

Brittany Moster, M.A. B.A. English, Literature, 2015

By Madelyn Chambers

Ph.D. Candidate, University of Birmingham

"If research is really what you want to do [for your career], then go for it. There's so much work that needs to be done, so there's no reason not to pursue it."



Brittany Moster graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in Literature. In 2016, she obtained her master's degree in Literature from University of Birmingham, located in the United Kingdom. Moster is currently pursuing her [PhD in Literature](#) at University of Birmingham, which she anticipates completing in 2020.

Moster decided to major in Literature after studying *The Great Gatsby* in high school. "It changed everything," said Moster. "I thought, 'If there is a whole world in this book, what else is there in a whole world of literature?'" At a tour of WKU's campus, Moster met Dr. Jane Fife and other English professors, and Moster's conversation with them showed her that WKU was the right place for her.

While pursuing her bachelor's degree, Moster studied abroad at [Harlaxton College](#) through WKU's Mahurin Honor's College. "When I was abroad at Harlaxton, I think that's when I realized that teaching and being in academia would be really cool," said Moster. "It was studying in new ways and helping my classmates in new ways that showed me that's what I wanted to do."

Moster also felt that taking *Intro to English Studies* with Dr. Alison Langdon shaped her interest in academic research. "I wrote an essay in that class which was published in *The Ashen Egg*," said Moster. "I didn't think that I could publish, but it was awesome to be in my second year of college and have something published." *Contemporary Drama* with Professor Walker Rutledge and *Poetry and Music* with Dr. Tom Hunley also prepared her for graduate school by demanding high-level work and encouraging outside-the-box thinking.

After graduating from WKU, Moster moved to Birmingham, UK, to earn her master's degree in Literature, concentrating in Modernism. Her PhD thesis focuses on John Middleton Murry's contributions to the modernist literary era.

In addition to working on her thesis, Moster also works as an editorial assistant for the academic journal *Modernist Cultures* and as a writing tutor for the English department at the University of Birmingham. "I try to keep to workday schedules, because the thesis is truly a full-time job," said Moster. "But the PhD is much more flexible than I originally anticipated, so there's lots of time to do conferences, go on archive trips, and meet other people who are working on PhDs and talk about our progress." After earning her PhD, Moster intends to apply for postdoctoral fellowships or seek a professorship at a university in the UK.

When she isn't studying or working, Moster enjoys exploring Birmingham, traveling around the UK, bicycling, and putting together jigsaw puzzles. "I do like reading, but when all you're doing is reading for your full-time job, sometimes it's really difficult to crack open a book at the end of the day," said Moster.

For students who are considering graduate degrees, Moster recommends that they "start early, and do quite a lot of research about where you want to be, because place is very important. Find a department that you like, research it, and get in touch with people. Make sure that you're touching base with that place so that you know it's a friendly one." She also recommends that current undergraduate students take time to explore their interests outside of the classroom. "Go out and find things that interest you on your own. Get involved in conversations that don't have anything to do with English and find other people who are interested in what you do."

