

## Career Paths for English Majors

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, the marketplace value of a BA in English is being hotly debated. Naysayers offer evidence that the humanities in general and the English major in particular are on their way to extinction in our tech-obsessed, budget-crunched America. But you'll be glad to know that a lot of the the top business people are your biggest cheerleaders.

In a flurry of 2013 articles on the subject, writers outline why English Majors are so valuable at this moment. If you read carefully, you'll see how these advocates argue that the skills you have are the very ones *everyone* is looking for. You can emphasize them in your applications for, well, any job at all.

According to Dean Rader, a journalist and University of San Francisco English Professor, the whole debate "began back in October 2012 when *The Wall Street Journal* ran a story in which Santosh Jayaram, a wildly successful Silicon Valley entrepreneur, praised English majors for their ability to construct stories about products or companies. He even uttered the words: "English majors are exactly the people I'm looking for,"" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 7/14/13).

Then other tycoons weighed in.

In an interview for *Business Insider* (6/20/13), Bracken Darrell, the CEO of a successful Silicon Valley tech company called Logitech, who was himself an English Major, said

"The older I get, the more I realize the power of words and the power of words in making you think ... the best CEOs and leaders are extremely good writers and have this ability to articulate and verbalize what they're thinking.

I'm sitting in Silicon Valley [right now] ... this is the most technical place in the country except for maybe the MIT campus ... I mean, there's more engineers per capita here. Yet the most successful guy in Silicon Valley in the last decade was Steve Jobs" Who famously said "it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields the results that make our hearts sing."

In *The Huffington Post* (5/ 23/13), small business expert Steve Strauss explained "Why I Hire English Majors."

"And the reason is not that I am a writer; I more consider myself an entrepreneur than anything else. I run a small business and the people I hire do a variety of tasks -- SEO, project management, social media, and so forth.

For my money (literally and figuratively), for my needs, and I suggest the needs of most small businesses, English majors are easily the top choice when it comes to getting the type of teammate who can make us all better, as they say in basketball.

Why, because they're smart, critical thinkers, bold, good writers, and easy to work with."

And just a couple of weeks later, the headline of a recent "round – up" in *The New York Times'* column "This Week in Small Business" read, "Hire an English Major." (July 15, 2013). *The Times* weighed in with the following observation:

"A major part of what business owners do to gain clients has to do with writing, whether it's writing an advertisement or a marketing brochure, a good sales letter or an e-mail sales campaign. Businesses also need people who can create powerful content for the company blog, develop a strong social media presence and craft a compelling description of products and services for the company Web site."

If that doesn't convince you of your value on the job market, how about Jordan Weissmann, a senior associate editor at *The Atlantic*, who wrote in that same magazine, "The Best Argument for Studying English? The Employment Numbers." ( 5/25/13):

"The economy's eating twenty-two-year-olds for lunch, and undergrads want jobs. But here's the funny part: humanities students aren't actually faring that terribly on the market.

That's according to the [most recent survey](#) of the college graduate labor market by the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. As of 2010-2011, the most recent year with available data, recent humanities and liberal arts majors had 9 percent unemployment. That's right about on par with students in computer and math fields (9.1 percent), psychology and social work (8.8 percent), and the social sciences (10.3 percent). And it's just a bit above the average across all majors of 7.9 percent."

While Weissman's numbers might not boost spirits, they should correct the current myth about how English majors fare in the market place. And for those of you who'd like more data on the subject, you might take a look at a book (which is available at our library) called *The Global Future of English Studies* by (the appropriately named) James F. English. The book apparently gives a well-documented overview of the current state and future trajectory of English studies. He compiles data on student enrollments, faculty hiring, and financing in English studies around the world including China, home to more English majors than the U.S. and U.K. combined. The book argues that far from declining, English Studies presents "new challenges and opportunities."

Another positive outlook comes from a recent survey commissioned by the [Association of American Colleges and Universities](#) that found "eighty percent of employers agree that, regardless of their major, every college student should acquire broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences." This study was cited in a larger 2013 report by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a highly respected independent policy

research organization. Their report, [The Heart of the Matter](#), laments the current privileging of the sciences over the humanities and stresses the need to support the humanities on a national level.

Finally, you might take inspiration from some very successful Americans who – though you may not know it – were English majors like yourselves: Sting (who was a teacher, too), Grant Tinker (former CEO of NBC), Andrea Jung (former Avon CEO), Bob Woodward (journalist), Barbara Walters (journalist), Clarence Thomas (Supreme Court Judge), Steven Spielberg (CSU Long Beach), James Franco (Creative Writing Emphasis, UCLA and currently a PhD student at Yale), comedian Jenny Slate (Columbia English and Comparative Literature), and our own CSUCI President Richard Rush, a PhD in English .

Take inspiration and take heart. You have an excellent education that has prepared you for a wider variety of careers than you may have imagined. Explore the options outlined here and see where they take you. Hopefully, after you graduate, you'll be on your way to a career that truly interests you and you'll be able to tell us about options we may not have thought of. Good luck!

## ADVERTISING AND MEDIA STRATEGIST

### Selling Your Words

How often do you see ads on billboards, web feeds or street benches and think, 'Hm? I could have come up with that.' As an English major you may wonder how you can combine your researching skills and creative mind and actually get paid for it. Well, advertising agencies need literate, multiculturally sensitive, creative, and disciplined writers. That could be you.

### Some Entry-Level Jobs (according to [onetonline.org](http://onetonline.org))

- Advertising and promotions associate
- Advertising sales agent
- Market research analysts and marketing specialists
- Media Strategist

This is a faster than average growing field, where managers of, for example, advertising and promotions, earn, on average, \$88,590 annually. These jobs require someone to plan, direct, or coordinate advertising policies and programs or produce collateral materials, such as posters, contests, coupons, or give-aways.

### What You Need To know

According to the job site, [Indeed.com](http://indeed.com), knowing the structure and nuances of the English language is the first thing advertising agencies are looking for, followed by knowledge of communications and media. They are also interested in administration and management, sales and marketing, and computer and electronic skills.

### Who's Looking?

The top advertising agencies such as [BIGPIE](#), [Arcana Academy](#), [Caviar Agency](#), [BBH Global](#), and [Critical Mass](#) find creative ways to excite and engage a company's desired market. For example, Arcana Academy has produced campaigns for Cadillac, Ford, and Jack Daniels, that have given them lasting images. You can work for agencies such as these, but there is a whole other area for advertising jobs as well.

Companies selling everything from dating services to the shoes on your feet use advertising agencies, but they also use social media outlets. Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube provide even more exposure for their products. Social media companies provide jobs to many writers and innovative graduates to keep their products trending.

The fastest growing career available is a Social Media Strategist. According to an article by Lauren Drell found on [Mashable.com](http://Mashable.com), nearly 80% of corporations use social media, so there's plenty of opportunity for aspiring strategists, especially as the other 20% get on board. Joan Yee, a media strategist/writer, based in Los Angeles says, "media strategists are critical. Advertising campaigns need to reflect an overall strategy for the brands." Yee was able to get her start first thing after college at a trade magazine publisher where she met people who referred her to others in publishing, films, and digital media. She points out that this career is not all about writing. It is mainly about building relationships and developing connections in the advertising world.

### **What Does A Media Strategist Do?** (according to [mashable.com](http://mashable.com))

- Assist in setting up or optimizing analytics tools for tracking visitors' behaviors.
- Assist in the development of online transactional or security policies.
- Assist in the evaluation or negotiation of contracts with vendors or online partners.
- Collaborate with web, multimedia, or art design staffs to create multimedia Web sites or other Internet content that conforms to brand and company visual format.
- Collect and analyze Web metrics, such as visits, time on site, pageviews per visit, transaction volume and revenue, traffic mix, click-through rates, conversion rates, cost per acquisition, or cost per click.
- Communicate and collaborate with merchants, Webmasters, bloggers, or online editors to strategically place hyperlinks.

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

If you're interested in advertising and want more preparation, these are some courses that will help you. These can be taken as electives with permission by instructors or by taking on a minor or double major in these interesting fields.

Bus 203: Introduction to Social Business- Focuses on the introducing students to the finance and planning of social businesses as well as comparing to traditional business models

BUS 495: The Entertainment Event: Production, Marketing and Performance- Gives students the opportunity to work directly with faculty and entertainment industry professionals focusing on aspects of talent management, project development marketing and related technologies that result in the production of an entertainment event.

COMM 331: Art, Society, and Mass Media- Students will be studying the relationships between visual art and human communication. Compares ancient traditions with the development of contemporary mass media including print, photography, film, television and the Internet.

COMM 342: Internet-based Social Networks- Explores the ever-changing evolution of the Internet based social networks by using research from sociology, computer science, media studies, and philosophy to understand Internet based networks and their impact on society.

COMP 101: Computer Literacy- Introduces the student to computer basics as well as word processing, spreadsheets, databases and programming.

MARK 310: Principles of Marketing- This class must be taken to take any other marketing course students may be interested in. It presents fundamental principles and methods and procedures in modern marketing.



## ENTERTAINMENT

### The Biz And You

If you're interested in the Entertainment industry, chances are you've been told: "Point your wagon west. Once you get there, find your cousin. He knows a guy." While it does help to "know a guy," being an English major is a good start. When asked about English majors in the industry, Jonathan Goldstein, actor and director, said: "They're all over the place. Grips, sound... directors. English majors are ubiquitous." As a CSUCI English major, you will develop skills that are immensely valued by all aspects of the industry: organizational, analytical, multicultural, creative, and poetical, along with the ability to communicate orally and through writing.

### Start On Your Goals

Because of the exclusivity, the industry requires substantial amounts of determination, action, and especially interest. Goldstein had this to say about preparing for a career in the film industry:

"If you seriously want to, go to the bookstore, go to the library. Read up on the specific director, autobiographies, film books; read up on your interest. Start doing. If you're a filmmaker, make a film. If you're a writer, start writing. There's no excuse."

It takes more than that, however. Goldstein also advises that one must be reasonable, and have a certain attitude:

"Spend some time everyday on your career. You don't need to do hours. Do practical things. Mail. Search. Audition. Set your goals practically. Make sure your goals are doable, so that you can succeed. Don't confuse dreams with goals. 'I'm gonna get an audition,' as opposed to 'I'm going to get a show.' Let your dreams guide your goals."

### Working Your Way Up

Ever heard of "starting in the mailroom?" To put it bluntly, you will have to start at a lowly position to gain access to the industry. The lead producer of "Forrest Gump" didn't start out as an intern, an assistant, or any sort of office worker - he started working as a studio sweeper and it took him years to attain his position. If you are looking for a highly coveted position like a writer's assistant or writer's room assistant, then these mailroom jobs are essential for getting there.

Meredith Bohling, a Development Coordinator assistant (script/story reader) of Focus Features, says:

“The best way to get one of these positions is to work at an agency or management company (first in the mailroom usually, then as an assistant). Because these companies work directly with writers and directors, the assistants there will hear about the position first and have a much better opportunity to get their names thrown into the ring.”

Clearly, these internships can lead to the real thing. Take a position for a few years, then try something else. Not only does it widen your network profile, but it allows you to experience more in the industry. There is something else you need to think about as well. Take the time to figure out where you want to end up. Do you want to be a script editor, a content writer, or a director? Knowing where you want to end up is half the battle, and wherever that is, you'll need experience in as much of the business as you can get.

### **Getting That Experience**

Interns are the grunts who get stuff done behind the scenes and often get promoted to real positions. But these internships aren't as easy as applying for a job on craigslist. It's basically two things: 1) Who you know and 2) What internships or industry experience do you have? Yes, talent is also necessary, but you need those two things to prove you have it.

What if you don't know anybody? Well, you can change that by networking. Talk to people who know people in the industry and develop relationships. Lucky for you, living in Southern California raises your chances of knowing someone, as does an internship. To get these internships, you can apply online through the production company websites, or you could network with our Career Advisors that have direct connections with many internship programs. Here are some resources to start your search for the right internship:

- [Cal State Internship Resource](#)
- [Disney/ABC](#)
- [NBC](#)
- [Sony](#)

### **Entrepreneurial Route**

If you have more of a self-starter attitude, and have the right resources and connections, you might consider starting your own project. There has certainly been a shift in the industry due to technological advancement, and it is now possible to produce near-professional results at home. And the internet allows for easy publishing of that content through personal websites and video hosts, like Youtube, and Vimeo.

Alex Odesmith, a recent Chapman University graduate with a BA in Film, along with three friends from college, started [Rafiki Tree Productions](#), and their entrepreneurial spirit

seems to be working well, as the fledgling company is able to financially support them. Odesmith's experience stresses the importance of networking:

“Networking is extremely important. We got our first gig through a friend; we filmed a music festival. At college level and post college, it's all about favors from friends. And now, it's about doing good work for clients and then meeting *their* clients and associates.”

