Doctor of Arts Program in English as our faculty is already heavily engaged with recognizing and meeting the needs of high school teachers and ELA students who are training to become high school English teachers.

Each of our 14 qualified faculty members has a teaching load of four courses per semester (4/4). Currently every semester, each of these faculty is teaching

- two lower-level composition courses, typically EH 101 and EH 102
- one literature survey course, typically, American Literature surveys (EH 201 or EH 202) or British Literature surveys (EH 203 or EH 204)
- one specialized upper-level or graduate course

In the past three years, however, with the increased number of students taking dual enrollment English courses at their high schools, the enrollment numbers in our English Composition courses, EH 101 and EH 102, have decreased significantly. In Fall 2025 semester we had to offer seven fewer sections of English Composition I, EH 101. A decline in student enrollment is also observable in the literature survey courses as they, too, are offered in high schools as dual enrollment. This means that our graduate faculty who teach composition and survey courses would have the capacity to teach more higher-level and graduate courses for the Doctor of Arts Program, as their teaching load will shift from lower-level composition and literature surveys to doctoral-level courses for the D.A. program.

Additionally, in the 2025-2026 academic year the English Department is hiring three (3) replacement hires for faculty who have recently retired. These will be tenure-track Assistant Professors with Ph.D. degrees in English who will also be teaching courses in the D.A. Program. These replacement hires are for the following specialties: 1) Medieval/Early Modern British Literature; 2) Professional Writing; and 3) Creative Writing. A fourth replacement position for an Assistant Professor, with a Ph.D. in English and specialization in Rhetoric and Composition will be open in Fall 2026. This means there will be a total of 17 graduate faculty, qualified to teach at the doctoral level. These hires are not new hires for the D.A. Program but replacements of faculty, so they are not added in the table or business plan as new hires.



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**Note:** Include *any new funds* designated for compensation costs (faculty, administration, and/or support staff to be hired) in the **Business Plan, Line 7 - Personnel Salaries and Benefits**. Current personnel salary/benefits *should not be included* in the Business Plan.

### B. Proposed Faculty Roster\*

Complete the following **Faculty Roster** to provide a brief summary and qualifications of current faculty and potential new hires specific to the program.

**\*Note:** Institutions must maintain and have current as well as additional faculty curriculum vitae available upon ACHE request for as long as the program is active, but CVs are **not** to be submitted with this proposal.

**The table below includes courses that will be taught for the Doctor of Arts Program in English by faculty who already teach at the English Department at Jacksonville State University. Some courses are listed multiple times as multiple instructors are qualified to teach them.**

Current Faculty			
1	2	3	4
CURRENT FACULTY NAME (FT, PT)	COURSES TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Rashad Ahmed, FT	EH 7037 Teaching English as a Second Language (3) EH 7050 Advanced Linguistics (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3)	Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics; TESOL, The University of Memphis (U of M), Tennessee	Dr. Rashad Ahmed is a linguist with a multidisciplinary background in TESOL and Composition Studies. His contributions to teaching, research, and professional development have been recognized through numerous awards at the local, regional, and international levels, including the Excellence in Scholarly Research and Creative Activity Award, the Faculty Scholar Lecturer Award, and the Excellence in Service Award from Jacksonville State University. His record of academic distinction also includes a Fulbright Scholarship, the Applied Linguistics Concentration Award, and a Summer Fellowship from the University of Memphis. His research covers a wide range of areas, including Artificial Intelligence in language learning, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Language Assessment, Digital Literacy, TESOL Methods, Sociolinguistics, and First-Year Composition. His recent publications include <i>Enhancements and Limitations to ICT-Based Informal Language Learning</i> and <i>Peer Review in Academic Writing: Different Perspectives from Instructors and Students</i> .



