I. INTRODUCTION

Boston University offers qualified students a unique opportunity to combine the study of law with coursework in English and American literature. “Law and literature” is an established scholarly field. The dual-degree program facilitates inquiry into the common terrain of these two disciplines, including textual analysis and interpretative techniques, legal and literacy theory, rhetoric, and the role of law in literature.

Successful candidates receive both the Juris Doctor (JD) degree and a Masters of Arts (MA) degree. With careful planning, the dual degree program can be completed in six semesters, rather than the eight semesters required to obtain each degree independently, because some courses can be credited toward both degrees.

The dual degree can significantly benefit a student, regardless of his or her career path. Students who intend to practice law will benefit from the careful, critical approach to textual analysis that is taught in graduate literature courses. Coursework taken in the program also will enhance the student’s writing skills, which are essential to law practice. Similarly, a student who decides to pursue a career outside law, such as teaching literature, will benefit from the rigorous specialized training in the analysis of legal texts and issues that a JD degree provides.

II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The JD/MA program is administered by a Joint Advisory Board. The Board includes one faculty member from the School of Law and one from the Department of English (“Department”). A member of the Board is appointed as the student’s advisor.

III. ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Students must apply and be admitted separately to the School of Law and to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GRS).

For School of Law application procedures:
Please consult the Boston University School of Law website: http://www.bu.edu/law/prospective/.

For the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences:
Please consult the Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Department of English
website for information on applying to GRS: http://www.bu.edu/english/graduate/admissions/

a. To be admitted to the joint degree MA in English program, students should have a substantial background in literature, at a minimum the equivalent of a minor (six courses), and preferably more.

b. Students follow the usual procedures for applying to the MA in English, including submitting official transcripts, with the following special provisions:

1) Students ordinarily apply to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences before or during their first year of law school to begin the MA program in their second year of law school. Students may apply to the two programs simultaneously or sequentially. A JD student must apply to GRS no later than his or her third semester in law school.

2) If applying to both programs simultaneously, students may use the same personal statement and same recommendations, provided that the statement and recommendations address the student’s interest in the dual program (both law and English).

3) If a student applies to the MA in English after beginning law school, he/she must write a new personal statement and submit at least one new letter of recommendation. Both should address the student’s scholarly skills and achievement in English and interest in the JD/MA program. (The student also should submit his/her other law recommendations).

4) Must submit LSAT score

5) Must take the General GRE (Graduate Record Examination) (The subject matter GRE in Literature in English is recommended but not required)

IV. JD/MA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A. Course Requirements

To earn the MA degree, students must complete eight graduate courses (normally 32 credits) in English. To earn the JD degree, students must earn at least 84 LAW credits, and must comply with additional School of Law requirements. The dual-degree program allows students to receive joint credit for some courses taken in BU Law and in the Department of English, subject to limitations described below.

The Department of English requires that dual-degree students complete at least six graduate-level courses in the Department, including one course in literacy theory and one Directed Study, which is devoted to the required JD/MA thesis. Of the six English courses, at least four must be graduate
seminars (courses numbered 700 or higher). Examples of courses offered by the Department that may be of particular interest to dual-degree students are in Attachment A.

Four of the literature courses taken to satisfy MA requirements also may be applied to the JD degree, up to a maximum of 12 LAW credits total. (NOTE: The Law School must adhere to ABA accreditation requirements, which typically means that a 4 credit GRS course ordinarily will yield 3 LAW credits. Please check with the Law Registrar’s Office to determine how many LAW credits may be granted for a GRS course). Students apply these literature courses to the JD degree during their second and third years of law school (typically one course per semester).

Students also must take at least two Law School courses during their second and third years of law school that are approved by the Joint Advisory Board as relevant to the dual program. Examples of recent LAW offerings that apply are in Attachment B.

To complete the MA in English, students must take two English courses beyond those needed to complete the JD degree. These can be completed in one of four ways, three of which permit the student to earn the JD and MA degrees in six semesters. The fourth option involves taking the remaining MA courses in the summer after receiving the JD degree, or in a seventh semester after receiving the JD degree. The options are listed in Attachment C.

B. Thesis Requirement

The core requirement of the joint JD/MA in English program is the thesis. Students must write a thesis that is a work of original scholarship and research and that substantially engages both legal and literary subjects, methods, texts, and/or analysis. This paper must: 1) satisfy BU Law’s Upperclass Writing Requirement; 2) be jointly supervised by a faculty member in the law school and in the Department of English; 3) be registered and counted as a Department of English Directed Study course; 4) be approved, in its final form, by a faculty member in BU Law and in the Department of English; 5) not substantially duplicate written work submitted for other courses either in the Department of English or in BU Law.

III. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

A. (For GRS admissions information):
   Admissions Office
   Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
   Boston University
   705 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 112
   Boston, MA 02215
   617-353-2696
   http://www.bu.edu/cas/admissions/graduate/apply/

B. (For Department of English MA program information):
   Associate Professor Laura Korobkin
ATTACHMENT A

Courses in English and American Literature that joint degree students might find especially worthwhile:

The Department of English has many courses that might interest law students. Listed below are courses in the theory of literary interpretation, since legal interpretation often relies on techniques of interpretation developed
in a literary context. Students would also be welcome to take any graduate-level course in literature (courses numbered 500 and above), as many law students have a deep interest in literature and literary analysis, and since analyzing, interpreting and writing about literary texts provides both skills that are useful to lawyers and access to the rich cultural and intellectual tradition that underlies our law. Please note that a substantial number of English department courses vary from year to year. With the exception of EN 792, Introduction to Recent Critical Theory, 700-level graduate seminars change each year; some are repeated fairly regularly, while others may be taught only once. Most topic-based upper-level literature courses also change each year, sometimes repeating and sometimes not. Therefore, interested students should always consult the most up to date list of courses available.

A. Courses offered every year:

EN 515/516  History of the English Language I and II

EN 604  Literary Criticism I  Survey of major philosophical discussions of literature from ancient Greece to the late nineteenth century.

EN 605  Literary Criticism II  Survey of literary critical perspectives and trends in humanistic theory relevant to literary interpretation from the mid-20th century onward.

EN 792  Introduction to Recent Critical Theory and Method  A selective study of recent literary theory and criticism, with emphasis on comparison of critical frameworks and methods.

B. Recent Courses that would be of special interest to law students (note that these courses may or may not be repeated):

EN 791  Law and American Narrative  This course examines the intersections of law and narrative in American literature and culture. Texts include judicial opinions, novels, law review articles, trial studies, historical materials, literary criticism. We will look for continuities and discontinuities, how narrative and storytelling function within the law, why legal issues and trials are so central to American literature, how ethical concerns are figured in the discourse of each and how each participates in larger cultural conversations. (offered 2002 and 2006)

EN 576  Studies in Literature and Gender: Gay/Lesbian Literature and Film  Literary and cinematic representations of gay and lesbian life in historical and cultural contexts. Topics include: mechanisms of homophobia; forging of homosexual identities; effects of same-sex desire on artistic form and conventions. (S 2009)

EN 588  Studies in African American Literature: Political Activism and African American Literature  Representations of politics in African American literature, along with the historical impact of US political movements on the tradition’s forms and themes.

EN 727  Literature and Politics in the Age of Queen Anne  Authors include Pope, Swift, Defoe, Manley, Addison, Steele and Gay. Close attention to partisan politics and the other arts. (F 2008)
EN 746/HI 757  Global South  Examination of US South in global historical and cultural contexts: New World colonialism; hemispheric plantation society; US imperialism; decolonization; contemporary globalization. Attention to interdisciplinary method. (S 2009)

EN 772  Modernist Authenticity  Shifting notions of authenticity and the aesthetics of the counterfeit (mask, lying, forgery) from Wilde through figures such as Yeats, Joyce, Beckett, Magritte and Warhol, with attention to bad faith and a possible alternative in the negative authenticity of lying. (S 2009)

EN 763  Shakespeare, Tragedy, Succession  Early modern stagings of the logic and tragedy of succession – the political as well as that of the family. Readings include historical texts on Tudor-Stuart succession, as well as Shakespeare’s plays. (F 2008)

EN 776  Performing Gender in the Twentieth Century  Representations of gender on twentieth century stages and intersections of gender with sexuality, race and class. (F 2008)

EN 734  Slavery and American Literature, 1830-1865  Slavery as a political, philosophical, and aesthetic topic in American literature. Texts include canonical and less advertised works from Poe, Douglass, Melville, Stowe, Thoreau, Frank J. Webb, and others. (S 2009)

EN 676  Feminist Theories and Movements  Modes of feminist thought, including radical psychoanalytical, materialist, global, performance, and queer theories, and their relationship to literary studies and political movements. (S 2008)

EN 791  Before Class: Early Modern Distinctions  The Elizabethan world-picture’s dark flip side: the symbolic violence of social distinctions (gender, religion, race, occupation, learning, birth, accent, etc.). Major and minor Tudor-Stuart works. (S 2008)

EN 495  Pragmatism and American Literature  This course examines authors such as Emerson, Poe, Dickinson, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Du Bois and Frost in terms of philosophical pragmatists (including Peirce, Dewey, William James, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.)