When it comes to English majors, his view is that “the type of attitude it takes to produce a video is similar to the attitude one needs to create or write a story. It's all about the story. That's the most important thing.” Although Odesmith and his friends were all Film students, he anticipates working with a lot of English majors in the future as his company expands, and moves from promotional and music videos, to film and television. He advises English majors interested in the industry to familiarize themselves with the filming and editing process and to “go in trying to learn as much as you can. A lot of things have to be learned while doing. Write everyday. Be a quick learner and have a good attitude. That's how you make friends.” Whether entering the business through traditional means, or starting your own company, it is essential to widen your knowledge base, establish connections, and have the right attitude.

## **Graduate Programs**

The other route you can take to network, after having received your English degree from CSUCI, is to find a graduate program that will offer even more education, experience, and of course, networking. According to Greg Reeves, the Best Boy (head electrician) on *Grey's Anatomy*, getting your MFA is a good option *because* of the networking availability that is offered. The shared experience of working on projects with potential colleagues will likely get you a position on a future project. The MFA is a masters program, but instead of having to do research and write papers, you get to work on projects, and actually get to apply your skills to what you love (sounds awesome right?). Here are some great local options to consider:

### **[AFI \(American Film Institute\)](#), Los Angeles, CA**

- MFA Directing
- MFA Producing
- MFA Screenwriting

### **[Chapman University](#), Orange, CA**

- MFA in Film Production
- MFA in Film and TV Producing
- MBA/MFA in Film and TV Producing
- JD/MFA in Film and TV Producing
- MFA in Screenwriting

**[UCLA](#), Los Angeles, CA**

- Producers Program MFA
- Production/Directing MFA
- Screenwriting MFA

**[USC](#), Los Angeles, CA**

- [MFA](#) in Film & TV Production
- MFA in Interactive Media
- MFA in Producing
- MFA in Writing

**[CSUN](#), Northridge, CA**

- [MFA](#) in Screenwriting

**[CSULA](#), Los Angeles, CA -**

- [MFA](#) in Television, Film and Theatre

**Paid Internships And Positions**

If you've been interning and are looking for better opportunities and more experience, here's a list of industry websites and writing programs that you can look into.

**Film Studios**

Here are some direct links to the big studios themselves, you may find a position here.

- [Fox Studios](#)
- [Sony Pictures](#)
- [Paramount Studios](#)

**Talent Agencies**

The [UTA \(United Talent Agency\)](#) is a well known talent agency that works with many actors, writers, directors, or anyone in need of an agent. If you are looking for an obvious way up the corporate ladder, you can find an agent training program here. Otherwise, this is just a great place to look for internships and get one's foot in the door.

**Writing Programs**

The larger corporations (NBC, ABC, etc.) offer writing programs for entry level positions. They are usually paid, year long contracts, and they move you around to different departments. This means you get a little taste of everything that goes on behind the scenes. However, some of these places require some form of portfolio to be submitted (usually with a screenplay or Pilot), so with these, consider having a little bit of internship experience beforehand, and having a working script readily available before applying. If you're really looking to challenge yourself, submit your work to the Warner Bros. Writing Workshop. It's very selective, but give it a shot. You never know. Here are some other places to take a closer look:

- [NBC PAGE Program](#)
- [ABC Writing Program](#)
- [Fox Diverse Writer's Program](#)
- [Warner Bros. Writer's Workshop](#)

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

ENGL 260: Creative Writing - An introduction to creative writing in fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry. Writing intensive with peer discussion and editing as well as reading what authors have written about the writing process.

ENGL 461: Fiction Writing - Prerequisites: ENGL 260 or Consent of Instructor - The writing of fiction is the focus of this class. The seminar format allows students the opportunity to talk about their writing and to receive critiques from their peers as well as the instructor.

ENGL 463: Writing For the Stage - Prerequisites: Consent of Instructor - The writing of stage plays is the focus of this class. The seminar format allows students the opportunity to talk about their writing and to receive critiques from their peers as well as the instructor.

ENGL 464: Creative Non-Fiction - Prerequisites: ENGL 260 or consent of the instructor - The writing of creative non-fiction is the focus of this class. The seminar format allows students the opportunity to talk about their writing and to receive critiques from their peers as well as the instructor.

ENGL 466: Screenwriting - Prerequisites: Consent of Instructor - The writing of screenplays is the focus of this class. The seminar format allows students the opportunity to talk about their writing and to receive critiques from their peers as well as the instructor. Offered in spring.

## FOREIGN SERVICE CAREER

### Why Foreign Service?

Are you interested in other countries and their cultures? If so, you may find jobs in the Foreign Service highly attractive. You get to work abroad in a variety of countries, get paid vacations to visit home, have some student loans forgiven, enjoy great benefits, and child-care stipends (the list goes on). But with many applicants for very few positions a year, these jobs are a long shot. That said, CSUCI English Majors may have a competitive edge because good writing and analytic skills are essential, as well as multicultural and international perspectives. After passing a multiple choice exam, candidates have to write a “personal narrative,” and that’s where the competition narrows.

### Voices Of Experience

Omie and Larry Kerr, who retired in 2004 from Foreign Service careers that took them to Singapore, Guatemala, Georgia, Chile, and Mexico, both feel that English majors may have an advantage. A former English major himself, Larry says that “writing and analysis are the pre-eminent skills.” He explains there’s not too much technical work. It’s more about looking at a situation and trying to make an intelligent analysis. And then writing up your analysis. English majors read, he points out. Whenever he went to a new country, he’d read about the history of that country, then he’d read some of the novelists and poets, which was so important for intercultural understanding because “literacy is often held in higher regard than it is in our own country” so it created mutual respect. Yet Larry, the English major, ended up an Economic, Consular and Political Officer while Omie, who had majored in Political Science, served ultimately as Cultural Affairs Officer in Mexico, having started out as an Assistant Press Officer.

### What Foreign Service Officers Do

Cultural affairs, which comes under the Foreign Service Career category of Public Diplomacy, can be a great match for English majors. It involves bringing people from the U.S. to speak or perform in the host country, supporting university and civic programs that promote intercultural understanding, and inviting people from the host country to study or participate in professional programs in the U.S. But that office has a broad mandate. A Cultural Affairs Officer needs to understand the economic, political, social and cultural environment of a country in order to best use available resources. Cultural sensitivity and analysis are essential to finding the right approach. When Larry served as Science Officer in Mexico, he convinced *The Boston Globe* to feature an article he’d written about mounting a telescope in the Sierra Negra, which eventually got more coverage, and increased U. of Mass. support.

## How Do You Get To Be A Cultural Affairs Officer?

Years of doing a variety of foreign service jobs. Where to start? On the [Foreign Service Website](#), which is part of the State Department.

1. You'll have to first **choose a career track** from among five: Public Diplomacy, Consular Officers, Political Officers, Economic Officers, and Management Officers. As discussed above, most English majors would be best matched with the first. But the second category is also a good fit: working in a consulate, helping people with visas, immigration, protecting American citizens abroad, etc.
2. **Apply Online:** for the Foreign Service Officer Test. Once you register, you'll find out where and when they're offering the free exam at a location near you. It's offered three times a year. You must be at least 20 years old and a U.S. citizen. You'll be offered some exam advice, a suggested reading list, and you can purchase the ACT Study Guide.
3. **The Exam:** Many people take the four-hour exam at least twice (it's free and there's no penalty) – once to see what it is, and the second time to try to pass it. English majors note: the recommended reading list begins with several news magazines such as *The Economist* and *Newsweek*, and continues with *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *The Elements of Style*. Clearly, writing is important. But so is American history and world geography. Taking some elective classes in political science and economics is a great way to better prepare for the broader insights you'll need. The site itself recommends *Inside A U.S. Embassy: Diplomacy At Work*. Other books that will help are: *Cliffs Test Prep Foreign Service Exam*, *Cliffs Quick Review of American Government*, *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*. The site also offers a [blog](#) with ideas and posts by people in the foreign service.  

According to William Martin, the Diplomat in Residence, “the entire process takes at least a year, and it is really up to you when to start it. The FSOT is given three times a year – in February, June, and October. You have to wait eleven months before taking it again. Each time you take the test starts a new process, and we do not penalize candidates who have taken it the FSOT previously or even look at previous scores.”
4. **Personal Narrative:** for those who pass the exam, you submit your narrative, which should stress any international experience you have, having studied multicultural and international literature, any extracurricular or civic service you've done, people skills, and successful writing. It helps, too, if you've taught English abroad or been in the Peace Corps or have an bi-cultural background, and language skills. The CSU offers a number of semester-long opportunities for studying abroad, and CI runs many shorter trips for students during spring and winter breaks and during the summer.
5. **Interview:** an opportunity to sell yourself and make known your enthusiasm for working abroad.
6. **Clearance and Medical Review**
7. **Register:** here's where you get an overall rating which gives you your “rank” on the list. It's good for eighteen months, so for that period you could be offered a position at any time.

**Complementary Courses To Consider:**

ANTH 102: Cultural Anthropology - The study of recent and modern societies using a cross-cultural perspective to gain an understanding on the range of human expression in culture and society. Issues discussed include ethnicity, gender, family structure, kinship, sex and marriage, socio-economic class, religion and the supernatural, language and culture, economics, political and social organization, art, and culture change.

ESRM 105: Environmental Issues in Geography - Introduction to basic concepts in geography and related environmental issues. Examines environmental impact on human affairs and human impact on the environment. Spatial awareness including cartographic knowledge, skills with global positioning systems (GPS) as well as hands-on experience using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is emphasized. This course is not open to ESRM majors.

GLST 200: Introduction to Global Studies - An introduction to globalization and its effect on governance, economic success, culture, the environment, and other global issues of human concern.

GLST 435: Global Cities - Prerequisites: Minimum two semesters of beginning college-level foreign language or equivalent proficiency. Introduces students to interdisciplinary issues faced by global cities. Offers a range of transnational topics, including but not limited to historic and contemporary issues of migration, racism and xenophobia, environmental degradation, global culture, movement of capital, and national identity. Specific global cities and related content to be designed by the instructor(s).

POLS 103: Introduction to International Politics - This course offers an overview of current theory, topics, and research in the Political Science subfield of International Relations. Emphasis will be placed on the role of power in international affairs, the structure of the international system, the meaning of security, and the importance of economic relations between nations and regions.

POLS 334: Peace Studies - Prerequisites: Junior Standing or Consent of Instructor - Examination of theories of and issues in the interdisciplinary field of peace and conflict studies. In-depth analysis of the concepts of peace and war causes of conflict and war, achieving negative peace, building positive peace, in-depth case studies in non-violence. Comparison of disciplinary approaches to the field as well as appraisal of interdisciplinary syntheses.

UNIV 392: International Experience - Lab Fee: \$0-10,000. Provides an opportunity for students to earn credit for travel and study in a country outside the US, where the student is immersed in a foreign culture. With faculty advisor approval, students may participate in a university-sponsored trip abroad or a personal trip abroad. Requires an approved plan of study by the faculty advisor prior to the experience.



## FOUNDATIONS

### What Are Foundations?

You've probably heard of the [Ford Foundation](#), [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), and the [Make a Wish Foundation](#). These are charitable, private organizations that work to better the world. They support projects in your community and nationwide. For example, the [MacAuthor Foundation](#) is the major supporter of [The Moth](#), which is the acclaimed NPR storytelling project. If you're interested in humanitarian issues (arts, health, poverty, education, public media), foundation work may be your calling.

### Where Do English Majors Come In?

In several kinds of jobs, actually: In-house Grant Writer, Freelance Grant Writer, Special Events Coordinator, Program Director, and Workshop Training and Education Coordinator. All of these use your intellectual and written skills, and your interest in social change.

### In-House Grant Writer

The in-house grant writer works at a nonprofit organization or foundation creating persuasive, eloquent grant proposals. Grants will convince the government or other funding sources to finance their programs. A grant writer will conduct research for potential funding sources and create a calendar of when funders are accepting proposals. S/he would also be responsible for maintaining a database of possible funders and actions taken. The Ford Foundation, for example, has three departments for grant writers: Economic Opportunities and Assets; Democracy, Rights, and Justice; and Education, Creativity, and Free Expression. They also have internships during the summer in their Human Resource department to learn the ins and outs of the organization.

### Special Events Coordinator

A career opportunity that might not seem suited to an English major is a Special Events Coordinator. However, this job provides an opportunity to get hands-on experience with the community as opposed to the in-house work done for the foundations. SEC's are the ones who work with other supervisors on the planning and execution of special events for foundations, charities, and fundraisers, including on-site coordination and assistance at the events. They also provide administrative and project coordination and support for event management for the office of the President of the organization and are almost always responsible for maintaining up-to-date files on all events.

## Management

Another path leads to management. A Program Director for a non-profit organization or foundation is responsible for managing one or more of the organization's programs or services. Compared to a Special Events Coordinator or even a volunteer, the Program Director seldom participates directly in the activities that produce the end result, but rather strives to maintain the progress and mutual interaction and tasks of various parties in such a way that reduces risks, maximizes benefits, and restricts costs.