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CURRENT FACULTY NAME (FT, PT)	COURSES TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Khadeidra Billingsley, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8002 Teaching Composition (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8020 Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 8040 Advanced Pedagogy in English Studies (3)	Ph.D. in English, Rhetoric and Composition The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa	Dr. Khadeidra Billingsley (affectionately known as Dr. K) joined the English department in fall of 2022. Prior to her time at JSU, she completed her Ph.D. at The University of Alabama where she served as an Academic Advisor/Success Coach and Assistant Director of the Writing Center. Over the course of her career, she has earned several teaching awards including the 2020 Early Career Educator of Color fellowship from the National Council of Teachers of English. Her research interests include composition pedagogy, writing assessment, and writing center studies. Dr. K's current work focuses on fostering collaboration between high school and college writing instructors with the goal of making students' transition to college-level writing smoother. Her scholarship has been published in <i>College English</i> , <i>Kairos</i> , and several edited collections. Dr. K is obsessed with true crime, reality television, and her fur baby, Brady Lee Billingsley-Cooke.
Randy Davis, FT	EH 501 Introduction to Graduate Study in English (3) EH 502 Studies in Nineteenth-Century American Literature (3) EH 553 Contemporary American Literature (3) EH 554 Contemporary European Literature (3) EH 555 Literature of the South (3)	Ph.D. in English, Contemporary American Literature, Native American Literature Ohio State University	Dr. Davis joined the Department of English in the fall of 1991 after receiving his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. His specialty is 19th-century American literature, and his research interest focuses on the depiction of Native Americans in American literature. Some of his research essays are "Fire-Water in the Frontier Romance: James Fenimore Cooper and 'Indian Nature'" published in <i>Studies in American Fiction</i> and "'The Path toward Civilization': Sociocultural Evolution and <i>The Delight Makers</i> " published in <i>American Literary Realism</i> . He received the Distinguished Teacher Award from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1997. He serves as the Graduate English Advisor and as the chair of the Writers Bowl Committee.



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Christopher Douglas, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8003 Teaching Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8011 Special Topics in English Studies (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7014 Studies in British Literature pre-1785 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 7010 The Eighteenth-Century Novel (3) EH 7058 Studies in Romantic Literature (3) EH 7025 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7036 Teaching College Lit: The British Survey (3)	Ph.D. in English, 18th-Century British Literature, 18th and 19th-century Transatlantic Literature, Southern Illinois University	Dr. Douglas, originally from Illinois, came to JSU in the fall of 2019 after working as an Instructor of English at the University of Alabama from 2016–2019. He has a Ph.D. in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century transatlantic literature. Dr. Douglas taught English as a Foreign Language at Wada Jr. High School in Minamiboso City, Chiba Prefecture, Japan before beginning his graduate studies in America. His dissertation work is on the moral agency of it-narratives, stories narrated by non-humans (animals, objects, and the occasional ghost), in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature. He has published on it-narratives in <i>ESQ</i> and <i>JNT</i> and has published a pandemic teaching reflection in <i>Digital Defoe</i> and pandemic-informed reading in the <i>Nathaniel Hawthorne Review</i> . Recently, he published a book chapter on 19th-century children’s it-narratives in <i>Animal Satire</i> (Palgrave MacMillan), he wrote and edited an episode of the <b>C19 Podcast</b> , and he authored an article on playing <i>Animal Crossing: New Horizons</i> as a Robinsonade experience in <i>Digital Defoe</i> . A co-edited collection of scholarly essays, <b>“I’m Just a Comic Book Boy”: Essays on the Intersection of Comics and Punk</b> , was published by McFarland & Co. in 2019. While he is not teaching, Dr. Douglas enjoys spending time with his rescue dog, and he considers himself an amateur baker and powerlifter.



