

What Can I do with a Master's Degree in English?

- Whether you are considering a master's degree in English, or you already have your degree and are unsure of your next step, one thing is certain: a master's degree will give you the experience and tools necessary for a number of different careers.
- A master's degree in English is excellent preparation for *teaching*, *writing*, *editing*, and much more. While continuing your study with a PhD program is certainly an option, students can use this guide to understand all the different paths their careers can take.

I Want to Teach.

Teach in the United States

- Teach College
 - More and more graduate students with a master's degree are being offered part and full-time teaching positions at community colleges (and some state and private universities). Depending on your teaching experience, you may be offered to teach courses in composition, literature, creative writing, and/or technical writing.
 - Keep in mind, however, that these positions usually come without the benefits and privileges of full-time professors. (Information from: <http://mastersinenglish.org/>)
- Teach High School
 - Every state has different rules and regulations for high school teachers. Some schools that are in a greater need of teachers will permit a teacher to teach while he/she takes certification courses and studies for the state exam(s).
 - There is also a growing need for bilingual and ESL teachers at nearly every grade level throughout the United States. (Information from: <http://mastersinenglish.org/>)
 - See <http://www.nais.org/Pages/default.aspx>
 - <http://www.carneysandoe.com/>
- Teach For America
 - Teach For America is a teaching program for recent college graduates. Graduates commit to teaching two years in under-resourced communities in urban and rural settings throughout the United States.
 - Teachers in TFA are treated like full-time faculty members, receiving the same school salary and benefits as the non-TFA faculty.
 - For More Information Visit: <http://www.teachforamerica.org/>

Teach Abroad

- Teach English in France, China, Spain, Korea, Turkey, and many more foreign countries
 - There are countless opportunities to travel to a foreign country and teach English and most programs require little or no experience with the native language.
 - To begin your exploration of an exotic adventure, visit some of these helpful links:

- <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21946.htm>
- <http://www.goabroad.com/teach-abroad>
- <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/teachingk12university/index.shtml>
- <http://www.worldteach.org/>

I Want to Write.

Search Engine Marketer

- As a search engine marketer, you would help companies market their products using digital channels such as email, facebook, and twitter. You would participate in the world of online advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), and studying how visitors interact with websites using web analytics.
- How to get your foot in the door? A great place to start: take the Google Certification Courses. While you are taking these courses, learn as much as you can about the industry and look for entry level positions at a search engine marketing agency.

Direct Response Copywriter

- Tasks for a direct response copywriter are based on mail marketing: fundraising letters, offers from cable and cell-phone companies, etc.
- This position is for those who enjoy interacting and collaborating with other people. They understand why consumers are drawn to certain products and not others. They can make these connections between themselves as creative writers and their audience/consumers.

Digital Copywriter

- As a digital copywriter, some things you may put together include banner ads, creative social media campaigns, blog posts, whitepapers, e-books, online strategies, landing pages, website copy, and/or viral promotion ideas.
- How to make an impression? Write an engaging and witty cover letter to an agency and ask if any internship opportunities exist.

News Reporter

- Yes, English majors can become news reporters without a background in communication or journalism. What this industry values is an eyes for detail. They want someone who has excellent research skills, as well as great writing and analytical capabilities.
- Broadcasting stations generally have interns. As an intern, try to absorb as much information about the way things work as possible. Buy a few books and show the station you take your internship seriously.
Some books to start with:
-Jerry Lanson and Mitchell Stephans' *Writing and Reporting the News*
-Carole Rich's *Writing & Reporting News: A Coaching Method*
-Melvin Mencher's *News Reporting and Writing*

Journalist

- English graduates can also become journalists. One famous journalist, Roy Peter Clark, got his PhD in Medieval Culture before leaving his mark on the journalism industry.
- Getting this type of job works a lot like the news reporting industry. If you land an internship after showing them some of your amazing sample work, try to absorb everything about the work experience.
- What is the difference between reporting and journalism? News reporting is about the quick and fast updates. The terse information you get via the internet about breaking stories. Journalism, media commentator George Snell writes, “Is getting beneath the news. It is an investigation, analysis and thoughtful commentary. It is in-depth expository reporting.”

For Example, George Snell writes:

Reporting: A 747 aircraft crashed in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean yesterday.

Journalism: A review of maintenance reports of the 747 aircraft that crashed last month revealed that the airplane had a faulty engine parts. Reports indicate that airline management ignored warnings that the parts were malfunctioning.

Technical Writer

- As a technical writer you will work on complex documents that are needed for products. An example may be writing a user/instruction manual for a consumer product.
- This industry usually requires some previous experience and is somewhat harder to break into. However, Rober Nagle, a technical writer with a Humanities M.A., offers some tips for working around the “must have 5 years’ experience in technical writing” If you would like to read some of Robert Nagle’s advice, check out his blog at: www.IdiotProgrammer.com

Corporate Blogger

- A corporate blogger can be responsible for creating a lot of blog posts, planning content schedules, brainstorming new ideas for articles and whitepapers, controlling social media accounts and keeping a close eye on site feedback and traffic.
- A great way to get noticed would be to email a well-recognized blog and offer them pro-bono work as an editor or proofreader. Doing this for a few months will get you the added experience for your CV. You may even get the chance to post a blog, which you can use later for a sample of published work.

Grant and Proposal Writer

- Many of the skills you learn as an English graduate student like researching and analyzing difficult material are the same skills valued in this industry.
- While positions tend to have “some experience preferred” latched to their description, you may already have experience writing and winning grants during your two years at UNCW. If you do not have this experience, start with a smaller non-profit company.

For more information and tips, visit James Mulvey's site, from which many of the above ideas are adapted: <http://www.selloutyoursoul.com/2011/12/19/jobs-for-english-majors/>

Mulvey has suggestions on government jobs, advertising jobs, and more. He has also written a book called *How to Find a Career With Your Humanities Degree in 126 Days*.

I Want to Work in Publishing.

- Careers in editing, production, design and more might be a good option for some with an M.A. in English.
 - <http://www.publishers.org/>
 - <http://www.publishersmarketplace.com/jobs/>
 - **For freelance work:** <http://www.guru.com/>

I Want to Work for a Nonprofit.

- Non-profit organizations or NPOs cover a wide range of fields including educational, health, the arts and more. Nonprofits often need individuals who are skilled researchers, writers, and organizers.
 - <http://www.idealists.org/>
 - <http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/>
 - <http://foundationcenter.org/>

Others might work in a university setting (student affairs, writing centers, public affairs offices—check openings at individual universities.) Others might work for the government (<http://www.ourpublicservice.org/OPS/>) or become an entrepreneur (<http://www.allbusiness.com/>)

Finally, you may want to read the advice given here: http://www.mla.org/job_nonacademic and here: <http://chronicle.com/article/You-Have-the-MA-What-Now-/140169/>

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