## Voices Of Experience

Eva Gomez, Assistant Director of Development for [CI Advancement](#), is in charge of three important programs with CI Advancement that have to do with creating documents about the annual funds for CSUCI and the foundation. She is the one who creates proposals that provide ways for the community to make donations to the school. Her colleague, Diana Smith, an independent contractor and grant writer for CI Advancement, also works to create proposals and contribute to research for any other grants that come into CSUCI. For those planning to work for a foundation or non-profit charity both Gomez and Smith suggest knowing how to network and market yourself. In addition to creating well-written proposals, grant writers are also in charge of connecting with funders, understanding budgets, and keeping up with current issues in your community.

## How To Enter This Field

If you're still reading, you are probably now wondering how and exactly when you can get started. Just volunteer in your community through charities and nonprofits such as the ones listed above. This will build your interests as well as your resume for future employers. From there you can take an entry-level job and move up in the organization. Foundation work is flexible; it's possible that with the right skill set you can move over to grant writing from many entry-level positions. Smith said, "A grant writer should be a well-read, creative problem solver." She herself stumbled into fundraising, which gave her the opportunity to put her English education and editing skills to good use for overlooking proposals. Many other grant writers may have started as Grant Administrators (keeping track of grants made, payments, report submissions, and so on), administrative assistants, program assistants, and interns.

## Get Involved!

Foundations seeking to hire want you to be involved in your community and have some experience in the line of work you plan to apply for. Stephanie McAuliffe of the David & Lucile Packard Foundation say, "The smaller community foundations tend to look for generalists while the big foundations tend to look for people with advanced degrees who have worked in a

nonprofit for three, four, or five years in the same field, and who already have a network.” If seeking a position, seek a foundation in which your background matches well in the same field.

### **Helpful Resources**

A resource that will give you tons of information on top foundations and career postings nationwide can be found through the [Foundation Center](#). It lists requirements, which tend to be a BA in English or COMM, and 1-2 years volunteer experience within your community. For an entry-level grant writing position the same requirements exist, including minimum of 1 year experience as an intern or grant writer for another organization.

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

If a career as a grant writer in a foundation interests you some classes here at CSUCI will be helpful to better your knowledge and hone your writing skills. These include:

ECON 203: Introduction to Social Business - Interdisciplinary overview of Social Business models and their application to social, economic, technological, cultural, political and environmental issue both locally and globally. Introduction to the finance and planning of Social Businesses, as well as comparisons to traditional and other alternative business models.

ECON 301: Social Business Planning - Prerequisites: BUS/ECON /SOC 203 - Addresses the major issues confronted when planning a social business: identification, diagnosis and measurement of social problem, elements of a social business plan including all types of resource flows, plausible forecasting about them, tax issues, and legal issues. Students will interact with an existing social business and research its business plan.

ECON 333: Nonprofit Organizations - Learning about current and past issues unique to nonprofit organizations including financial, legal, and political.

ENGL 480: Introduction to Grant Writing - Intro to grant writing process. Includes needs assessment, researching funders, and preparing a proposal. Students will be encouraged to work collaboratively to identify authentic needs and develop a draft grant proposal that can serve as the seed for an actual proposal.

ENGL 482: Technical and Business Writing - Students will get an overview of this field, while engaging in research, interviewing, and producing genres of technical writing. These will include: reports, users guides, manuals, and technical descriptions.

ENGL 337: Literature of the Environment - Prerequisites: Junior Standing or Consent of Instructor - Involves the student in many forms of dialogue on issues pertinent to humanity's relationship with Earth. By reading works by writers from diverse fields and by writing in response, the student will gain a better understanding of our planet and its needs. Emphasis will be placed on writing in modes appropriate to the interdisciplinary field of Environmental Science and Resource Management.

FIN 300: Business Finance - Prerequisites: ACCT 220, MATH 140 or MATH 150 - Principles of planning, procuring, and controlling short term and long-term financial resources of business organizations. Topics include: cash and capital budgeting, debt and equity markets, security evaluations, cost and structure of capital.

FIN 321: Public Budgeting - Examines the major concepts of public budgeting and finance in the United States. Key topics of study include: expenditure estimation, revenue forecasting, capital budgeting, budget reform and financial management. The politics that characterizes the budgetary process will be emphasized throughout.

FIN 421: Public Financial Management - Prerequisites: FIN 300 - Provides an in-depth coverage of key concepts and theoretical principles of modern corporate finance, including analytical tools necessary for managerial decision making.

MGT 307: Management of Organizations - Principles, methods and procedures planning, organizing, leading, and controlling people within organizations. Topics include the history of management thought, organizational culture and design, decision-making, managerial communication, and strategic management.

MGT 471: Project Management - Prerequisites: MGT 307 - Presents the principles of project management, which is a special form of work organization, which focuses on a one-time objective. Discusses all aspects of project management: definition of objectives, selection of team and other resources, establishing of timing and sequences, creation of monitoring and control processes, and development of analysis and reporting mechanisms.

There are grant writing workshops as well. Some can be found at the Ventura County Community Foundation located in the city of Ventura for a very reasonable price. They will supply you with the know-how and basic understanding of how a proposal should look, which will put you ahead in this competitive line of work.

### **What's Available In Our Neighborhood**

Founded in 1987, the [Ventura County Community Foundation](#) or VCCF, invests the money that drives the charitable endeavors for the whole County. Additionally, it owns and operates the VCCF Nonprofit Center in Camarillo, a place where non-profits and the community work together to help all residents, and also serves as a hub for nonprofits in eastern Ventura County. Their goals include preserving the vision of donors by ensuring their money is carefully managed and invested. The VCCF also provides scholarships, grants and partnerships with other local non-profit organizations, such as Turning Point Foundation and FOODSHARE. In addition, they provide education and training programs for the next generation of nonprofit leaders.

The VCCF is important to local charities. They are involved in education (\$1 million in scholarship money in 2008). Check out their website to learn more about applying for scholarships. The VCCF is also linked in fundamental ways to CSUCI; they were contributors to

the Henry L. “Hank” Lacayo Institute for Workforce and Community Studies, and the Martin V. Smith Center for Integrative Decision-Making here at our campus. One of the VCCF Board Members, Dr. Terri E. Lisagor, was a past member of the California State University Channel Islands Community Advisory Committee.

Susan Seale, Director of Programs at VCCF, explains that career paths associated with nonprofits and foundations include: grant writing, event planning, human resources, human services, i.e. health and education. Grant writers are paid positions, and are sometimes employed in-house by their respective programs. If this sounds appealing, perhaps think about adding courses in fundraising, grant writing and public planning/administration. Almost all grantwriting positions require fundraising experience because unlike corporations or government agencies, nonprofits literally depend on the kindness of others.

According to the Wells Fargo Non-Profit Handbook 2013, grant writers for non-profits averaged \$54,163 annually in 2012. A Special Events Coordinator makes \$46,343, and the average Human Resources professional in non-profits can expect to make around \$48,062. Decent money, especially if you get to work for a cause you are passionate about, i.e. the women’s equality movement, animal rights, social justice, etc.

[This VCCF link](#) lists current job opportunities in the field of nonprofits and shows how forward thinking the VCCF is in providing essential services to the nonprofit community. In effect, their role is to help those who help others.

## GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

### Why Get A Graduate Degree In English?

1. For the love of the subject and the desire to study in greater depth and
2. If you have a passion for teaching, because that's one of the more likely things you'll do with your advanced degree.

### What Degrees Are Available?

An MA, which generally takes 2 years, qualifies you to teach in private high schools and community colleges. The PhD prepares you to teach at a 4 year college or university and become a scholar. Talk to any of your professors. All are glad to have made that choice. The 5-7 years (on average) it takes to get a PhD (including the masters) may seem like forever, but after your first year or two, you generally begin to teach at the same time, so your professional life has really begun.

While there are an abundance of graduate and professional programs from law to film and media studies, we'll focus on five commonly considered programs for English Majors: Literature, Creative Writing, Media Studies, Composition and Rhetoric, and Teaching Credential . We'll try to give you some idea of the range within each category, and will feature the California universities most often sought by CSUCI students. However, we encourage our most successful students to apply for the best programs in their field of interest and feel confident that they're sufficiently competitive to win scholarships or receive financial aid.

Keep in mind that although UC's are more competitive to get into, the prestige of their programs is greater. That means their degrees may be more valued than CSU's in the marketplace, so weigh your options carefully. And don't let their higher tuition scare you. Our Professor Georgina Guzmán explains that

“In fact, at most UC's and most departments, tuition is waived while you work as a Teaching Assistant, so you get great teaching experience AND school paid for. I think that we need to debunk the misconception that UC's are prohibitively expensive for PhD programs and that you will have to take out loans to pay for school. In fact, in most cases, MAs at CSUs cost a lot more because there are so few fellowships and there is less money in the CSU system (UC's have lots of private donors....not really a public school at all...)”

It's also worth remembering that any of the most prestigious programs, such as [Brown](#), whose website boasts excellent job placement for their graduates, and [University of Virginia](#), also offer generous financial support for their doctoral students with a combination of teaching assistantships, scholarships and fellowships. Some graduate schools have special funding for out-of-state student, as The University of New Orleans does. Applicants admitted to UNO's MA

in English program from out of state can enroll with the [Privateer Graduate Award](#), a scholarship that provides *in-state tuition rates* for students who meet certain criteria.

Since finding a teaching position can be an issue, you might want to ask about a program's record on job placement. According to the Modern Language Association, tenure track universities jobs have declined "modestly" over the past four years. A leading researcher in the field believes Comp/Rhet is approaching "market saturation." On a positive note, there's a lot of attention being paid to this problem right now. For example, MLA's partnership with the American Historical Association, funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, called [Broadening Career Horizons](#) is attempting to do just that - broaden job prospects for PhD's in English. According to the statistics, most PhD's do get tenure track jobs eventually, even when they begin as adjuncts. Universities are increasingly trying to sustain Humanities programs, which doesn't get the kind of funding that Science and Technology programs do. The discourse about the Humanities as essential to higher education is front and center throughout academia, and prominent also in newspapers and magazines at this time. We encourage students who have the passion for a PhD to pursue one. A good search tool for grad programs overall (with geographic and program filters) is [Gradschools.com](#). Some students like using social media sites like [www.gradcafe.com](#) to help them with their applications. But as Slate editor Katy Waldman notes in her article about these sites, they can create more angst than they're worth. It's up to you.

### **Admission Realities**

PhD programs in English are highly competitive – only 11 admissions out of 408 applications in U. of Michigan's recent history, for example. However, these programs seek diversity – geographically, culturally, and economically – which might help California students with programs in the Midwest and East, and CSUCI students in particular, who often put themselves through college and thereby demonstrate a very appealing determination and self-reliance.

After a brief overview of each of the five kinds of graduate programs, click on any of the schools named to find out more about their particular program within that field.

## MA/PhD IN ENGLISH

Master's programs are available throughout the CSU's with tuition at about \$5,500-6,500. Outside of [San Luis Obispo](#) and [Long Beach](#), most CSU MA programs are listed as "moderately difficult" to get into. For those interested in the PhD, think about the UC's. Tuition is at \$12,000 but there's generally financial aid. Don't forget programs in the rest of America, particularly as you'll probably have geographical advantage coming from California since most universities want students from a variety of regions. Though tuition is likely cheaper for you in California, many of the best grad programs in English make grad school affordable, or free.

[Northridge](#) requires an 80<sup>th</sup> percentile on the GRE or a 3.6 GPA in upper division English courses and a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 undergrad credits. The program takes 2-3 years; it's 30 credits with T.A. opportunities. [CSU Long Beach](#) boasts small classes with 40 tenure track/tenured professors to choose from and culminates with a thesis *or* an exam. Although they list as "selective," they require a 3.3 GPA and no GRE. While the focus is on Brit and American literature, they do have an interdisciplinary component for those interested.

[UC Riverside](#), listed as "selective," doesn't seem to require more than the CSU's. They offer a combination of traditional English courses and topic courses: "The Age of Plath"; "The Racist Past." [UCLA](#), listed as "highly selective," takes 12-14 students a year, all of whom are fully funded. They require a combined 1300 on the GRE, recommendations, a 15-25 page paper, and a statement of purpose. One of their recent PhD's, our Professor Georgina Guzmán, says "UCLA was a great place to get a well-rounded education in English literature. My professors were very knowledgeable and supportive. And my peers, as well as my undergrad students, always pushed my thinking to a higher level."

Don't forget to look beyond California. [University of Michigan](#) has one of the most inviting websites. They focus on British, American and Anglophone literature and listen to this:

"We are committed to the idea that learning is a social process, and that one can learn a great deal from one's peers when lodged in a community that encourages students to share ideas. Such a community is impossible to establish when students are made to compete for funding with one another, however. To foster a collective enterprise, we guarantee six years of funding to all admitted students."

Yes, 6 years of funding! At least two of those years seem to be *totally* funded, and I would imagine they try hard to accommodate student needs the rest of the time, too. *And* this is ranked (according to the National Research Council) as the sixth top program in the nation. Students also receive stipends, health care, and other benefits. Interdisciplinarity is their credo and several of their faculty hold joint appointments with Afroamerican, African Studies, Women's Studies, and encourages students to take courses in other programs.