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Jessica Griffith, FT	EH 8002 Teaching Composition (3) EH 8030 Course Design, Curriculum, and Assessment in English Studies (3)	Ph.D. in English, Professional Writing, Curriculum, Assessment, Course Design The University of South Florida	Dr. Griffith joined the English department in the Fall of 2024. Prior to her time at JSU, she completed her Ph.D. at the University of South Florida, where she served as Assistant Director of the Professional and Technical Writing service course program. Her research interests focus on pedagogy, field-wide research related to curriculum, and program evaluation within the field of technical and professional communication (TPC). Dr. Griffith's current work examines the way instructors teach within the TPC service course in order to build a course that best supports students. Her scholarship has been published in the <i>Journal of Technical Writing and Communication</i> , <i>Business Communication Quarterly</i> , as well as in an edited collection through the WAC Clearinghouse. Dr. Griffith loves a good documentary, true crime podcasts, and checking travel destinations off her never-ending list.
Larry Gray, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8011 Special Topics in English Studies (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7022 Studies in American Literature post-1865 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7027 Seminar in Adaptation Studies (3) EH 7053 Contemporary American Literature (3)	Ph.D. in English, 20th-Century American Literature; Adaptation Studies, Film The University of Virginia	Dr. Larry Gray's teaching and research interests include Film, Adaptation Studies, 20th-Century British Literature, 19th- and 20th-Century American Literature, and Henry James. He has published articles in the <i>Henry James Review</i> , <i>Adaptation</i> (Oxford University Press), <i>Notes on Contemporary Literature</i> , and in book-length collections on Robert Penn Warren and Henry James. He has presented papers on fiction, film, and film adaptations at conferences in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, The Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Poland, Turkey, South Korea, and China. Dr. Gray has also been awarded four separate NEH-funded nationally competitive Fellowships for seminars with distinguished scholars (Louis Menand, Christopher Ricks, Robert Pippin, and Sarah Beckwith) at the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. From AASCU he has been awarded two Fellowships for the Japan Studies Institute, through which he gave presentations first at San Diego State University in a two-week residency and the following year during a two-week tour of universities throughout Japan.



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Raina Kostova, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7054 Contemporary European Literature (3)	Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, Contemporary European and Non-Western Lit, Literary Theory Emory University	Dr. Kostova's research interests involve contemporary literary theory, women's literature, Russian and non-Western literature and philosophy. She has publications on the contemporary Austrian Nobel Prize-winning writer Elfriede Jelinek; the twentieth-century American poet and harbinger of postmodernism, Wallace Stevens; and the early twentieth-century Russian poet Osip Mandelstam, whose poems she has also co-translated from Russian into English. She teaches a variety of courses at JSU, including Literary Criticism, Non-Western Literature, World Literature, Contemporary European Literature, and First-Year Writing.
Gabriel Lonsberry, FT	EH 7062 Studies in Shakespeare (3) EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8011 Special Topics in English Studies (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7014 Studies in British Literature pre-1785 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 7032 Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies (3) EH 7057 Studies in Non-Dramatic Elizabethan Literature (3) EH 7064 Middle English Literature (3) EH 7065 Seventeenth-Century English Literature (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3)	Ph. D. in English, Shakespeare, Early Modern British Lit Purdue University	Dr. Lonsberry joined the Department of English in the fall of 2021 after earning his Ph.D. and working as a Lecturer at Purdue University. His specialty is early modern drama—particularly that of Shakespeare—and his research focuses on Shakespeare's plays in performance at the court of King James I. Additional research interests include Ben Jonson and the Stuart court masques, as well as Prince Henry Frederick's impact on Stuart court culture. Some recent essays are "The Tempest, <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , and Dramatic Absolutism on the Stuart Court Stage," published in <i>ELH</i> , and "The purchase is to make men glorious': <i>Pericles</i> on the Stuart Court Stage," soon to be published in <i>The Shakespearean International Yearbook</i> . When he is not teaching, Dr. Lonsberry enjoys listening to, researching, and podcasting about music, as well as recording music of his own.



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Ashley Rattner, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7021 Studies in American Literature pre-1865 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 7032 Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3)	Ph. D. in English, 19th-Century American Lit, Literary and Cultural Studies The University of Memphis	Specializing in early and nineteenth-century American literature and culture, Dr. Rattner’s research interests include utopia, reform, print culture, antislavery activism, communal studies, and public humanities. She is currently working on a monograph titled <i>The Crass Materiality of Utopia: Publishing Communitarian Reform in Nineteenth Century America</i> . Dr. Rattner’s scholarship appears in the <i>Nathaniel Hawthorne Review</i> and <i>J19</i> and is forthcoming in <i>Early American Literature and Gender and Sexuality in the Midwest</i> (Ohio University Press). She has published reviews in <i>Journal of American Studies</i> , <i>African American Literature</i> , and <i>Communal Societies</i> . Her public writing appears in <i>Teaching C19</i> , <i>Avidly</i> , and the <i>Los Angeles Review of Books</i> . Dr. Rattner has held research fellowships at Winterthur, the Center for Communal Studies, and the William L. Clements Library. In summer 2025, she participated in the “Sex, Gender, and Print” seminar at the American Antiquarian Society. She has delivered lectures at the Maine Historical Society, Heritage Alliance, Tusculum University, and Ohio University. Dr. Rattner has co-chaired the C19 Podcast since 2022.
Marija Reiff, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8011 Special Topics in English Studies (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7015 Studies in British Literature post-1785 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 7058 Studies in Romantic Literature (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7056 Victorian Literature (3)	Ph.D. in English, Victorian Literature University of Iowa	Dr. Reiff’s teaching and scholarship centers on British literature of the Romantic, Victorian, and Edwardian eras, with particular expertise on the late-Victorian theatre. Prior to joining the JSU faculty in the fall of 2022, she earned her doctorate from the University of Iowa in 2018 and then spent four years teaching literature at one of the leading universities in the United Arab Emirates. Dr. Reiff has published on a number of nineteenth-century authors, including Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and her work has appeared in a variety of journals, encyclopedias, and edited collections, including articles in <i>Women’s Studies</i> , <i>Victorian Review</i> , and the <i>Australasian Journal of Victorian Studies</i> . When Dr. Reiff isn’t grading papers or chasing after her three small children, she likes to spend time at the theatre, where she can often be found acting, singing, and directing shows.



