

**ENGLISH**

<http://english.gmu.edu>

**Name and description of the field**

The discipline of English encompasses a wide variety of topics, all centering on the creative and communicative functions of language. From the study of literature, English majors gain a sense of the creative possibilities of their language. They learn about the relationships between literature and history, society, culture, gender, and psychology. In so doing, they gain a deeper appreciation of the human experience as it has been communicated over time through imaginative literature. English majors also gain skills in writing and communicating their own thoughts. Creative writing courses give students first-hand knowledge of the power of language to convey feelings and experience; courses in non-fiction writing, including technical and professional writing, help students convey ideas and information clearly and concisely. The underlying benefit of these varied studies is an increased sensitivity to language and an increased confidence in using it, whether in spoken or written forms.

**What special skills or abilities are needed to succeed in this major?**

- An interest in cultivating thoughtful reading;
- Inquisitiveness about the marvelous varieties of literary performance;
- An aptitude for written expression;
- Patience for careful revision of writing;
- The desire to learn critical skills from other writers and readers.

**What are recent graduates doing?**

With the strong communication and analytical skills developed in earning an English degree, graduates pursue a wide variety of careers in media organizations, trade and professional associations, non-profit organizations related to the arts, social change and other areas; schools; and in a variety of businesses. Many of these careers require knowledge of computer software such as word processing, desktop publishing and other communication and organizational computer tools. **Recent graduates can be found working settings in that include writing, editing, publishing; teaching, public relations, technical writing, paralegal, marketing, and consulting.**

**Specific job titles include:**

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Associate editor                  | Sales consultant                |
| Writer/editor/reporter/journalist | Director, Marketing             |
| Technical writer/editor           | Insurance Underwriter           |
| Public information specialist     | Leadership Consultant           |
| Proposal coordinator              | Project support coordinator     |
| Sports writer                     | Paralegal                       |
| Advertising writer                | Researcher                      |
| Administrative assistant          | Teacher                         |
| ESL Teacher                       | Recruiter                       |
| English teacher                   | Technical trainer               |
| Producer                          | Adjunct English professor       |
| Media Director-Sales              | Personnel management specialist |
| Analyst                           | Writing consultant              |
| Web developer                     | Analyst                         |
| Web content manager               | Writing Consultant              |
| Proposal Writer                   |                                 |

## EXPLORING MAJORS

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### Employers who have hired English graduates:

American Red Cross	Assoc. of Writers & Writing Programs	BAE Systems
GMU Fenwick Library	Fairfax County Govt.	GMU English Language Institute
EnAble Access, Inc.	Wolf Trap Foundation for Performing Arts	Express Scripts
L-3 Communications	Northern VA Community College	Various No.VA. Public Schools
GMU Information Services	Virginia Wesleyan College	Kastle Systems
Loudoun Co. Public Schools	United Press International	SAIC
U.S. Customs	Assoc. of Writers & Writing Programs	Lockheed Martin
Feld Entertainment	Prince William Co. Library	Peace Corp

### Resources for additional information:

Students can obtain a **Where to Start...Career Resources** guide for English majors at Career Services. Web sites are listed in this resource for finding internships and employment. Examples of resources include:

*Great Jobs for English Majors, Career Choices for Bookworms and Other Literary Types, Career Opportunities for Writers, Current Jobs in Writing, Editing and Communications*

**Career Library Resources** - <http://careers.gmu.edu/careerlibrary/wheretostart/engl.pdf> located in the Career Services Library, SUB I, 348

**Major, Career & Job Hunting Information Online (links to the academic department, job descriptions, associations and other useful sites)** – Go to <http://careers.gmu.edu/onlineresources/engl.htm>

### For more information about graduate school:

- Consult English faculty.
- See the posted graduate school notices in the English Department.
- Consult the resources in the Career Services Library, 348 SUB I, and the graduate catalogs in the main University libraries.

### Is it possible to minor in English?

Yes. The English minor consists of 18 hours of UL English courses. Also available are a linguistics minor and an undergraduate certificate in the Teaching of English as a Second Language. For specific requirements please contact the English department.

### Whom should students contact for further information?

**Laura Ellen Scott**  
English Department  
A 481 Robinson Hall  
703-993-1179

**Academic Advising Center**  
304 SUB I  
703-993-2470

**Ken Guerrant**  
Career Services  
348 SUB I  
703-993-2370