While we're in the Midwest, Professor Sofia Samatar has this information to share:



“As a newly-minted PhD from the [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#), I highly recommend the [Department of African Languages and Literature](#), the only department of its kind in the United States. I studied with some of the most respected voices in the field of African Literature, and graduated with excellent Arabic reading skills. Although out-of-state fees at UW-Madison are high, fellowships and teaching assistantships are available: that's how I managed. The MA program in African Languages and Literature takes 2-3 years; an additional 4-5 years are required to get a PhD This department offers a wonderful program for students interested in Africa, the Middle East, languages, literature, cultural studies, and international relations.”

If you've done well, try for the best. All programs look for geographical and cultural diversity. Maybe you're just what they're looking for. Consider the top programs in the country ([ranked using data from the National Research Council](#)): [Harvard](#), [Stanford](#), [Princeton](#), [Columbia](#), [Cornell](#), [Michigan](#), [Vanderbilt](#), and [U. of Chicago](#).

### Alumni Voices Of Experience

Many of our majors have gone on to graduate Literature programs. Here's what a few of them have to say:

Nick Salazar, BA '12, at [SFSU's MA English program](#) (which has both a theory and a literary history option): “Things are great! Graduate school is definitely a new beast but I'm figuring it out as I go. The toughest hurdle thus far was making it past that initial shock of how much reading I'm doing this semester haha, but that's what I'm here for! I'm definitely enjoying myself. The professors I've worked with so far are great and my peers are awesome, the Graduate Literature Association has a journal that they are completely in charge of so that is a rad opportunity that I am definitely going to take part in, both by submitting and helping to run it. They also organize social events and such, so that we can all take heart in each other's madness. “

David Boubion, BA '10, at SFSU's MA [Comparative and World Literature](#), says “My master's program at San Francisco State is going great!! I have been selected as a TA for this year and am working with Professor Dane Johnson who specializes in literature of the Americas. I lectured for his class a couple of weeks ago on Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. My plans for the future include furthering my education to obtain a doctorate degree in Comparative Literature. I'm consciously deciding to take a third year to learn French and Italian, so that I will be able to compare text written from those languages.” David says that between financial aid and a part/time job, he's been able to pay for his studies and live. Most of the students do the same, and live in rented rooms.

Leila Sakhai, one of our open enrollment post BA students, now in a PhD program, chose [Claremont Graduate University](#) because their English degree offered transdisciplinary studies, with a Cultural Studies bent. So you can take a straight English Literature degree or

concentrate in American Studies or Early Modern Literature (16<sup>th</sup>-early 18<sup>th</sup> C). Leila likes their small seminar approach, some of which have only 6 students or 12 at most. "It's a huge amount of reading, but I'm getting used to it." And by the way, she got 80% of her tuition paid for in fellowships and the rest in loans that will be cancelled if she teaches at a CSU.

## MFA CREATIVE WRITING

Generally, this is a 2 year long program of workshop seminars where teachers and peers give you feedback on your writing; it culminates with a completed (or near completed) manuscript of stories, a novel, play, or work of creative-non-fiction. This degree is “terminal,” which means that with one you can teach on the community college and university level. Programs abound. Every fall the very reliable *Poets and Writers* magazine runs “[The MFA issue](#)” where they rank 140 of the top regular and low residency programs and provide important information about them, such as student-faculty ratios, cost, etc. In our neck of the woods, the programs that made the cut were [San Diego State](#), [UC Riverside](#), [UC San Diego](#), and [Antioch, L.A.](#) (low residence). The top programs are [U. of Iowa](#) (Iowa Writers’ Workshop), [U. of Michigan](#), [U. of Wisconsin](#), and [N.Y.U.](#) What follows is a very partial list, but will hopefully give you an idea of what’s out there.

### How To Decide?

Here’s what CSUCI Prof. Masaki Matsuo had to say.

“A writer friend loaned me a copy of the [Creative Writing MFA Handbook](#), by Tom Kealey. Not a great book, but it provides a good overview of all the programs in the country. I broke programs down into 3 categories because of my situation:

1. Dream schools (e.g. [UCI](#))
2. Schools with good funding, even if they were in places I was afraid to go (e.g. U of Michigan)
3. Schools in California (e.g. [UC Davis](#))

Initially, I was not keen on applying to Davis because I was unsure what their funding package looked like, and because it wasn’t an MFA program. After going to the prospective student event, though, I found out that the faculty was super involved (and amazing writers, by the way), the students were cohesive and non-competitive, funding was generous, and that the MA is essentially an MFA with the added benefit of flexibility (i.e. you could go get a PhD right after). In the second year, students, if they want to, are guaranteed to teach at least one quarter (for me, two) of a creative writing workshop (poetry or fiction). Poets, Fictionites, and early PhD candidates all share classes, so you get a well-rounded education (as opposed to all workshop all the time). The program tends to lean toward traditional fiction (realist), but now that Lucy Corin is the head honcho, it might take a more experimental leaning. But it’s balanced, so you won’t feel alienated (more than the usual) whether you write like Saul Bellow or George Saunders.

I loved UC Davis. If you can get in, I would not hesitate to go there.”

Professor Andrea Marzell Reilly also shared her experience at a very different program:

“The program at [UC Riverside, Palm Desert](#) is the only low-residency MFA in creative writing and writing for the performing arts offered in the UC system. Students enroll in seven quarters of online study and attend five 10-day residencies. I finished the program in two years. The faculty consists of accomplished, award-winning writers actively publishing in a wide range of genres. It was an incredibly supportive program. I wrote approximately 30-40 pages of prose per month, working in two genres and read 5-7 books a month. It’s a lot of work but well worth it. I would recommend this program to anyone looking for an intensive and individualized program. I was able to complete the first draft of my novel, which is due to be published sometime in 2014.”

And though Marzell Reilly doesn’t say this, she finished the program while teaching here full time!

As for other programs in the area, [San Francisco State University](#) has a good MFA with one of the largest writing faculties in the area. One of our students who went there loved it. It’s a 3 year program, which can lead to their PhD program as well. They’re connected with many Bay Area literary projects where students can intern. Tuition is \$7,700/yr. [Antioch, L.A.](#) offers a two-year low residency program with a lot of the work online for students who mostly work full time while they’re pursuing the degree. While it’s expensive, from \$8-12,000 a year, some scholarships are available. [CSU San Diego](#) offers a 3 year program in either poetry or fiction, produces well-known literary journals, has an outstanding faculty, and provides one-on-one mentoring. And they have a lot of scholarship, financial aid, and work opportunities. They also offer a tandem pedagogy program and teaching opportunities for those who plan to teach. It’s worth noting, too that [CSU San Bernardino](#) sent one of their faculty to present their MFA program to our students in hopes of encouraging them to apply.

Close to home, [Northridge](#) offers an MA with an option in Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Comp, or literature for students with a 2.50 GPA and a score of 3+ on their GRE. What makes it particularly attractive is their T.A. (teaching associate’s) program through which students in all options can teach composition, gaining invaluable experience at the college level.

CI Composition Prof. Rachael Jordan, a graduate of the Northridge program, says “As a TA, you are the instructor on record, and have full control of the class. Also, you take a preparation course before beginning to teach the Composition class and then during your first semester, remain in that class with your TA cohorts as an area of support and different ideas. I absolutely loved the program, especially the experience the TA Program gave me.” She feels the faculty is “outstanding.” As a large program, they have 34 full-time faculty and a great variety of courses.

## MA IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS

Media Studies, as journalism is often referred to now, takes a multimedia approach: Writing for interactive Media, Online community engagement, Digital news and production, Print, cable, and television production. Why would an English major pursue a graduate degree in Mass Communication? Because this is a growing area. Business is looking for people who are literate, strong writers, and analytic thinkers. A combined BA in English and MA in Mass Communications assures employers that you have the competence s/he's looking for.

Some pundits claim journalism is dying but according to experts, it's simply changing. Does an English major fit into the field? You may be surprised to learn that some of the top journalists majored in English. The journalist of the moment, Alan Rusbridger, the editor of *The Guardian*, the British newspaper that broke the Rupert Murdoch scandal, published WikiLeaks, and Edward Snowden's files on U.S. government surveillance, studied English Literature at Cambridge and was inspired to pursue journalism afterward from reading George Orwell.

Some MA programs focus on journalism alone, others are a part of Mass Communications, which prepares students for both journalism and the kind of Communications studies that prepares students to work in both corporate and small businesses. Most of the CSU's offer either journalism or communications, or a combined version. These programs, costing between \$5,346-\$6,422, are much cheaper than what are considered the top programs, but some of those do have need-based financial aid and scholarships.

The top programs are at [Berkeley](#), [Columbia](#), [Northwestern](#), and [USC \(The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism\)](#), but some, like Berkeley, only take students with journalism experience and a portfolio of 3 published articles. There's a special \$10,000 fellowship for food writing. Some programs, like [UCSB's combined MA/PhD program in Mass, Organizational, Interpersonal Communication](#), is strongly a social science based program for students with a Communications or social science background. To find out about a couple of CSU's with excellent Media programs, click on the links that follow.

[San Jose State's School of Journalism and Mass Communication](#) is one of the largest in the state, and provides degrees in advertising, P.R., and journalism. Close to the high tech center of Silicon Valley, they can provide a lot of experience in writing about this subject, and internships. Scholarships are available for those who qualify and they say the students they're looking for can "express themselves clearly." [Northridge has an MA in Mass Communications](#) which accepts a BA in English (though you may have to take a few of their undergrad courses) for students with a 3.0 in all courses, above average on the GRE Verbal or significant journalism experience or experience in mass media. According to them, the program focuses on "research and theory of mass media and society." This should open up possibilities in both business and journalism.

## MA/PhD RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

Would you like to teach composition or create and run comp programs, writing centers, or design new approaches to teaching comp? Then you can pursue an MA or PhD in the area of Rhetoric and Composition. Take a look at the website of the [Council of Writing Program Administrators](#) to see some of the jobs that are offered.

Three of our Composition faculty members are recent PhD's from [Indiana University of Pennsylvania](#), which offers both a residential and a low residency (summers only) Graduate Studies in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) program that requires an MA in English or Education and 3 years teaching experience. Here's what Kathleen Klompfen, our Writing Center Director, says about the low residency version:

"It took three summers of coursework and then the dissertation—for which one didn't need to go to PA during the summer, but I went for a few weeks most summers to touch base with my committee. The program was intense. While one is in PA doing coursework they really can do nothing else, no taking along small kids, no trying to teach online at the same time. Taking classes in this accelerated way is taxing, but doable. Total cost, about \$36,000."

The CSU's offer excellent Comp and Rhet MA's. According to Prof. Bob Mayberry,

"[Cal State Fresno](#) has a small but growing and vibrant MA program built around their new DSP Composition Program (modeled on ours). And [Cal State San Bernadino](#) also has an MA in comp/rhet with a couple very fine faculty." Fresno offers either a Composition Theory or a combined Literature and Comp Theory MA Humbolt's program got mixed reviews from one of our faculty, Prof. Scott DeLoach, who said he "got lots of opportunities to be in front of a classroom," which prepared him professionally, but that budget and political issues made for a complicated academic environment. For Emily Gahan, one of our graduates, the [Northridge MA program](#) is a good one:

"I'm in the Rhet/Comp option, but no matter what option you pick you have to take some core classes and literature classes. A lot of the classes are focused on lit theory and rhetoric. The most interesting class I've taken so far was Dr. Clark's Genre class. It focused on how genres are created, upheld, and what the constructs of genre are. I'm hoping to teach Composition after I graduate, and this class was applicable to teaching. In most the classes I've taken so far, the students 'teach' a subject each week. When I first started, this was a challenge for me because you're expected to become an expert on your portion of whatever subject it is. We have to pick articles for the class to read, and create a presentation. I really like it now."

Outside of California, there are lots of programs. A couple of highlights to give you a sense of what's out there: [Arizona State U at Tempe offers an attractive Rhetoric, Composition,](#)

[and Linguistics program](#) where interdisciplinarity is encouraged. They require a 3.0 GPA; 85<sup>th</sup> percentile on GRE, a sample critical paper and statement of personal goals. It's expensive, over \$1,000 a credit with 54 credits required after the MA But if you work 20 hrs/week as a TA, you get a full waiver of tuition, health insurance, and a stipend. The [University of Nevada at Reno](#) website sounds quite inviting:

“The Rhetoric and Composition faculty are committed to collaborative activity with students, engaging with them in local internship opportunities, conference presentations, scholarly research, program development and assessment, and writing projects. In addition, students receive active mentoring in teaching and administration, as well as opportunities to serve in leadership positions in the Core Writing Program and the University Writing Center. PhD students in Rhetoric and Composition also develop expertise in one cognate area, such as American literature, oral history, women's literature, critical theory, environmental literature, narrative theories, secondary school pedagogy, business/technical writing, or linguistics. Qualified PhD candidates have opportunities to teach intermediate and upper division courses in their areas of emphasis.”

In addition, they claim success in placing their graduates in tenure track positions. Prof. Glotfelty, Program Director, says they currently have 17 students with classes capped at 15. Grad students can be T.A.'s, “which covers most of the cost of tuition.” Generally, the program is 2 years coursework, 1 year exams, and 2 years of dissertation credits – 73 credits in all.