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CURRENT FACULTY NAME (FT, PT)	COURSES TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Kimberly Southwick-Thompson, FT	EH 7045 Creative Writing Seminar (3) EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7032 Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3)	Ph.D. in English and Creative Writing, Poetry University of Louisiana at Lafayette	Dr. Southwick-Thompson is a poet and the founder and Editor in Chief of the literary arts journal <i>Gigantic Sequins</i> . She is the author of the debut poetry collection <i>Orchid Alpha</i> (Trembling Pillow Press, 2023). Her research interests include genre and hybridity, feminist studies, and American poetry. She serves as a Member-at-Large on the board of the Emily Dickinson International Society and chairs their Web and Social Media Committee. Dr. Southwick-Thompson is the advisor of the Jax State Writers' Club, which puts on the on-campus literary journal <i>Something Else</i> , and the co-chair of the Reading and Lecture Series Committee in the English Department, which organizes the <b>Write, Southerners! Reading Series</b> events.
Thayer Truss, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7027 Seminar in Adaptation Studies (3)	Ph.D. in Humanities, English, Film Studies, Minority Studies Clark Atlanta University	Dr Truss's research focuses on the evolution of black stereotypes from literature to film. Her work examines the origins and explanations of stereotypes from the earliest elements found in Reconstructionist literature all the way to the current aspects of these same archetypes present in modern film. She also examines the black feminine identity in the works of Adrienne Kennedy, Sonia Sanchez, and Ntozake Shange.
Julia Tigner, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 7022 Studies in American Literature post-1865 (3) EH 7030 Readings in Literary Time Periods (3) EH 7032 Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3)	Ph.D. in English, 20th-Century American Lit, African American Lit, Black Women Writers Auburn University	Dr. Julia Tigner joined the English department in the fall of 2022. Prior to her time at JSU, she completed her Ph.D. at Auburn University and served as a Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow at the Georgia Institute of Technology. She is currently at work on a book manuscript entitled "We Keep It Movin': Black Women Negotiating Politics of Inbetweenness," which explores how Black women writers across the African Diaspora use liminality as a trope to negotiate space and live at the intersection of race and gender. Dr. Tigner's work also appears in <i>Outside In: Voices from the Margins</i> (2018), and she has a forthcoming article in <i>J19: The Journal of Nineteenth Century Americanists</i> .



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CURRENT FACULTY NAME (FT, PT)	COURSES TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Jennie Vaughn, FT	EH 8001 Research Methods in Literature (3) EH 8002 Teaching Composition (3) EH 8003 Teaching Literature (3) EH 8004 Core Classroom Texts (3) EH 8008 Readings in Genre (3) EH 8020 Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition (3) EH 8025 Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes (3) EH 8040 Advanced Pedagogy in English Studies (3) EH 7032 Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies (3) EH 725 Major Authors Seminar (3) EH 7055 Literature of the South (3) EH 7033 Teaching College Writing I (3) EH 7034 Teaching College Writing II (3) EH 7034 Teaching College Lit: The American Survey (3)	Ph.D. in Rhetoric, Composition, and English Studies The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa	Dr. Vaughn is a two-time graduate of JSU. As an undergraduate she earned a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in English and Communication. She later received a Master of Science in Secondary Education, English Language Arts. She earned her Ph.D. in English Studies from the University of Alabama in 2015. Her research specialties include women's/feminist rhetoric and writing, community-engaged writing, and writing for social justice. Dr. Vaughn is published in <i>College English</i> and <i>Community Literacy Journal</i> and is a member of the Convention of College Composition and Communication (CCCC), College English Association (CEA), and the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition (CFSHRC). Her book, <i>Ethics and Representation in Feminist Rhetorical Inquiry</i> , co-edited with Amy Dayton, is available from the University of Pittsburgh Press.
Additional Faculty (To Be Hired)			
1	2	3	4
FACULTY POSITION (FT, PT)	COURSES TO BE TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
NONE			

