

# ENGLISH

## What can I do with this major?

### AREAS

### EMPLOYERS

### STRATEGIES

#### WRITING/EDITING

Creative Writing  
Novels: Fiction and Nonfiction  
Poetry  
Plays  
Screenplays  
Scripts  
Greeting Cards  
Lyrics/Jingle Writing  
Graphic Novels  
Journalism  
Writing/Reporting  
Editing  
Critique  
Freelance Writing

Newspapers  
Magazines  
Broadcast media companies including television, radio, and movie  
Trade, professional, or consumer publications  
Internet sites  
Large corporations  
Government agencies  
Department of Homeland Security  
Department of Defense  
Department of State  
Veterans Affairs  
National Archives and Records Administration  
Universities and university presses  
Technical industries  
Self-employed/Freelance

Select elective coursework in a particular area of interest.  
Write/edit 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.

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#### TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Technical Writing and Editing  
Science and Medical Writing  
Grant and Proposal Writing  
Software and Hardware Documentation  
Information Technology 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  
Software publishers  
Self-employed/Freelance

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

### PUBLISHING

Editing  
Advertising  
Sales  
Circulation  
Production  
Publicity  
Marketing  
Promotion  
Administration

Trade publishing  
Special interest magazines  
Trade magazines  
Association magazines  
Sunday newspaper supplements  
Educational publishing  
Religious books and magazines  
Professional and scholarly publishing  
University presses  
Independent publishers  
Alternative media publishers  
E-books  
Audiobooks

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.  
Volunteer to write or edit publications with local nonprofit organizations to gain experience.  
Be prepared to relocate to cities with a publishing presence. A large majority of opportunities exist in New York City.  
Research the publishing industry to learn more about career ladders.

### EDUCATION

Teaching  
Administration  
Higher Education Administration  
Admissions  
Financial Aid  
Academic Advising and Support Services  
Development  
Alumni Affairs  
International Education and Study Abroad  
Student Affairs (e.g., Residence Life, Student Activities, Orientation, Leadership, Greek Life, Multicultural Programs)  
Information/Library Science  
Non-classroom Teaching  
English as a Second Language (ESL)  
Research  
Tutoring

Public and private K-12 schools  
Colleges and universities  
Language institutes, local and abroad  
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 assistant, peer mentor, student advisor, etc.

**AREAS**

**EMPLOYERS**

**STRATEGIES**

**ADVERTISING**

Creative Services  
Copy Writing  
Art Direction  
Web Page Design  
Account Management  
Media  
Account Planning  
Production

Advertising agencies  
In-house agencies of large companies

Demonstrate talent, persistence, assertiveness, and enthusiasm.  
Obtain experience with campus media such as the newspaper, or TV, or radio station.  
Be prepared to start in an entry-level position.  
Develop strong statistics background for market research positions.  
Create a portfolio of writing showing originality and imagination for creative positions.  
Gain knowledge of various media, contemporary tastes, and trends.  
Participate in sales, promotions, or social media for student organizations or private businesses.  
Complete an internship in a market research firm or advertising agency.  
Supplement curriculum with courses in advertising, communications, business, art, or graphic design.

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**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Account Coordination  
Writing/Editing  
Media Relations  
Social Media  
Account Management  
Fundraising  
Research

Public relations firms  
Advertising agencies  
In-house public relations departments  
Trade associations  
Colleges and universities  
Nonprofit organizations  
Government agencies

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.

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**BUSINESS**

Management  
Customer Service  
Sales and Marketing  
Human Resources  
Insurance  
Claims  
Underwriting

Business organizations including banks, real estate agencies, insurance firms, and large and small corporations  
Retailers including department, grocery, drug, specialty, variety, 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

### LAW

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

## EMPLOYERS

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

## 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.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- A bachelor's degree in English is very broad and is sufficient for entry level positions in business and industry, as well as in areas such as entertainment, radio and television commentary, 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, religious studies (e.g., seminary).
- Be proactive, determined, assertive, and confident in order to secure freelance writing opportunities. Writers typically experience many rejections for each piece that is accepted for publication. Save samples of written work to be used for a portfolio. Cultivate other career opportunities in order to supplement a freelance writing income.
- 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.