## TEACHING CREDENTIAL

A single subject credential program prepares you to teach grades 6-12, middle or high school, same credential. All credential programs in California require subject matter competency, which can be gained via an approved program (like our English Ed program which is just an option for the BA in English) or via the CSET examination. So, if students decide after graduation that they want to teach, they tend to take the CSET exam and qualify that way. On occasion they come back and take the coursework instead. Our program is one semester for prerequisites and one year of actual credential work. Most of the programs are one year. The combined MA/cred programs, like Santa Barbara's, are typically two summers and one year. They are very intensive.

### Alumnae Voices Of Experience

Two of our graduates with the straight BA in English took the intensive route. Nathan and Emily McClain, who met in our program and later married, say they “both went through the [credential/masters accelerated program at UC Davis](#). It was an insane workload, expensive and made me never want to look at educational theory again. On the other hand, the student teaching in inner-city Sacramento was fantastic. I loved the hands-on experience and no punch-pulling feedback I received from my master teachers as well as the observations from my professors.”

Paola Bisharat, CSUCI '12, took the English Education option and is now in the [CSUCI credential program](#) while simultaneously student teaching sixth and seventh grades at Monte Vista Middle School in Camarillo. Here's her view: “So far, the program has met all of my expectations. I am learning so much about what it takes to become a full-time teacher—from how to create a lesson plan, to how to manage a classroom with all ELL students. We learn and are trained to handle I.E.P. (Individualized Educational Program) meetings, how to classroom manage, how to create a syllabus, and even how to handle parents when they believe their students needs are not met. It is A LOT of work and is extremely time consuming, but totally worth it. If you truly want to teach and love working with children, this credential program is perfect- I definitely recommend it! I am confident I can find a job in the Ventura or Los Angeles school districts. Many schools are looking for new teachers, as older teachers are seeking retirement since everything now has been changed to Common Core Standards. Many teachers do not want to convert their ways, so they are retiring early (good news for me!).”



## HUMAN RESOURCES

### A Career You May Have Not Considered

Many students believe that the corporate world belongs to business majors, yet English majors have a unique set of talents that can be applied to corporate positions which emphasize critical thinking, personal relations, problem solving, and excellent written and oral communication skills. While it is true that many jobs utilize these abilities, there are specific positions, such as those in Human Resources, which use them with greater emphasis. But what exactly is Human Resources? Many large businesses such as [Microsoft](#), [IBM](#), [Google](#), [Apple](#), and similar corporations use HR professionals as the link between upper level management and employees. According to the job summary from [onetonline.org](#), the common job duties are: management of employment records, management of employee relation issues, interpreting and explaining human resource policies, as well as administrative activities. Laurie Nichols, Associate Director of [Human Resources](#) at [CSUCI](#), describes HR professionals as a “neutral body” whose job is to “listen to both sides and provide clarity.”

### What Qualifies An English Major For HR?

You have the skills. In the CSUCI English program, students are taught to analyze characters, look for motive, recognize conflict, propose problem solutions, and hone their abilities of perception. The HR professional uses these same skills as s/he builds relationships between the employer and employees, and resolves conflicts. The incorporation of cultural diversity into the core curriculum of English majors at CSUCI builds within students a cultural sensitivity and empathy for a wide variety of personalities. Diversity Officer is also part of HR, but all HR professional are tasked with creating an atmosphere of inclusion in the workplace.

### Climbing The HR Ladder

While the titles of entry level HR positions may vary, most are referred to as HR assistants or generalists. According to Nichols, the role of an HR assistant is to know the basics about all aspects of HR, including: benefits, communication, training, and staffing. The next step for an HR assistant would be to become an HR specialist, working in one of these fields. It is important to note that HR often hires from within the company, and Nichols emphasizes that those seeking a career in HR may need to start in a different entry level position and “prove yourself through another avenue.”

### What Does It Pay?

The entry level field of HR assistants is one that is growing at an average rate according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). HR assistants in the lowest bracket of pay make approximately \$27,700 annually in California according to [onetonline.org](#). The median pay scale

for HR assistants in California increases to a salary of \$43,300. While the pay scale for entry level positions in HR may seem unimpressive, the median wage for HR specialists, the next step in the HR ladder, is a salary of \$64,500 in California, and that *is* impressive.

### **How To Get Started**

A key component in preparation for entering the field of HR is internships. Internships assist greatly with networking, an important aspect in the HR profession. Many large corporations such as Microsoft, IBM, and Google offer internships to students directly within the HR field. These internships are usually during the summer, though some may be acquired throughout the academic year. In all cases, a high GPA increases a student's chances of obtaining an internship.

### **Voice Of Experience**

In an interview with Zachary Kuney, manager of a partnership team focused on web publishing at Google, he spoke about the [BOLD Internship Program](#) offered by Google. Located in Mountain View, California, the BOLD program is offered to current sophomores and juniors. This summer program places students in different business fields for a 10-12 week paid internship, including People Operations, which according to Google is dedicated to redefining Human Resources and promoting a unique company culture. Kuney stated that the BOLD program provides a "well-rounded experience - a mix of challenging projects, fun and tons of information to help you make the right decision." Having personally managed interns from the program, Kuney highly recommends that students apply for the internship.

### **Networking Opportunities**

Aside from internships, Lori Burke, a Human Resources Generalist with the [Ventura County Star](#), suggests that students look into the local Ventura County chapter of [PIHRA](#) (Professionals In Human Resources Association). PIHRA is an association which provides a place for those in the HR field to network, offering members educational opportunities, seminars, and more. Students are able to gain access to the PIHRA network for a \$30 fee. The website offers a job search engine which focuses specifically on HR job opportunities, and allows members to upload their resumes.

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

Some of these courses may seem unlikely, but Nichols, our CSUCI Associate Director of Human Resources, recommends them as useful for HR jobs.

ANTH 102: Cultural Anthropology - The study of recent and modern societies using a cross-cultural perspective to gain an understanding on the range of human expression in culture and

society. Issues discussed include ethnicity, gender, family structure, kinship, sex and marriage, socio-economic class, religion and the supernatural, language and culture, economics, political and social organization, art, and culture change.

ANTH 106: Culture and Communication: Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology - Surveys the study of communication from an anthropological perspective. Provides students with an overview of how humans interact and communicate using verbal and nonverbal language. Students learn how language both reflects and shapes thought, culture, and power/status. Exposes students to anthropological theories of language origin, language use, and cultural issues associated with language in cross-cultural contexts.

BUS 320: Business Operations - Exploration and application of quantitative techniques, systems analysis and operations analysis of business functions, with an emphasis on the optimization of process and operational efficiencies. A variety of management science methodologies will be applied to theoretical and real-world situations.

BUS 524: Special Topics in Human Resource Management - In-depth analysis of current topics in human resource management. Topics vary each semester.

BUS 826: California PHR/SPHR Certification Preparation Course - Preparation course for Professional in Human Resources certification.

MATH 201: Elementary Statistics- Critical reasoning using a quantitative and statistical problem-solving approach to solving real-world problems. Topics include: probability and statistics, sample data, probability and empirical data distributions, sampling techniques, estimation and hypothesis testing, ANOVA, and correlation and regression analysis. Students will use standard statistical software to analyze real world and simulated data.

SOC 101: Introduction to Sociology - An introductory study of the basic concepts, theoretical approaches, and methods of sociology. Topics include: the analysis and explanation of social structure, social change, group dynamics, socialization and self, social stratification, and cultural diversity.

## LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

### Working For The People

If you like public service and providing valuable resources to your community, a career in local, state, or federal government may be a good choice. In addition to competitive salaries and generous benefit packages, these careers usually have a wide potential for advancement.

Within government, the career paths with the best opportunities for English Majors are Human Services and Human Resources. Human Services provides benefits to society, i.e., a Parks and Recreation supervisor in local or state government. Human Resources is the department mainly concerned with recruitment, hiring and providing benefits to employees. In local, state and federal government, these departments can employ hundreds, sometimes thousands of people.

Entry level positions don't pay all that well, but they do get your foot in the door. Starting out you learn the job, you train and supervise, and further down the road you might oversee an entire department. That is because government agencies like to hire from within. Rising up the ladder from employee to manager may take years, of course.

### Compensation

The good news here is stability, steady income, and (almost always) a comprehensive benefits package. Starting pay for these entry level jobs (which mostly require a BA degree) range from \$30,000 to \$48,000 per year. Along with that is a benefits package, which typically includes: medical/dental insurance, an option for life insurance, a 401K, and retirement fund. Most government agencies also provide tuition assistance and may even provide free or low-cost child care.

### How To Apply

Part of the appeal of government jobs is they are, literally, everywhere. Most vacancies are posted on individual cities, counties, states and federal websites. Included below for convenience are links to:

- [County of Ventura Human Resources](#)
- [State of California Human Resources](#)
- [USA Government Careers](#)

In addition to the aforementioned career paths, Human Resources and Human Services, government employment offers a plethora of career choices, including, but not limited to: Public Relations/Affairs, Communications, Copywriter, Copy Editor, Telecommunications Associate,

Management Services, Liaisons, Interpreters, Park and Recreations Services, and many other options.

A word about the government hiring process; getting government jobs oftentimes takes anywhere from four to eight months, depending on the position. This is because there may be hundreds, even thousands, of applicants for a single position. Background checks (legal, employment, drug use, maybe even credit scores) are extensive, especially for state and federal employment. To the prospective applicant, this process is necessary to obtain the best personnel for the position.

### **Voice Of Experience**

Dee Emami, a Human Resources manager for the County of Ventura, provided the following valuable information for English Majors seeking government jobs:

“The best way is for graduates to go to [our website](#) and review job descriptions. Each one has a ‘Training, Education and Experience’ section. The County has roughly 8,800 jobs. We currently have 84 jobs open to the public, which is about average. An entry-level clerical job would be approximately \$30,000 near the top of its range. Benefits are available for review behind each job description on the website. The County offers vacation, sick leave, insurance, etc.”

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

BUS 110: Business Law - Introduction to the legal and regulatory environment of business, emphasizing the USA legal system. Topics include contracts, personal property, litigation, antitrust, labor agreements, discrimination, environmental protection and international trade and law.

FIN 300: Business Finance - Prerequisites: ACCT 220, MATH 140 or MATH 150 - Principles of planning, procuring, and controlling short term and long-term financial resources of business organizations. Topics include: cash and capital budgeting, debt and equity markets, security evaluations, cost and structure of capital.

FIN 410: Financial Markets and Institutions - Prerequisites: FIN 300 - Broadly covers the operations, mechanics, and structure of the U.S financial system. Provides an in-depth discussion of selected topics critical to financial management.

POLS 102: Comparative Government - This course introduces the student to the contemporary study of comparative politics. The theme for the course will be democratization and democracy. Topics will include political institutions (constitutions, executives, legislatures, courts, and political parties), political behavior (voting, group activism, and other modes of political participation), and political ideas (political culture, socialization, status of women, and political economy).

POLS 140: California Government and Politics - Introduction to the structure and function of California state government. Satisfies California state and local government requirement for students who have taken American Government without a California component or who receive Advanced Placement credit for American Government

POLS 316: State and Local Politics and Policy - Examines the structures, functions, policies, politics and administration of subnational governments in the United States. Satisfies the California State and local government requirement for students who have taken American Government without a California component or who have received Advanced Placement credit for American Government.

## MEDIA: PRINT AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING

### The Outlook

With a lot of media competition, print publishing is a narrowing field and largely located in New York City, but they still do hire editors, marketers, managers, rights and publicity specialists, all of whom love working with books and authors.

### Professional Programs

For those who want to try this route, there are four major intensive graduate programs in print and digital publishing: at [NYU](#), [Pace](#), [Columbia](#), and The City College of New York and a few other programs throughout the country as well. These 6 week programs are expensive, but do offer some scholarships and financial aid. Columbia's costs \$7,436 for tuition, room and board. Here's what NYU's program brochure says:

“The Summer Publishing Institute immerses students in an intense, six-week study of book, magazine, and digital publishing. Now in its 35th year, the program combines workshops, strategy sessions, and presentations by some of the leading figures in publishing. Our faculty members and speakers introduce students to the editorial, marketing, creative, business, sales, and digital aspects of the industry.

Students create actual launch plans for new magazine brands and imprints for book publishing houses, and learn from having their projects judged by a panel of senior publishing executives. At the conclusion of the program, students attend a Career Fair where they interview with some of the nation's leading publishing companies.

The Summer Publishing Institute is designed for recent college graduates and for young professionals trying to break into publishing.”

Pace University, which offers a 36 credit MS in publishing, has a location in midtown, where the publishers are and places full time students in 20/hr./week internships. According to their website, “The MS in Publishing can also be completed entirely through online courses, within three years, in the fully accredited eMSPUB program (electronic Masters in Publishing).”

### Internships

The biggest and most effective internship program is at Writer's House in NYC. It's 16 weeks of 24 work/hours during which the intern does “tons of organizational and assistant work,” according to Michael Mejias, who directs the program. But, he adds, “This is editorial boot camp. You'll learn how to compose rejection letters, work rights and contracts, prep for

your interviews, and you'll meet the HR people from the Big Six publishing companies so you know what to expect." Of their 216 graduates over the last decade, 161 work in publishing.

