The programs offered by the Department of English provide an opportunity for a truly liberal education, one that encourages both self-discovery and an exploration of enduring ideas. The curriculum includes courses in composition, rhetoric, linguistics and literature. The English Department’s mission is to prepare students to succeed in an increasingly diverse world. The department is devoted to an innovative curriculum that encourages lifelong learning, critical thinking and effective writing. We teach students to see textual work as an engagement with history, convention, culture and place so that they can participate responsibly in changing regional and challenging global environments. In particular, the department is concerned with Alaskan cultures, the North Pacific Rim environment and the intersection of networked technologies and forms of textuality. The English Department also strives to familiarize students with a full range of literacies – written, digital and visual – so that they may become active and well-equipped citizens.

To address this mission, the department offers three emphases in the undergraduate major: literature, rhetoric and language, and secondary education.

- The literature option focuses on significant examples of literature from different places, periods, and genres as well as the social and geocultural forces that shape them.
- The rhetoric and language option focuses on rhetorical strategies and techniques of composition, emphasizing historical, theoretical and linguistic perspectives.
- The secondary education option prepares students for teaching literature and writing at the middle and high school levels as well as for admission to UAA’s Master of Arts in Teaching program.

The department also provides minors in English and creative writing. The Minor in English with the literature option enhances the experience of students majoring in other subjects by providing a study of significant authors and literary works as well as by developing skills in writing and critical analysis. The Minor in English with the professional writing option prepares students to interpret and present complex information in a readable form to various audiences using a variety of media. The Minor in English with the linguistics option is designed for non-English majors who wish to build a foundation in linguistic studies for complementary majors, such as anthropology and languages, and for those who are interested in the study and teaching of languages. The Minor in Creative Writing and Literary Arts allows students to explore the crafts of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, and dramatic writing in an intensive series of workshops taught by active writers in the genres.

For information on English placement tests, transfer credits, petition procedures, or special registration, contact the English Department (http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/english).