EN 665  (offered in F 2006 as EN 746) Money and Marriage in American Fiction  Marriage as literary plot, legal contract, market commodity, gendered constraint in the American novel 1796-1925. Readings in law, economics, history, criticism. (F 2007)

EN 666  Critical Studies in Literature and Society: Census and Anti-Census  The love-hate relationship between literature and demography in fiction, poetry, history and visual art. (F 2007)

EN 773  Pre-detection: Crime Narratives 1760-1845  English, American and French crime literature leading up to the emergence of the modern detective novel. Attention to models of narrative reconstruction and notions of evidence, induction, and investigation in emergent historical and criminological sciences. (F 2007)
EN 785  Queer Theory  Intensive study of various lesbian, gay, and queer theories, with consideration of how they emerged from gender studies. (F 2007)

EN 665  Social Theories of the American Novel 1789-1900 Origins of the American novel in the context of political and social theories of the developing nation, the influence of the British novel, and recent critical approaches. (F 2006)

EN 772  Revolution and Romanticism  British Romanticism in the context of the French Revolution debates of the 1790’s. (F 2006)

EN 778  Shakespeare and/in History  The context, social values and formal techniques of the innovative, often bizarre popular “historical” dramas that became authorized “history” for subsequent centuries. (S 2006)

EN 796  US Imperialism and Literary Culture  Interplay between US imperialism and modern literature 1880-1940. Relations between national reunification, feign expansion, emergent empire, the fiction of region and race. (S 2005)

EN 733  Antebellum American Literature  Sermons, speeches, poetry, fiction and essays from the 1830’s to 1860’s. Responses to race and the Fugitive Slave Law; interactions among sensational, sentimental, romantic genres.
ATTACHMENT B

Example LAW courses and seminars (S) that could be applied toward MA requirements:

American Legal History, Fall – Seipp
Comparative Law (S)*, Fall – di Robilant
Constitutional Theory (S), Spring – Fleming
Democracy & Equality (S), Fall – Lyons
Legal History, Fall – Seipp
Family Law, Fall – McClain
Historical Perspectives on Law, Constitutions & Culture (S), Spring – Collins
Islamic Law and Legal System (S), Spring – Reza
Jewish Law (S), Spring – Hecht
Law & Sexual Minorities (S), Spring – Volk
Law, Work & Poverty (S) – Fall, M. Hylton
Legislation, Spring – Marks, Leonard, Moncrieff, Silbaugh
Philosophical & Policy Perspectives on Tort Law (S), Fall – Simons
Philosophy of Law, Fall – Baxter
Political Resistance & Responsibility (S), Spring – Lyons
Rhetoric (S) – Farnsworth

*S=Seminar
ATTACHMENT C

Options for Completing the MA/JD requirements

In order to complete the Law/English JD/MA, students must take two courses beyond those necessary to earn a JD. These courses can be completed in one of four ways, three of which would permit the student to graduate on time for the JD.

Option 1: The JD/MA student will take two extra courses over the course of the second and third years, one EN (English) graduate seminar and one EN Directed Study, used to write the interdisciplinary law/literature thesis. These courses will be taken as overloads during the academic year. The student completes the JD/MA program in six semesters.

Note: The thesis written through the Directed Study will also meet the Law School’s writing requirement. The Law School’s program does not give independent course credit for the writing requirement, and students often meet it by submitting work they have done for Law Journals or other research completed outside of coursework. In the semester that a law student takes the Directed Study course to write the JD/MA thesis, he or she will, therefore, be carrying a load quite similar to that of a typical law student who is researching and writing the required Law paper outside of required Law coursework. This option permits students to pursue summer internships or other summer employment.

Option 2: The JD/MA student will complete one or both of the extra courses over the summer by taking one 500-level EN course and/or the Directed Study during either of the BU summer school terms. The JD/MA student completes the program in three academic years, and graduates with his or her entering law school class.

Note: Summer school courses are completed in six weeks. A student taking a 500-level EN summer school course in the first summer term (this year May 18-June 25 2010) could therefore still have time to complete a substantial summer internship at a law firm or other legal workplace. Such late starts to summer internships sometimes occur for a variety of reasons, so doing a shorter internship is understood by many firms.

Option 3: The JD/MA student combines Options 1 and 2 above by taking one overload course during one academic year and one summer course. The student graduates in three years with his or her entering law school class.

Option 4: The JD/MA student completes the two extra courses after finishing the JD requirements, during the summer after law school graduation or during a seventh semester after law school graduation.