Right now, Mejias is especially interested in interns who know the Latino population, speak Spanish, and will help them "discover the Latino *Twilight*." He cautions that budding writers are less likely to get internships than English majors interested in the *business* of publishing. Resumes should stress activities that a candidate has stuck to for a long time, whether a sport, language, or music, to show the tenacity that's necessary for a publishing career. There's an \$800 stipend upon completion, but that means interns have to find a means of support in NYC, which most do with flexible au pair or waiter jobs. For more information and an application, email: [mmejias@writershouse.com](mailto:mmejias@writershouse.com).

Fortunately, we have some opportunities closer to home. Sage Publications is located in Thousand Oaks, provides internships, and has already hired one of our English major graduates. McGraw Hill Education and Professional Publishing is a giant corporation with offices all over the world, including Southern California. Their site says:

"We provide the teaching and learning solutions that help people succeed. Our greatest asset as a corporation is the intellectual capital of our employees. Staying on the cutting edge of our industries and providing valuable ideas, research, analysis, and new information is what keeps us going every day."

English Majors should be a good fit. Oh, and *Working Mother* magazine voted them one of the ten best companies to work for in 2009. Not a bad thing. The only way in is an [online application](#) where you can create a "job agent" who will match your skills with their current openings. English majors can choose the Editorial and Analytic Research tracks.

## Literary Agencies

California also has literary agencies. You can check them out on the net to see if they have internships or starting positions:

- [Andrea Brown Agency](#) (L.A.)
- [Larsen Pomedá](#) (S.F.)
- [Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency](#)
- [Margaret McBride Literary Agency](#) (La Jolla): 858-454-1550
- [Bradford Literary Agency](#)
- [Veritas Literary Agency](#) (S.F.)
- [The Knight Agency](#) (L.A. and East Coast)
- [Linda Chester Agency](#) (the agent there said they were too small for interns).



Natalie Fischer Lakosil, an agent at the Bradford Literary Agency in San Diego describes her work this way:

“It’s a fair blend of business, entrepreneurial activity, and literature; I sort through hundreds of submissions a week, on top of managing a client list of 20+. Managing the client list involves editing (both content and line edits), putting together pitch (back of the book type blurbs to use to talk and sell to an editor) and submission list (which requires research, keeping an eye on trends, who’s buying what, etc), contract negotiation, selling subsidiary (audio, translation, and film) rights, career advising (next books, branching out, changing publishers) and troubleshooting any hiccups in the publication or beyond process.

In today’s changing industry, I also do assisted self-publishing, which means I’ve had to get tech savvy and learn ebook formatting and posting. I am paid on commission only, which means I only get paid for the work extended to a client when they are paid. Some agencies (few) offer a salaried position, with bonuses or commissions offered after the initial salary is recouped, but a budding agent shouldn’t count on one of these positions. It takes between 3-5 years to really start seeing any money from agenting. It can be a slow process as an agent builds a list, starts making sales, and sees those sales result in a published book.”

If you’re still game for being a literary agent, here’s Lakosil’s advice with the specifics that you’ll need:

“I got my foot in the door of publishing through internships. It’s very much an apprenticeship business, and so starting with one, or multiple, internships will open the door not only to being an agent, but to being an editor, too. Most agents and starting editorial assistants interned at multiple agencies first. I found my internship via my school’s career center; however, it’s a good idea to look up local literary agencies via [QueryTracker](#) (create a free account to search by location) to see if they might offer internships. Past that, [BookJobs.com](#) or [Publishers Marketplace](#) will list internship opportunities (or other paid positions).

Many internships involve only reading, and so it’s possible to have a remote internship with an agency. Some publishing houses also offer internships, such as Chronicle, Entangled, Flux, Grove/Atlantic Press, so it’s also a good idea to search for local or near-by small presses for opportunities as well. Internships within the publishing industry tend to be unpaid and for credit only, so be prepared for that.”

## **Book-To-Film**

Another angle on the book business is the “book to film” agency or studio department. These people buy rights to books that they can turn into or market for film or television. Generally, someone starts as a “reader,” reading through the “slush pile” of manuscripts, books,

story ideas that come to them. They write reports recommending them or not. Optimally the reader eventually becomes the buyer, the person with the power to make a deal happen. Most production companies use readers, such as Dreamworks ([email](#)) or Fox 2000. Also, the big talent and literary agencies: CAA, ICM, and William Morris do as well, though their websites don't offer any info about jobs or internships. They partner with literary agencies in New York, who send them book-to-film suggestions. But they have agents, assistants, and readers who then read those suggestions.

### **Digital**

On the digital end, some great sites are developing – you probably know them better than we do – that use young writers by the dozen for a readership of your peers. [Bustle.com](#), [xoJane](#), and [Jezebel](#) (owned by [Gawker Media](#)) are zines aimed at young women. [Bleacher Report](#) is aimed at men. Check those out, and other new ones as they emerge.

## THE PEACE CORPS

### The Peace Corps Wants You!

Education is the Peace Corps' primary need; they currently have 8,073 volunteers around the world and 43% of them serve in Education. They're looking for 3,000 new volunteers for the next year. All you need is a BA in English with a 2.5 GPA (without an English degree, candidates have to have 30 hours of teaching experience). However, if you've also tutored in the Writing Center or did any kind of tutoring or teaching, you're ahead of the game. Second language and bicultural experience, great. And if you've demonstrated leadership, civic service, or entrepreneurial skill, that's even better. As Kanani Moriarty, the West Coast regional representative (and former volunteer in Micronesia) says, "English Majors are Gold."

### Why Join The Peace Corps?

Adventure. Experience. Service. Add to that, the Peace Corps can be a career path. Returning Peace Corps volunteers get financial aid to attend graduate school at more than 70 [partnering universities](#). They also have a year of non-competitive eligibility for government jobs. That's how Kanani got her job. One of her friends got his post-Peace Corps job as a Public Affairs Specialist for the National Parks Service. Another one is a manager at the U.S. Immigration Service. Kanani says that the Peace Corps is "leg up" to a career because it teaches you to create your own projects in addition to your assignment, so you return with entrepreneurial skills that employers recognize. Also, their [Master's International Program](#) allows you to get a Master's Degree at partner universities (USC is one) where you do one year at the university, then get credit for your Peace Corps Volunteer work.

According to Jason Afable ('09) an alumni who joined the Peace Corp:

"You'll receive world class training (as an ESL volunteer, I received around 3 months of training on par with the most intensive TESOL certification courses anywhere) and you'll have the support of one of the largest and most established aid organizations in the world, not to mention the support and camaraderie of your fellow volunteers—many of whom will become lifelong friends—and members of your local community. Depending on your post, you're likely to cross paths with local and national governments, NGOs, multinational corporations, and other players in the global aid community."

### Other Benefits

The practical ones are: full medical and dental coverage, 48 vacation days, housing and travel allowance, \$7,500 transition allowance afterwards. Also, some states waive teaching credentials for P.C. volunteers who teach.

## How to Apply?

It takes about 9 months to a year to get accepted for service, so they encourage college seniors to *apply the summer before they graduate* or that fall. If your grades are good, they'll assume you will graduate on time. You apply online at [their website](#), with recommendations from a friend, a job supervisor, and a supervisor of a volunteer position you've held. You can substitute a professor for one of these. Note that while you can request a particular country or program from an available list and may be nominated for that, you might be placed elsewhere because there's a greater need. How it works is that Kanani reads the applications for this area, invites some for interviews, then nominates them for the program. Then the Placement folks choose people from that list to give actual assignments.

## The Experience

Kanani was disappointed with her assignment, but went anyway and decided that the best things are what you don't expect. She feels that "the cultural immersion helped to form me as a person." You have to accept the assignment offered, but you can withdraw and you can also leave if the experience isn't right for you. You have to be flexible, everyone says, because often the assignment doesn't work exactly as planned, so you have to work with whatever the community needs. But you have a lot of support. You spend three months together in country with your "training group" while each of you lives with a host family and has time to learn the language. From there, each volunteer goes to his/her home site, where they'll stay. But there are more training meetings periodically to refresh everyone and share ideas.

## Alumni Voice Of Experience

Afable, our CSUCI alum, describes his Peace Corp experience this way:

"The Peace Corps is a great way to gain hands-on experience living and working in foreign countries. My own Peace Corps experience served as a launch pad to a career teaching English in foreign countries, which has allowed me to live and work in Ecuador, South Korea, and the Philippines, and to travel to many more countries. But while there are many professional and academic benefits for Peace Corps volunteers, the experience itself is the most rewarding part.

Unfortunately, there's absolutely no way to describe '*the* Peace Corps experience'. The Peace Corps operates in more than half of the countries on the planet, and the experience of the volunteer can vary greatly even within one country. I lived and taught on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean in a village of around 50 people, but could just as easily have been working in a University setting in Eastern Europe, or working with businessmen in North Africa. Regardless of where you

volunteer, you can count on what is likely to be the most challenging and rewarding experience of your life.

But what will probably have a greater impact on you is what you learn about the *human* experience—the cultural insights you gain, the personal and professional relationships you forge, and the people who change your life (and whose lives you change) forever. It's not always easy to recognize the significance of what you're doing, but at times, you will. It might come to you when one of your eighth grade students finally “gets it” and starts to use articles consistently in her sentences. It might be when you collapse exhausted onto your lumpy mattress after helping to build a new classroom at the local school. Or it might be after a couple of drinks, when you demonstrate your grasp of the local dialect by competently explaining to your non-English-speaking co-worker what “twerking” is. There will be moments, probably lots of them, when you step back and think, “I'm really doing this; this is amazing!” And those moments will stick with you forever.

Expect it to be difficult - culturally, professionally, and emotionally. You're going to miss your friends and family. You'll probably feel useless and ineffectual at times. There will be periods where it's hard not to be depressed (holidays are the worst). But if you're committed, if you give everything you can, and if you keep a *really* open mind (*bat soup, anyone?*), you'll have the experience of a lifetime.”

### **To Talk To A Real Person Who's Done It**

Rachel Day is the recruiter for CSUCI. Rachel was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Cape Verde from 2010-2012, where she taught English in her rural community. Rachel also ran a leadership camp for young girls and worked on art initiatives. Rachel's enthusiasm for Peace Corps is infectious. Rachel can be reached at:

[rday2@peacecorps.gov](mailto:rday2@peacecorps.gov) or 310.356.1103.

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

ANTH 102: Cultural Anthropology - The study of recent and modern societies using a cross-cultural perspective to gain an understanding on the range of human expression in culture and society. Issues discussed include ethnicity, gender, family structure, kinship, sex and marriage, socio-economic class, religion and the supernatural, language and culture, economics, political and social organization, art, and culture change.

ESRM 105: Environmental Issues in Geography - Introduction to basic concepts in geography and related environmental issues. Examines environmental impact on human affairs and human impact on the environment. Spatial awareness including cartographic knowledge, skills with

global positioning systems (GPS) as well as hands-on experience using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is emphasized. Not open to ESRM majors.

GLST 200: Introduction to Global Studies - An introduction to globalization and its effect on governance, economic success, culture, the environment, and other global issues of human concern.

GLST 435: Global Cities - Prerequisites: Minimum two semesters of beginning college-level foreign language or equivalent proficiency - Introduces students to interdisciplinary issues faced by global cities. Offers a range of transnational topics, including but not limited to historic and contemporary issues of migration, racism and xenophobia, environmental degradation, global culture, movement of capital, and national identity. Specific global cities and related content to be designed by the instructor(s).

POLS 103: Introduction to International Politics - This course offers an overview of current theory, topics, and research in the Political Science subfield of International Relations. Emphasis will be placed on the role of power in international affairs, the structure of the international system, the meaning of security, and the importance of economic relations between nations and regions.

POLS 334: Peace Studies - Prerequisites: Junior Standing or Consent of Instructor - Examination of theories of and issues in the interdisciplinary field of peace and conflict studies. In-depth analysis of the concepts of peace and war causes of conflict and war, achieving negative peace, building positive peace, in-depth case studies in nonviolence. Comparison of disciplinary approaches to the field as well as appraisal of interdisciplinary syntheses.

UNIV 392: International Experience - Lab Fee: \$0-10,000. Provides an opportunity for students to earn credit for travel and study in a country outside the US, where the student is immersed in a foreign culture. With faculty advisor approval, students may participate in a university-sponsored trip abroad or a personal trip abroad. Requires an approved plan of study by the faculty advisor prior to the experience.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### What Makes An English Major Viable?

You may wonder about the inclusion of Public Relations as a career for English majors since it is a field so closely associated with business degrees. Yet at the core of Public Relations is written and oral communication. Public Relations directors are in charge of creating intentional public images for companies. According to [onetonline.org](http://onetonline.org), Public Relations personnel also organize meetings, exhibits, and arrange promotional campaigns with advertising agencies. So, for example, McDonald's has the Ronald McDonald House, Coke supports the Olympics, and Disney sponsors the Make-A-Wish Foundation. It is the Public Relations Department that designs and implements these programs. Emphasizing your cultural sensitivity, imagination, and great writing can be central to getting these sorts of jobs.