Abbreviations: (FT, PT): Full-Time, Part-Time; (D, UN, UT, G, DU): Developmental, Undergraduate Nontransferable, Undergraduate Transferable, Graduate, Dual: High School Dual Enrollment  
Course Modality: (IP, OL, HY, OCIS): In-Person, Online, Hybrid, Off-Campus Instructional Site



# Alabama Commission on Higher Education

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## New Program Proposal

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### C. Equipment

Will any special equipment be needed specifically for this program? Yes  No

If **yes**, list the special equipment and include all special equipment costs in the **Business Plan, Line 8**:

### D. Facilities

Will new facilities or renovations to existing infrastructure be required specifically for the program?

Yes  No

If **yes**, describe the new facilities or renovations and include all *new* facilities and/or *renovation* costs in the **Business Plan, Line 9**:

### E. Assistantships/Fellowships

Will the institution offer any assistantships specifically for this program? Yes  No

If **yes**, provide the number of assistantships to be offered and include all *new* costs for assistantships in the **Business Plan, Line 10**.

Since most of our students will be high school teachers with full-time jobs, for the time being we do not intend to offer any assistantships or fellowships. This may be reconsidered in the future.

Explain the function of the Assistantships (i.e., teaching, research, etc.)?:

### F. Library

Will any **additional** library resources be purchased to support the program? Yes  No

If **yes**, briefly describe new resources to be purchased and include the cost of new library resources in the **Business Plan, Line 11**:

### G. Accreditation Expenses

If programmatic accreditation was indicated above, please include all accreditation costs in the **Business Plan, Line 12** and itemize and explain below:

### H. Other Costs

Please include all other costs incurred with program implementation, such as marketing or recruitment, in the **Business Plan, Line 13** and explain below:

## 4) Program Revenue and Funding



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## New Program Proposal

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- A. Tuition Revenue:** Please describe how you calculated the tuition revenue that appears in the **Business Plan, Line 17**. Specifically, did you calculate using cost per credit hour or per term? Did you factor in differences between resident and non-resident tuition rates?

**Note:** Tuition Revenue should be proportional to total enrollment.

In initiating the program, we are inspired by the extraordinary success of the D.A. program in English at Murray State, which since its conception in 2016 grew five-fold, starting with a cohort of 23 students and reaching to 117 students in September of 2024. With dedicated marketing efforts, we will strive to achieve similar, if not, higher growth.

Following Murray State's example, we expect to start with a cohort of 10 students and progressively increase each following cohort by 5 students. We estimate that each student will be able to take two courses per semester, plus two courses in the summer, as the summer is a prime time for high school teachers to work on their professional development. This is a realistic estimate based on our two graduate certificate programs, Teaching College Writing and Teaching College Literature, which are for the same type of students—namely, high school English teachers.

To be even more conservative in our estimate, we estimate that on average each student will be able to take between 5 and 6 courses per year, which is 15-18 credit hours per year. The average of this is 16.5 credit hours per year per student. Since each doctoral credit hour equals \$500, each student will bring an annual revenue of \$8,250 ( $16.5 \times 500 = \$8,250$ ). Since each student with an M.A./M.S. degree will need to take 45 credit hours to complete the degree, applying the above average of 16.5 estimate for credit hours per year, each student will complete the degree in 2.7 years ( $45 / 16.5 = 2.7$ ). The table above shows that each student will take 16.5 credit hours in their first and second year, and 12 credit hours in their third year ( $16.5 + 16.5 + 12 = 45$ ). This means that each student will bring a revenue of \$8,250 in their first and second year, and \$6,000 revenue in their third year ( $12 \text{ credit hours} \times \$500 = \$6,000$ ).

