

ENGLISH

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

WRITING/EDITING

Creative writing
Fiction and nonfiction
Poetry, plays, screenplays, and scripts
Commercial writing (e.g. greeting cards, jingles)
Journalism
Writing/Reporting
Podcast script writing
Editing
Critique
Professional writing
Copywriting and editing
Blogging
Speech writing
Column writing
Social media writing and management

Newspapers/Magazines
Broadcast media companies:
Television
Radio
Movie
Trade, professional, or consumer publications
Internet sites
Government agencies
Universities and university presses
Technical and gaming industries
Large corporations
Self-employed/Freelance

Select elective coursework in a particular area of interest.
Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or departmental or program newsletters.
Volunteer to assist or tutor students in a writing center.
Become familiar with the proposal writing and submission process involved in freelance writing.
Gain as much experience as possible through volunteer positions, internships, or part-time jobs.
Demonstrate patience and persistence in starting a career in creative writing.

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

Writing/Editing
Corporate communication
Management
Customer Service
Sales
Marketing
Human resources
Consulting
Real estate
Insurance

Financial institutions
Real estate agencies
Property management firms
Insurance companies
Large and small corporations
Print and electronic media
Consulting firms
Retailers including department, grocery, drug, online, and book stores

Obtain a business minor.
Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs, internships, or volunteer work.
Secure leadership roles in campus organizations and student professional associations.
Seek experience as a financial officer or treasurer of a campus organization.
Develop strong analytical and computer skills.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

PUBLIC RELATIONS/ADVERTISING

Account coordination
Writing
Editing
Research
Media Relations
Social media management
Account management
Fundraising

Public relations firms
Advertising agencies
In-house public relations departments
Trade associations
College and universities
Nonprofit organizations
Government agencies
In-house advertising departments
Sports and entertainment organizations
Educational institutions
Consulting Firms
Hospitality and tourism industry
Private corporations
Freelance

Obtain internship or other relevant work experience to break into this field. Be prepared to start at the bottom and work for promotions.
Develop strong research, public speaking, and interpersonal skills.
Seek experiences being self-directed and a team player.
Volunteer to write publications for nonprofit or student organizations.
Supplement curriculum with business courses

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Technical writing and editing
Science and medical writing
Grant and proposal writing
Content management
Software and hardware documentation
Information technology writing
Manual and tutorial writing
Human-computer interface design
Corporate communications and training
Mechanical communication

Management, scientific, and technical consulting companies
Technical industries
Retailers, including electronics
Engineering firms
Healthcare industry
Computer systems design companies
Self-employed/Freelance
Software publishers

Earn a bachelor's degree with a focus in English, communication, or journalism. Complete coursework in technical communication.
Minor or take classes in science and/or computer science to learn about technical areas.
Gain experience in a specialized field such as engineering, medicine, science, web design, or computer software.
Develop strong grammar and language skills; consider a second-language.
Obtain volunteer or internship experience as a research assistant in a technical information department.
Pursue a technical writing or editing internship.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

GOVERNMENT

Administration
Research
Policy analysis
Lobbying
Legislative services
Program management
Cultural resources management

Federal government
State and local government
Public archives
Libraries

Learn federal, state, and local government job application process. Seek assistance from the campus career center.
Take additional courses or earn a minor in an area of interest.
Gain relevant work experience through government internship programs.
Earn a master's or professional degree in a related field to qualify for the most job opportunities.
Get involved in campus leadership roles.
Develop excellent written and oral communication skills

EDUCATION

Higher education administration:
Admissions, financial aid, academic advising and support services
Higher education administration continued:
Development and alumni affairs
International Education and Study Abroad
Information/Library Science
Developing educational products and services
Non-classroom teaching
English as a Second Language (ESL)
Research
K-12 Teaching
University teaching
Teaching abroad
Tutoring
Educational consulting

Public and private K-12 schools
Colleges and universities
Language institutes, local and abroad
Educational companies
Libraries
Museums
Private learning centers
Test preparation organizations
Nonprofit organizations involved with literacy

Obtain appropriate state certification for public school teaching.
Gain certifications to teach multiple subjects or age groups for increased job opportunities.
Earn a master's or doctorate degree for post-secondary teaching. Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations for graduate school.
Plan to attend graduate school in college student personnel or information science for those fields.
Seek volunteer experiences working with children through Big Brother/Sister programs, tutoring, summer camps, YMCAs, etc.
Participate in activities such as debate or literary clubs, campus publications, or student government.
Pursue leadership roles such as resident advisor, peer mentor, student advisor, etc.

PUBLISHING

Editing
Advertising
Sales
Self-publishing
Circulation
Production
Publicity
Marketing
Promotion
Administration

Trade publishers
Trade magazines
Special interest magazines
Association magazines
Sunday newspaper supplements
Educational publishers
Religious publishers
Professional and scholarly publishers
University presses
Independent publishers
Alternative media publishers (e.g., e-books, audio-books)

Obtain an internship in the publishing industry.
Participate in a summer publishing institute.
Develop proofreading, editing, and copy-editing skills; maintain current knowledge of digital production technology
Gain experience by writing for student publications such as the newspaper, creative writing magazines, the yearbook, etc.
Conduct an informational interview with or shadow a professional in the publishing industry.
Look for positions with local dailies and alternative weeklies in the community

AREAS

LAW

Law Assistance
Prosecution
Defense
Contractual
Corporate
Nonprofit or Public Interest
Government
Mediation
Lobbying

NONPROFIT

Administration
Research
Grant writing
Development/Fundraising
Programming
Volunteer coordination

GENERAL INFORMATION

English majors develop skills – in written communication, editing, problem-solving, and working independently and in a team -- that are valued by employers in nearly every profession. A bachelor's degree in English is very broad and is sufficient for entry-level positions in business, industry, and nonprofits, as well as in areas such as entertainment, radio, television, and museum work. Because English can lead to many different career paths, it is important to identify an area of interest and plan to gain the right skills, experiences, and credentials to enter that field.

A major in English is also good preparation for continued graduate or professional training in areas such as English, law, political science/government, public administration, communications, medicine/medical humanities, and faith-based professions.

Be proactive, determined, assertive, and confident in order to secure freelance writing opportunities. Save samples of written work to be used for a portfolio.

Cultivate other career opportunities in order to supplement a freelance writing income.

Seek out and engage in internships in business or government to demonstrate skills and interest in working in desired fields following graduation.

Get involved in organizations and gain experience in leadership roles that reflect interests in business or government roles.

Obtain additional areas of expertise such as journalism, broadcasting, technical writing, or politics for specialized positions.

Conduct informational interviews or shadow professionals in careers of interest to learn more about their jobs.

Join relevant professional associations. Attend their conferences and read journals.

EMPLOYERS

Law firms
Government agencies
State and local government
Corporations
Public interest organizations
Private practice
Colleges and universities

Nonprofit organizations
Social service organizations
Churches and religiously affiliated groups

STRATEGIES

Participate in a debate or forensic team to hone communication skills.

Join a pre-law student organization.

Develop strong research skills and attention to detail.

Take courses in, and gain experience with, mediation and conflict resolution.

Obtain a summer or part-time job in a law firm.

Plan to shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.

Complete special training requirements for paralegal positions.

Attend law school and earn a JD to become an attorney. Maintain an excellent GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to gain law school admittance. Plan to take the LSAT.

Volunteer or intern with social service organizations.

Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds

Develop excellent communication skills.

Take a course in grant writing.

Join a service organization or get involved in community service projects