

# What can I do with a degree in... **ENGLISH?**

## What is **ENGLISH?**

In today's "high-text" careers, those who get ahead have mastered critical thinking and clear communication. They have creativity, passion, and vision. At WCU, when you study English, you will be joining one of the most vibrant programs at the university, where our students and faculty where our students are ready for the challenges of a rapidly changing world and prepared for today's job market.

The Department of English offers exciting courses that will help you see the connection between academics and a successful and meaningful life beyond the classroom.

## What are the **DEGREE OPTIONS?**

You will graduate with a **B.A. in English** (please see the Education Major Map for information regarding the B.S. Ed in English option.) Students in English choose a concentration, which appears on the official transcript, and a required minor or a second major. A minor or second major is a great way to expand your knowledge base and build career-ready skills.

## What are the **CONCENTRATIONS?**

**Creative Writing and Publishing:** Imagination, writing craft, and the publishing world are explored in workshops in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction for emerging authors and all writers.

**English Studies:** Majors can customize the hours they take beyond the core classes, a concentration ideal for students who need flexibility in pursuing pre-professional programs or a double major.

**English Studies Pedagogy:** Required for students pursuing a BSEd in En-



lish and a stand-alone concentration for students interested in pedagogy-centered careers.

**Film and New Media:** A concentration focused on analyzing visual media texts in their cultural contexts to understand how media shapes the stories we tell and informs our world.

**Global English Studies:** This concentration highlights the vitality and interconnectedness of textual traditions across the globe, and the relevance of global learning and approaches to life.

**Literary Studies:** Students explore written and visual texts from both critical and creative perspectives in their cultural contexts, emphasizing research, collaboration, and new technologies.

**Public Writing and Rhetoric:** Emphasizes the public life of writing—adapting messages for diverse audiences and using writing to intervene in our social and political worlds.

**Writing and Editing in Professional Environments:** Students sharpen their writing skills and work on interdisciplinary teams, collaborate with community partners, and publish their work in digital environments.

## What is the **ADMISSION PROCESS?**

Students declare an English major with the Advising Center, located in Killian Annex. Please make an appointment with your advisor.

## What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Our graduates pursue careers as editors, publishers, communications consultants, film and screen writers, novelists, journalists, media correspondents, travel writers, librarians, speech writers, technical writers, teachers here and abroad, lawyers and doctors, and project managers.

## Who employs **ENGLISH** graduates?

Our graduates work in a variety of industrial sectors including magazine, newspaper, and broadcast companies; marketing and public relations firms; law firms; educational technology and software development companies; nonprofits and foreign service; school systems and higher education institutions; and film and media companies.

# MAJOR MAP

**How to use this map:** Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

## 1st YEAR

## 2nd YEAR

### EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

The courses you take your first year will depend on your concentration and when you declare your major. However, many students focus on liberal studies requirements and introductory English classes. Check out the [8-semester plan for your concentration](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Courses your second year will likely continue with your liberal studies, with a special focus on required English courses. Check out the [8-semester plan for your concentration](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

### GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness.

If you are thinking about attending graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions like on-campus employment or early internships.

See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU.

Engage deeper with [DegreePlus](#); choose an additional competency to complete

### BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Lily Award](#), a program aimed to encourage students to be connected with their community.

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

Consider [study abroad programs relating to English](#). Talk with a study abroad advisor about targeted experience for your concentration.

### PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [Onet Online](#).

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus.

Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools you wish to apply to in a few years with their admission requirements so that you are aware of the expectations.

## Looking for a minor or second major? Consider these options:

Biology  
Business Administration & Law  
Communication  
Computer Science  
Criminal Justice  
History

International Studies  
LatinX Studies  
Management  
Marketing  
Music  
Philosophy

Political Science  
Psychology  
Sociology  
Spanish  
TESOL

### 3rd YEAR

### 4th YEAR

Third-year courses focus heavily on English classes within your concentration as well as on your chosen second major/ minor. Check out the [8-semester plan for your concentration](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Courses in your final year will focus on finishing English requirements, as well as requirements for your second major/ minor and other elective requirements. Check out the [8-semester plan for your concentration](#) and make an appointment with your advisor, complete your degree audit, and [apply for graduation!](#)

Consider internship experiences that will give you practical and hands-on experience to put on a resume. Get involved with Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honors Society (by invitation only) Get involved with The Nomad's [Interdisciplinary Innovations Conference](#) or participate in [NCUR](#) or the [Undergraduate Expo](#).

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Write for the [Western Carolinian, the Gadfly or the Nomad](#), WCU's student-run publications. Work in the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) as a course tutor, Writing Fellow, Academic Skills Consultant, etc.

Continue to build relationships and volunteer with area organizations in your field.

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual Career Fair Plus event, held each October and February.

Connect with alumni in your field through [LinkedIn](#)

Participate in the Humanities Symposium through your Senior Seminar course.

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Apply for internships. Utilize the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) for MCAT, GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Take the MCAT, GRE, etc. Use [Big Interview](#) to learn more about professional interviews.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Schedule a visit to tour professional schools of your choice, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by using the [CCPD](#).

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

# MORE INFORMATION

## INTERNSHIP Information

At Western Carolina University there are numerous internship opportunities for students. In some cases, internships are established through a faculty member in the student's major. Often students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic advisor the possibility of receiving college credit. Generally, three hours of general elective credit can be earned for a minimum of 150 hours of experience.

## SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge such as:

- critical thinking and problem-solving
- writing and editing skills
- interdisciplinary collaboration
- visual and multimodal design skills
- research and presentation skills
- project management skills
- storytelling for different audiences

## KNOWLEDGE Base

Student pursuing this program will develop skills in the following areas, all of which will make them competitive for whatever professional pathway they choose to follow:

- Locating, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing information from multiple kinds of sources
- Articulating content knowledge in visual literacy, language, literature, rhetoric, and writing

- Executing effective writing skills across a variety of tasks, media, audiences, and contexts
- Showing awareness and understanding of unfamiliar communities, ideas, cultures, and values
- Exhibiting readiness for careers and/or advanced studies by embodying high standards of professional activity, discourse, and behavior

## Professional RESOURCES

- Association of Writers: [www.awpwriter.org](http://www.awpwriter.org)
- Carolinas Writers Conference: [www.carolinaswritersconference.org](http://www.carolinaswritersconference.org)
- IEEE Professional Communication Society: [procomm.ieee.org](http://procomm.ieee.org)
- National Council of Teachers of English: [www2.ncte.org](http://www2.ncte.org)
- North Carolina Writers Network: [www.ncwriters.org](http://www.ncwriters.org)
- South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAMLA): [samla.memberclicks.net](http://samla.memberclicks.net)
- Sigma Tau Delta, International English Honors Society: [english.org](http://english.org)
- Society for Technical Communication (STC): [stc.org](http://stc.org)
- TESOL International Association: [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)

## QUESTIONS?

For questions, please call the English program at 828-227-7264 or visit [english.wcu.edu](http://english.wcu.edu).

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or [careerservices@wcu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wcu.edu).