- B. External Funding:** Will the proposed program require external funding (e.g., Perkins, Foundation, Federal Grants, Sponsored Research, etc.)?      **Yes**  **No**

If **yes**, please include all external funding in the **Business Plan, Line 18** and explain specific sources and funding below:

- C. Reallocations:** For each year will tuition revenue and/or external funding cover projected expenses?      **Yes**  **No**

If **not**, budget reallocation may be required. Please include all reallocations in the **Business Plan, Line 19** and describe below how your institution will cover any shortfalls in any given year.

ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAM BUSINESS PLAN									
1									
2	INSTITUTION:	Jacksonville State University							
3	PROGRAM NAME:	Doctor of Arts in English	CIP CODE:	23.0101					
4	SELECT LEVEL:	GRADUATE (DOCTORATE)							
5	<b>ESTIMATED *NEW* EXPENSES TO IMPLEMENT PROPOSED PROGRAM</b>								
6		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	TOTAL
7	PERSONNEL SALARIES & BENEFITS								\$0
8	EQUIPMENT								\$0
9	FACILITIES								\$0
10	ASSISTANTSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS								\$0
11	LIBRARY								\$0
12	ACCREDITATION								\$0
13	OTHER COSTS								\$0
14	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
15	<b>*NEW* REVENUES AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAM SUPPORT</b>								
16		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	TOTAL
17	TUITION + FEES	\$82,500	\$206,250	\$348,750	\$461,250	\$573,750	\$686,250	\$798,750	\$3,157,500
18	EXTERNAL FUNDING								\$0
19	REALLOCATIONS								\$0
20	<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	\$82,500	\$206,250	\$348,750	\$461,250	\$573,750	\$686,250	\$978,750	<b>\$3,157,500</b>
21	<b>ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS</b>								
22									
23		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	AVERAGE
24	FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT	No data reporting	25	35	45	55	65	75	50.00
25	PART-TIME ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT		10	15	20	25	30	16.67	
26	<b>TOTAL ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT</b>		25	45	60	75	90	105	<b>66.67</b>
27	<b>NEW ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT</b>		15	20	25	30	35	40	<b>27.50</b>
28	Validation of Enrollment		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
29	<b>DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS</b>								
30	<i>Note: Do not count Lead "0"s and Lead 0 years in computing the average annual degree completions.</i>								
31		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	AVERAGE
32	DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS	No data reporting			10	15	20	25	17.50

## Graduate Curriculum Overview

### Graduate Curriculum Checklist:

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Overview              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Components            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Options (as required) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## 1. Graduate Overview

**Enter the credit hour value for all applicable components (N/A if not applicable). The credit hours MUST match the credit hours in the Curriculum Components table.**

Curriculum Overview of Proposed Program	
Credit hours required in <b>Program Courses</b>	12
Credit hours in <b>Program Options (concentrations/specializations/tracks)</b>	0
Credit hours in <b>Program Electives</b>	21
Credit hours in <b>Required Thesis/Research</b>	12
Credit hours in <b>Required Capstone/Internship/Practicum</b>	0
<b>Total Credit Hours Required for Completion:</b>	

Maximum number of credits that can be transferred in from another institution and applied to the program:	15
Intended program duration in semesters for full-time students:	5
Intended program duration in semesters for part-time students:	7.5

Does the program require students to demonstrate industry-validated skills, specifically through an embedded industry-recognized certification, structured work-based learning with an employer partner, or alignment with nationally recognized industry standards?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
		X

If **yes**, please explain (i.e., number of hours required, etc.):

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Does the program include any concentrations/ tracks/ options?		X
If <b>yes</b> , please explain (i.e., define):		

## 2. Graduate Components

Please provide all course information as indicated in the following table. Indicate new courses with “Y” in the associated column. If the course includes a required work-based learning component, such as an internship or practicum course, please indicate with a “Y” in the WBL column.