### Standing Out From The Crowd

While the English major curriculum does focus on communication, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](http://Bureau of Labor Statistics), many employers prefer candidates with degrees in public relations, communication, or journalism. The BLS also lists backgrounds in political science and technical writing as assets for those looking to enter the PR field. English majors who minor in one of these areas, or choose an emphasis of technical writing, may greatly increase their marketability when applying for entry level PR positions.

There are also other venues that students may pursue aside from academics which will increase their chances of breaking into the PR field. The [Public Relations Student Society of America](http://Public Relations Student Society of America) (PRSSA) provides an online network for students who are interested in Public Relations. This is a valuable tool since networking is a key factor in the PR field. The PRSSA has satellites on various college campuses which offer [Certification in Education for Public Relations](http://Certification in Education for Public Relations) (CEPR) programs, the closest of which being [CSU Fullerton](http://CSU Fullerton). Students also have the option of applying through PRSSA online to create a chapter on their college campus. These chapters would not offer CEPR opportunities, but they would still be an invaluable asset in networking and demonstrating initiative in the PR field. Finally, students on a campus without a PRSSA chapter can apply to become a [PRSSA affiliate](http://PRSSA affiliate) online, with \$82 being the current annual due rate. Being an affiliate allows students access to events, scholarships, and the PRSSA internship center.

### Internships

Local Public Relations internships are available. One such internship is offered by [OmniUpdate](http://OmniUpdate), a company which provides web content management systems to higher education facilities. Posted on September 19, 2013 on [internmatch.com](http://internmatch.com), the internship is a paid position starting at \$10/hr; interns will assist in writing a crisis communication plan and work on marketing tasks such as press releases. OmniUpdate specifically mentions English majors on

their list of desired candidates. This would be an excellent opportunity for CSUCI students to gain on-the-job experience close to home.

### **Voice Of Experience**

Zachary Kuney, manager of a partnership team at Google, focuses on web publishing. He spoke about the [BOLD Internship Program](#) offered by Google. Located in Mountain View, California, the BOLD program is offered to current sophomores and juniors. This summer program places students in different business fields for a 10-12 week paid internship, including People Operations, which according to Google is dedicated to redefining Human Resources and promoting a unique company culture. Kuney stated that the BOLD program provides a “well-rounded experience - a mix of challenging projects, fun and tons of information to help you make the right decision.” Having personally managed interns from the program, Kuney highly recommends that students apply for the internship.

### **Accreditation In Public Relations**

One more thing to keep in mind when considering a career in Public Relations is post-graduate studies. While not required, becoming an APR (Accredited in Public Relations) greatly increases one’s ability for career growth in Public Relations. Accreditation in Public Relations is obtained by passing an examination process overseen by the Universal Accreditation board. The examination is broken down into ten categories, some of which include ethics and law, communication models and theories, and business literacy. An applicant’s competence is judged in each category. While this may seem daunting, the [Public Relations Society of America](#) (PRSA) offers study guides, sample tests, and lists recommended reading and online courses to help.

### **Complementary Courses To Consider**

COMM 101: Public Speaking - Introduction to communication theory and the study of the human communication process with an emphasis on effective public communication. Includes intensive practice in public speaking, reasoning, and critical listening.

COMM 200: Introduction to Communication Studies - Foundational principles and theories of communication provide the student with alternate ways to understand human interaction. Tracing historical and cultural answers to the question, what is communication, guides students to consider alternate paradigms.

COMM 210: Interpersonal Communication - Analysis of the role communication plays in interpersonal relationships with special emphasis on intercultural communication. Oral interpersonal communication skills will be stressed.



COMM 220: Group Communication - This course examines communication in the small group context. It will investigate the important theoretical foundations and practical applications of group communication as well as apply those theories and skills to actual group interactions.

ENGL 482: Technical and Business Writing - Technical/business writing is translation and persuasion. It requires explaining specialized source material to an audience to motivate action and provide grounds for decision making. Students will research and interview for information that they will turn into various forms, including but not limited to: reports, user guides, manuals, technical descriptions, business correspondence, marketing brochures, resumes, and proposals.

ENGL 483: Technical Communication - Course is designed to bridge the gap between interest in technical communication and the need to develop real world skills. Students will take projects from inception to completion by incorporating key technical communication principles: document design, collaborative authoring, and project management. This class also explores the relationship between core concepts of relevant software and best practices for technical writers.

MKT 310: Principles of Marketing - Presents and analyzes the fundamental principles, methods and procedures in modern marketing: planning, pricing, distribution, and promotion. Topics include creating customer value and satisfaction, strategic planning, marketing process and environment, research and information systems, consumer markets and consumer buyer behavior, business markets and business buyer behavior, segmentation, product and services strategy, new-product development and product life cycle strategies, pricing, communications, direct and online marketing, and social responsibility and marketing ethics.

MKT 311: Consumer Behavior - A comprehensive study of behavioral models and concepts designed to help understand, evaluate, and predict consumer behavior. Stresses analytical thinking about consumer psychology and prediction of how marketing tactics may influence demand for products and services.

POLS 103: Introduction to International Politics - This course offers an overview of current theory, topics, and research in the Political Science subfield of International Relations. Emphasis will be placed on the role of power in international affairs, the structure of the international system, the meaning of security, and the importance of economic relations between nations and regions.

POLS 150: American Political Institutions - Examines the major American national and state political institutions and processes, including the presidency, congress, the federal court system, political parties, the electoral system, and major institutions of state government. This course emphasizes how these institutions and processes function within changing American Constitutional principles of the role of law, federalism, shared power, and individual and civil rights. Meets Title 5 US Constitution and State and Local Government requirement.

## TEACH FOR AMERICA

### What Is It?

[Teach for America](#) is a government program to place college graduates in “underachieving schools” across America, including Los Angeles. Teach for America is looking for students who care about “educational inequity,” and want to make a difference. Of the 32,000 who presently teach in the program, English Majors are the 3<sup>rd</sup> most typically declared major. They want diversity in their candidates. Currently, they have only 10% Latino teachers, for example, and are seeking more. Most of their applicants have come from the highest ranking colleges: 18%, for example, come from Harvard’s senior class. However, Teach for America is interested in educational diversity as well.

### What Does It Take?

It’s a two year commitment. If you have a 2.50 GPA, you apply in January of your senior year. In some states there’s a content-related test as well. If you’re accepted, you go for a 6 week summer training course, and a 2 week regional orientation. Under federal law, you have to have a state teaching credential to teach, but there’s a special arrangement for “non-traditional” teachers who receive an “alternative certificate.” These teachers are also expected to complete coursework towards the next level of certification while they’re teaching. Financial support varies by location.

### The Benefits

First and foremost, an incredible experience. The pay isn’t bad either, with salaries of \$25,000-\$51,000, depending on the location. Speaking of which, another benefit, is you get to choose 10 regions you’d like to work in and they’ll assign you to your preferred region and grade whenever possible. 80% of accepted applicants get their first choice. Also, you get health insurance and no-interest loans for transition after you complete your 2 years. Shopping and housing discounts, too. And they provide scholarships for grad school in education, law, social work, and other fields. Overall, if you want to make a difference as soon as possible, this is a good choice.

## TEACHING ABROAD

### The Global Demand

Do you want international experience? Do you have a passion for teaching? Well, the world is calling and it wants you, an English major, to educate their students. There is a demand for native English speaking teachers all around the world, due in large part to the ever-growing importance of English in global business and politics. Why are countries willing to import teachers? Because their local teachers may not be equipped to teach English accurately, colloquially, and conversationally. They're willing to pay you to do it. Beyond teaching the differences among "there," "their," and "they're," the programs teach students American pronunciation and grammar.

### Certifications (Not Required, But Helpful)

There are many international English teaching jobs, so the qualifications tend to vary based upon the quality and purpose of each specific program. Some jobs only require native knowledge of English and any sort of BA/BS. However, certain certifications will make you more desirable to employers.

Certifications in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), TESL (as a Second Language), or TESOL (to Speakers of Other Languages) will boost your resume even further. All of these prepare you to teach English, however the curricula and teaching strategies differ with each. For the very serious, a MATESOL (Masters) degree is offered at some universities, and is the best preparation for a career as a professor abroad. If you seek a specific job, make sure to get the correct certifications or degree; otherwise, any of these will generally elevate your pay and benefits.

### Alumni Voice Of Experience

Along with degrees and certifications, some experience teaching, tutoring, coaching, or any sort of leadership role will help boost your resume. Two of our CSUCI graduates, Emily and Nate McCain, teach at Korea International School, and this is what they had to say:

"It's very competitive to get hired at the International school level. We got our foot in the door by working on the boarding side first. We have also both done extracurricular activities like coached the swim and baseball teams, taught a writing club, been involved with middle school ELL (English Language Learners) support, taught SAT prep and critical reading courses."

There are usually local programs in search of volunteers. You may want to check local public schools, universities, and nonprofit programs.

## How CI Can Help

Here at CI, our [Center for International Affairs](#) offers a summer internship, the [ICE Program](#) at Konkuk University in Seoul, South Korea. It is a great opportunity to learn and teach in a different country. For more information click the link.

## Placement Agencies And Resources

- [C.I.S.: Council of International Schools](#)
- [Dave's ESL café](#)
- [International School Review](#) – placement agency review site.
- [International School Services](#) – San Francisco based recruiting agency – two of our graduates used this agency with success, although it doesn't have the best reviews.
- [Search Associates](#) – another such agency got the highest rating on the review forum of all such placement agencies, both for responsiveness and placement.
- [T.I.E.: The International Educator](#)

## Programs

- [AEON Japan](#)
- [AIPT Teach International](#)
- [American-Scandinavian Foundation](#)
- [Central European Teaching Program](#)
- [Chilean Ministry of Education's "English Opens Doors" program](#)
- [CIEE Teach \(Chile, China, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, Vietnam\)](#)
- [Czech Republic Ministry of Education](#)
- [English Language Fellows Program with the U.S. Department of State](#)
- [English Program in Korea \(EPIK\)](#)
- [French Cultural Exchange through the French Ministry of Education](#)
- [Hess International Education Organization](#)
- [IFESH Africa program](#)
- [Japanese Exchange and Teaching Programme \(JET Programme\)](#)
- [Princeton In Asia](#)
- [Serendipity Russia Program](#)

## Another Approach To Teaching Abroad

[WorldTeach](#) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization founded by a group of Harvard students in 1986 in response to the need for educational assistance in developing

countries. Like the Peace Corps, it's a volunteer organization, but they provide more support and training (so they claim). It's a bit different from the Peace Corps in that you can serve for only a year, you choose your country and program, you don't have to be a citizen, and you'll find out if you're placed in a month after your application.

### **Who Are They Looking For**

WorldTeach programs are open to native English speakers who have a commitment to education and international development. With CSUCI's focus on international and multicultural perspectives, our BA's in English have a competitive edge.

### **Keep**

Unlike the Peace Corps, there's no salary. According to their website:

"The host school, institution, or government will provide a modest living allowance, paid in the local currency. This monthly stipend is designed to cover your day-to-day living expenses based on the local cost of living. It is not designed to cover extra personal expenses such as travel, tours, souvenirs, communications with home, etc. so you will need to take your own spending money. In most countries, your host family will provide you with most of your meals."

For most countries, the volunteer has to raise a \$3,500-5,500 "contribution" to cover expenses and does this through their local church, rotary club, corporations, and family. However, their Pacific Islands placements are free (though there's a refundable deposit), and include transportation. China is only \$500, but the volunteer has to pay for plane fare. And volunteers have an easy time finding jobs in China after their service.

### **Benefits**

Applicants choose the country they want from among the many options listed at that time and can get a TEFL Certification for an extra \$350 with their training program. This is a proven program that can offer "excellent volunteer support including in-country orientation training, full-time field staff, 24-hour emergency support, and health insurance including medical evacuation." With this experience, many volunteers find paid teaching jobs afterwards.

According to Shawn, a program manager for the company and a former volunteer in a two street town in China said that "the real benefit is in the support WorldTeach provides. If you have any problem with your school or your host family, they'll step in." Was he lonely in his remote town? Not at all, he said. He had a "site mate" and a large group of WorldTeach volunteers in a city two hours away where they'd go for occasional weekends. Best experience for Shawn was "making Chinese friends, going to their weddings, being there for the celebration of their new babies, being a part of their lives."

**To Apply**

Do the [online application](#) four months before departure time for a program you're interested in, including your resume, two page personal statement, and two recommendations.

**Complementary Courses To Consider**

ARAB 101: Elementary Arabic I - First course in Modern Standard Arabic. Features some exposure to the Egyptian dialect. Aims at developing elementary communicative skills and knowledge about the Arab-speaking world. Not intended for students with prior knowledge of Arabic.

CHIN 101: Elementary Chinese I - First course in Modern Standard Chinese (Mandarin). Develops elementary communicative skills and knowledge of the Chinese language and cultures. Not intended for students with prior knowledge of Chinese.

