A department of English and American Studies outside of an English-speaking country is a phenomenon of extremity. This makes the department particularly alert to the extremity of language and subjectivity as such, to literary phenomena where languages and alphabets intricate and intersect, phenomena such as manifest themselves in the contemporary writings of Salman Rushdie or Kazuo Ishiguro, but no less so in the works of Shakespeare, Chaucer and Milton. It is from its position of extremity that the department of English and American Studies at Tel Aviv University underscores and supports the rigorous scrutiny of literary texts in the English language, using the finest of the conceptual tools of literary theory, as a basis for critical thinking that is at the same time creative.

A high degree of proficiency in English is required for entry into the Department of English and American Studies, as all undergraduate and graduate instruction is conducted in English. The program of the department is designed to provide students with rigorous knowledge of English and American literature and train students in the critical use of methods of the study of literature. Courses are aimed at sharpening the student's analytic thinking through the close reading of representative literary texts in the English language and texts in the theories of literature, poetics, aesthetics, psychoanalysis, and the study of culture.

The department offers an American Studies Track designed to provide interested students with a broad, critical understanding of American history, society, and culture, from the colonial period to the present age of globalization. Studies in this track are interdisciplinary in nature: while the program is based on core courses in the English department, it integrates courses from other disciplines, from history, cultural studies, political science, religion, art history, film, and media studies. Our goal is to encourage students to engage the complexities and diversity of the American experience by utilizing the various methods made available in such a wide-ranging curriculum.

The department's curriculum is enriched by a program of seminars, international conferences and visiting scholars who are invited for varying periods of time to lecture and participate in workshops devoted to current issues in the field. These include lectures sponsored by the Cohen-Porter Fund for the English Department, the Sheila Carmel Lecture, and the Yael Levin Writer-in-Residence Program. The Department's Goldser Foundation London Book Collection provides a broad-based access to a wide range of primary and secondary source material, and is an invaluable research asset for both Faculty and Students.

The department awards several grants and prizes for excellence in student writing and
achievement.