Insert Additional Rows as Needed				
<b>Institution:</b>	Jacksonville State University			
<b>Program Name:</b>	Doctor of Arts in English			
<b>Program Level:</b>	GRADUATE (DOCTORATE)			
Curriculum Components of Proposed Program				
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	New? (Y)	WBL? (Y)
Program Courses		12		
EH 8001	Research Methods in Literature	3	Y	
EH 8002	Teaching Composition	3	Y	
EH 8003	Teaching Literature	3	Y	
EH 8030	Course Design, Curriculum, and Assessment in English Studies	3	Y	
Program Options (enter total credit hours from all options below)		0		
Program Electives		21		
EH 8004	Core Classroom Texts	3	Y	
EH 8008	Readings in Genre	3	Y	
EH 8011	Special Topics in English Studies	3	Y	
EH 8020	Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition	3	Y	
EH 8025	Advanced Study of Major Writers/Themes	3	Y	
EH 8040	Advanced Pedagogy in English Studies	3	Y	
EH 7014	Studies in British Literature pre-1785	3	Y	
EH 7015	Studies in British Literature post-1785	3	Y	
EH 7021	Studies in American Literature pre-1865	3	Y	
EH 7022	Studies in American Literature post-1865	3	Y	
EH 7030	Readings in Literary Time Periods	3	Y	
EH 7032	Special Topics: Diversity in English Studies	3	Y	
EH 7037	Teaching English as a Second Language	3	Y	
EH 7045	Creative Writing Seminar	3	Y	
EH 7050	Advanced Linguistics	3	Y	
EH 7010	The Eighteenth-Century Novel	3		
EH 7057	Studies in Non-Dramatic Elizabethan Literature	3		
EH 7058	Studies in Romantic Literature	3		
EH 7062	Studies in Shakespeare	3		
EH 7064	Middle English Literature	3		
EH 7065	Seventeenth-Century English Literature	3		
EH 7800	Special Problems	3		
EH 7025	Major Authors Seminar	3		
EH 7027	Seminar in Adaptation Studies	3		
EH 7053	Contemporary American Literature	3		
EH 7054	Contemporary European Literature	3		
EH 7055	Literature of the South	3		

EH 7056	Victorian Literature	3		
EH 7033	Teaching College Writing I	3		
EH 7034	Teaching College Writing II	3		
EH 7035	Teaching College Lit: The American Survey	3		
EH 7036	Teaching College Lit: The British Survey	3		
<b>Required Thesis/Research</b>		<b>12</b>		
EH 8990	D.A. Project	12	Y	
<b>Capstone/Internship/Practicum</b>		<b>0</b>		
<b>Total Credit Hours Required for Completion:</b>		<b>45</b>		

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Doctor of Arts (DA) in English at Jacksonville State University. This program is a timely and innovative addition to JSU's academic offerings, filling a critical gap in advanced education opportunities for practicing teachers.

Unlike the existing Doctor of Education (EdD), which is designed to prepare candidates for administrative and leadership roles, or the traditional PhD, which emphasizes research, the DA in English is intentionally structured for teachers who plan to remain in the classroom. This program offers advanced content knowledge in English, which will directly enhance instruction, improve student learning outcomes, and strengthen secondary and post-secondary education across Alabama and beyond.

The program's design thoughtfully addresses the professional needs of today's teachers by:

- Providing the doctoral credential necessary for teachers to earn the doctoral-level salary increase, a critical factor in teacher recruitment and retention.
- Preparing teachers to teach Dual Enrollment and other college-level courses in their high schools, thereby expanding opportunities for students to earn college credit while still in secondary school.
- Incorporating a National Board Certification (NBC) component, further advancing teacher expertise, professionalism, and recognition.
- Offering a pathway for teachers who wish to grow academically without leaving the classroom for administration or research roles.

Importantly, this program will increase graduate enrollment in the Department of English by attracting both secondary and post-secondary educators who are eager to advance their knowledge and impact while maintaining their teaching careers. It will also directly benefit Alabama's students, who will have greater access to highly qualified educators and more rigorous academic opportunities.

For these reasons, I believe the Doctor of Arts in English will be an invaluable addition to Jacksonville State University's graduate offerings and a significant asset to the educational landscape in our state. I strongly urge its approval and implementation.

Sincerely,

Melissa Shields, Ed.D, NBCT

Assistant State Superintendent

Alabama State Department of Education



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Regional Inservice Center  
100 Gamecock Drive  
Anniston, AL 36205

**September 18, 2025**

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Jacksonville State University Regional Inservice Center, I am pleased to offer my strong support for the proposed Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in English within the College of Arts, Humanities, and Sciences.