CHS 364: Chicano English - Examination of the social, cultural and linguistic factors that influence the development of Chicano English. Investigates the language use of Chicanos and the sociolinguistic and sociocultural ways of speaking and communicating. Issues of language variety, influence of Spanish, social history and use and function in the Chicano community. Implications for K-12 schooling are addressed.

EDML 617: The Socio-Cultural Context of Schooling: Teaching and Learning in a Bilingual/Multicultural Context - A sociolinguistic approach to the study of verbal and non-verbal elements of communicative competence amongst Latina/o/s, including traditional patterns of communication and use in the United States.

SPAN 101: Elementary Spanish - Develops basic functional proficiency in the Spanish language. As students develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, they acquire knowledge about cultural similarities and differences between the U.S. and the Spanish-speaking world. Not for native Spanish speakers or those with two or more years of high school Spanish within the last three years, or those with college level Spanish.

## TECHNICAL WRITING

### What Is Technical Writing?

Beyond a valuable writing skill, technical writing is a skill the corporate world cannot do without. Technical writers take complex mechanical and conceptual information and transform it into a compact and accessible format, producing everything from instruction manuals to website content. Students who take pride in the meticulous, in puzzling out a perfect paragraph, writing in teams, and designing layouts, etc., are prime candidates for technical writing careers.

Although it would seem that Technical Writers are concerned only with putting words to a page, Masaki Matsuo, who teaches Technical Writing at CSUCI, stresses that technical writing is a social job. Technical writers often interview Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and ask questions, gathering information that will be incorporated into the writing. Matsuo describes technical writers as the “bridge between upper management and technical engineers.”

The Technical Writing route is not always so straight. Professor Matsuo mentioned that many technical writers actually start in other positions. Matsuo himself started as a programmer, and since he was the new guy, he was tasked with doing the documentation - technical writing. Eventually he made the switch to being solely a technical writer, and mentioned that his friends in the profession got their start in a similar fashion.

### The Outlook

According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the technical writing profession is expected to grow at an average rate, yet in California it has an above average growth rate. One of the more enticing aspects of technical writing is its pay scale. In 2012 the lowest pay scale bracket made on average \$18.61/hr nationwide, \$24.20/hr in California. That comes out to \$50,300 a year in California, well above the average starting pay for college graduates.

### Technical Writing At CSUCI

[CSUCI](#) offers courses in technical writing open to all, and the English major has an option in technical writing, providing the following courses: Engl 482 Technical and Business Writing, and Engl 483 Technical Communication. CSUCI also offers a [Technical Writing Certificate](#) program, yet not all of the courses in the program are offered every semester. Most technical writers are employed in the computer and engineering industries according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, so computer science, web design, and engineering are good minors for would be technical writers.

## Alumni Voice Of Experience

CSUCI English major graduate Josh Seale is currently working as a technical writer and editor for Haas Automation, a machine tool manufacturer in Oxnard. Josh was offered his position as a result of an internship at the company. He recommends that those looking for a career in Technical Writing build a strong portfolio which showcases their skills, with experience from internships being a great way to build up a body of work. Josh also suggests that you develop a strong eye for detail, and he stresses the importance of writers being able to demonstrate “understanding of audience and the rhetorical situation.”

## Internships

Experience is key to getting a technical writing position; internships provide that experience and build connections with potential employers. Many major corporations such as [Microsoft](#) offer technical writing internships. They're looking for BA's in English, with preference given to those who understand programming concepts and languages. [Hewlett-Packard](#) also offers summer technical writing internships for students who have completed their second year of university studies and are pursuing a degree in a related field.

## Complementary Courses To Consider

ENGL 482: Technical and Business Writing - Technical/business writing is translation and persuasion. It requires explaining specialized source material to an audience to motivate action and provide grounds for decision making. Students will research and interview for information that they will turn into various forms, including but not limited to: reports, user guides, manuals, technical descriptions, business correspondence, marketing brochures, resumes, and proposals.

ENGL 483: Technical Communication - Course is designed to bridge the gap between interest in technical communication and the need to develop real world skills. Students will take projects from inception to completion by incorporating key technical communication principles: document design, collaborative authoring, and project management. This class also explores the relationship between core concepts of relevant software and best practices for technical writers.



## ALUMNI VOICES

The list provided above is only a fraction of what's possible and prospects also change every few years. There are a lot of positions still out there that we haven't considered, named, or even heard of yet. For example, a recent visiting alumni panel of English graduates included a woman who works at the Ventura County Courthouse editing judges' and lawyers' writing, a Ventura Councilwoman, a young man in International Relations, and another who was half-way through Ventura Law School. To give you a sense of possibilities not already covered, here's what a few of our alumni have to say.

### CAMILLE GENOVESE ('11) - Trader Joe's Associate

"When I finally chose English as my major, I had absolutely no idea what career I hoped to obtain with it. My biggest regret from my time in college is that I didn't take advantage of the career center or the contacts my teachers could have given me. For the first year out of college I applied to a lot of different office jobs in the hopes of gaining enough experience in a professional setting to gain me access to an editing position or perhaps writing for a magazine. The closest I got, though, was an interview for an internship at SAGE Publishing, but, alas, I didn't even have enough experience for that position. So in April 2012 I started working for Trader Joe's. Though it wasn't exactly part of my plan, this laid-back grocery store job has actually turned out to be a blessing in disguise. I work a few less hours per week, so I now have time to pursue activities I previously didn't have the time or energy for.

Since I first learned to write, I've imagined myself as an author. I hope to get published many times over.

With all my stress-free time I also decided to pursue volunteering. The first place I decided to volunteer at was the Santa Paula Animal Rescue Center (SPARC) mostly because it's close and I love animals. Then I started thinking that maybe I could explore possible careers. I heard about the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program. CASA volunteers advocate for the best interests of foster children in the courtroom. The CASA program has opened my eyes to the uncertain and confusing world foster children are thrust into when they are taken away from their parents. I think I may have found my calling.

Life after college has definitely not turned out the way I imagined it would when I was younger, but one important thing I'm finding out is that it's not the end of the world if you don't start your career as soon as you graduate."

## JON LOPEZ - Editor, Writer, Producer

“I wanted to be a screenwriter and Professor of Cinema Studies, so I could practice both of my passions in life: Movies and teaching (I hope to teach at USC one day and put at least one flick on the silver screen).

I'm currently a Producer-Editor-Writer at Warner Bros, in their Worldwide Television Marketing Dept. 'PrEditor's' are a growing field inside of entertainment that, as the title suggests, do 3 times the work a regular employee might do.

There is a taste for all kinds of writing in the world and in an industry of 'who you know,' you absolutely need to build advocates who will build your reputation and connect you with the opportunities usually reserved for 'the friends of a friend.' I am exactly where I want to be, inside of entertainment.”

## SEAN PADRE ('12) - Proofreader

“What you come to realize is that finding a job is very competitive. In my case, I managed to get two interviews but none of them landed me with a job. After that, I applied everywhere I could. I utilized job search engines like Indeed.com, and created a profile on LinkedIn. I got interviews, but I never got the job.

Right now, I am working at the corporate offices of Harbor Freight Tools as a proofreader, and I can say that I'm actually content with where I'm at. It pays the bills, and it sure is a hell of a lot better than working at Blenders in the Grass. I have my cousin to thank for helping me land the job there.

My advice is to utilize what connections you have. Networking is key. You shouldn't lead by your degree alone because that will get you nowhere. Lead by what experience you have, and if you have little to none of it, start from basics and build up from there. Temp and staffing agencies are a helpful resource. If you're lucky enough to know someone who can land you a job somewhere, do not hesitate to use that resource.”

## SARA PARKER ('09) - Tutor &amp; Councilor

“I tutor all ages of students in English, History, test taking & study strategies, and organization/time management. I do that as my main source of income. I also started my own business (what I went to grad school for). I teach parents how to feel more comfortable discussing sex education with their children. I run group and private workshops that give them ideas, strategies, and references to other authors/professionals.”

### JOSH SEALE ('05) - Technical Writer

“While I was in school, I bounced around quite a bit unsure what exactly I wanted to do. So I entered the English program at CSUCI without much of a plan about what I would do with it. I took a couple of jobs that related to my general fields of interest: I worked at the Writing Center for most of my CSUCI career, and I also landed an internship as a marketing copywriter.

I've been a technical writer/editor for almost eight years at Haas Automation, a machine tool manufacturer in Oxnard and it kind of fell in my lap. My internship turned into kind of a contract job while I looked for something permanent. I had a resume up on [monster.com](http://monster.com), and the recruiter here called me one day to ask if I might want to give technical writing a try. It turned out to be a good fit. I've since completed a master's degree in technical communication, and I'm now in charge of a massive rewrite project for our Operator's Manuals.

If you want to be a tech writer, develop inquisitiveness, an eye for detail, and a tolerance for what I call "living in Wonderland (or, alternatively, the movie 'Labyrinth'): you'll probably work with highly technical people who tend to infer very little, so you won't get a good answer if you don't ask the right question. Starting with technical knowledge can be good, too, but you may also want to maintain a degree of naivete (real or imagined), which helps you approach a topic from the 'unlearned' end-user's perspective.

Write constantly.

Read constantly.”

### JOE SILVA ('13) - Staff Writer (Creative Writing Emphasis, formerly in the Navy)

“Since graduation I have applied for a number of positions from Content writer, Script Workshop Coordinator, Technical Writer, Producer, Training Coordinator, Editorial Assistant, Production assistant and Human Resources Associate. I've been on six interviews and received three job offers.

I did find part time work, from my third offer, as a Staff Writer for a Veteran website called MilitaryConnection.com. For that job, I write articles, press releases, social media posts, letters from the staff, award descriptions and blog content for the site. My advice to current & future students is to be sure to utilize all of your resources when hunting for jobs. I found my part time job on Craigslist. But I've also networked with friends and used job search sites when looking for jobs. And if I could go back

and do anything over again, it would be to have applied for internships while I was still in school.”

#### DEVON WILLIAMS - Freelance

“Try to imagine how the skills and experience you have gained can somehow be applied to positions in any field. Also, don't be afraid to take an internship or that entry-level position, as you can gain experience and work your way up. Every constructive thing that you do becomes a valuable part of your experience.

Regarding work experience—I have held positions in Accounting, Marketing/Biotech, Food & Hospitality, Equine Training/Agriculture, Self-Storage (which required me to closely examine legal handbooks regarding Auction and Eviction processes). The most important thing is to never allow yourself to become discouraged because the things we want can come to us in some very unexpected ways.”

## CAREER FAIRS

In addition to internships and having a mentor, attending Career Fairs is a great way to meet prospective employers as well as find out what companies and organizations are looking for. The art of networking can be daunting at first, but here are a couple of suggestions; 1) We're all human, and most are actually pretty nice. Remember that the CEO or director you are talking to was probably in a situation like yours at some point in their career. 2) Dress to impress and be attentive. These are busy professionals, so put your phones on silent. It's helpful to jot down some notes for later talking points as well.

The Fall 2013 Career Fair here at CSUCI included representatives from the City of Ventura, Amgen, Thousand Oaks Library, Sage Publications and others. Without exception, all of the panel participants were receptive and open to questions afterwards. This is where you meet the people doing the jobs you might be interested in.

### Some Advice From The Participants

Speaking about her prior work in publishing Christy Weir, Ventura City Councilwoman, said "You never know when you're going to use it." She also stressed the importance of being flexible in employment choices, citing such diverse jobs as copy editor, director of a private school, as well as the previously mentioned publishing work. She sees a promising career for graduates in local government and pointed out, "baby boomers are retiring."

"Do everything and anything," commented Steve Brogden of the Thousand Oaks Library, and holding for laughter, added, "as long as it's legal."

"Develop public speaking, no matter what field you go into," advised Federal Reserve employee Robert Parry. "Education is essential," he continued. He reminded the audience that the Federal Reserve hires for positions other than economists, so be prepared to think outside the box when looking for work.

"You are your own brand," said Ingvald Smith-Kielland, Director at Strategic Partnering. He also stressed the importance of having a mentor as well as taking risks career-wise when young.

When talking about what employers are looking for, all the speakers used the same terms repeatedly: "enthusiasm," "imagination," "decision making ability," "follow-through," "reliability," "trust," and most importantly, "likability."

### The Career Development Center

Career Fairs are only one service among many offered at CSUCI. According to Amanda Carpenter, Coordinator of Career Development Services, "We provide a range of career

counseling services to help you to identify career interests, conduct occupational exploration, design a career plan, and gain valuable hands-on, career-related experience to launch your career for success after CSUCI.” These services include: Graduate & Professional School Resources and Fairs, Career & Internship Fairs, Mock Interviews, Employer Panels, Networking Events, and Workshops. Taking advantage of these opportunities will also enhance those crucial people skills.

Additionally, the Career Development Center provides one on one career counseling. According to the website, “Career Development is a lifelong process of exploration and decision making. A step-by step guide is available to assist CI students through the stages of career development.” Hopefully, this will prompt you to visit the [Career Development Center](#); Amanda Carpenter, who was essential in creating this guide, is an incredible resource for all CSUCI students.