As the Jax State Region 6 Inservice Center, we are committed to advancing teacher leadership and professional growth across Alabama. One of the cornerstones of this work is our National Board Certification (NBC) support program. Alabama consistently ranks among the top states nationally in NBC accomplishments—7th in the nation for active NBCTs (2,434), 7th in percentage of active NBCTs (4.7%), 5th in new NBCTs (220), and 6th in maintained NBCTs (221). Our own Regional Cohort has consistently supported approximately 70 candidates each year for the past two years through monthly sessions that build teacher reflection, instructional expertise, and student impact.

The proposed Doctor of Arts in English aligns seamlessly with these efforts by preparing high school English teachers to:

- Advance their content expertise while remaining in the classroom,
- Qualify to teach college-level courses in high schools, and
- Pursue National Board Certification as part of the degree requirements.

Research clearly affirms the impact of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs). Cavalluzzo (2004) found that students taught by NBCTs gain the equivalent of one to two additional months of instruction annually, with even greater benefits for minority and low-income students. The American Institutes for Research has reported that new teachers mentored by NBCTs demonstrate up to 6.5 months of additional learning gains for their students compared with peers who are not mentored by NBCTs. NBCTs also achieve stronger outcomes on leading measures of teacher effectiveness, including classroom observations and value-added scores (Cavalluzzo, 2004). NBCTs are four times more likely to remain in the classroom than the state average—an investment that pays dividends not only in student achievement but also in teacher retention. In fact, Michelle Accardi (2019) from the National Board Director of Policy & Partnerships, highlights that every \$1 invested in NBCTs generates a \$31 return on investment, underscoring the significant educational and economic value of supporting Board certification.

Given these findings, the D.A. program's integration of National Board Certification makes it uniquely powerful. Our center stands ready to support D.A. candidates in their pursuit of NBC through our established cohort model. We are confident that graduates of this program will strengthen teaching and learning in Alabama by bringing together advanced content expertise, college-level instructional preparation, and the professional distinction of National Board Certification.

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For these reasons, I strongly endorse the approval of the Doctor of Arts in English program. This initiative represents a forward-thinking investment in our state's teachers and students, and I am eager to see its impact across our region and beyond.

Sincerely,

*Valerie Curtis*

Valerie Curtis  
Director  
Region 6 Inservice Center  
Jacksonville State University



October 5, 2025

## Greetings!

I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Doctor of Arts (DA) in English program at Jacksonville State University. This innovative program addresses a critical need in Alabama's educational landscape and represents an excellent opportunity for high school English teachers seeking advanced content knowledge and pedagogical development.

The DA program is particularly valuable because it offers a specialized pathway designed specifically for classroom educators who wish to deepen their expertise without pivoting toward educational administration or academic research. This focus on practical, content-rich professional development directly serves the teachers who are shaping students' literacy and critical thinking skills every day.

I am especially impressed by several key features of this program:

**Practical Career Benefits:** The inclusion of National Board Certification as a program component is particularly forward-thinking. Teachers who complete the DA will not only qualify for doctoral-level salary increases but will also achieve NBC status, which brings additional compensation and professional recognition. This dual benefit makes the program both academically rigorous and financially beneficial for educators.

**Addressing a State-Level Gap:** The absence of any similar program in Alabama makes JSU's proposal particularly significant. By following the successful model of Murray State's DA in English Pedagogy, JSU is positioning itself to meet documented demand while learning from an established program's best practices. This will provide the foundation for further growth in careers in education, which will also help provide a solution for the current teacher shortage.

**Strengthening K-12 and Higher Education Connections:** This program will create stronger bridges between secondary and post-secondary education, benefiting students across Alabama through better-prepared teachers and expanded dual enrollment opportunities.

I wholeheartedly support Jacksonville State University's Doctor of Arts in English program and believe it will serve as a model for teacher-focused doctoral education. The program will strengthen teaching quality, provide meaningful professional advancement for dedicated educators, and ultimately improve student outcomes across the state.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information or support for this worthy initiative.

Sincerely,

Charissa Lambert

ALSDE Office of School Improvement



50 N. Ripley St. Montgomery, AL 36130



256-310-6657



charissa.lambert@alsde.edu