



WCU English Majors' Handbook

2026-2027 Academic Year

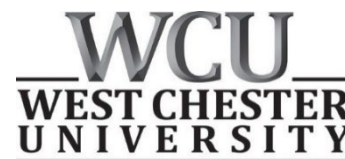
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Welcome from the English Department Chair

Summer 2026



Dear English Major:

Welcome to West Chester University's Department of English!

Our faculty and staff look forward to making your undergraduate years as enjoyable, fulfilling, and generative as possible. As the university's largest department, we offer programs and experiences designed to enrich your time at the university and to prepare you for your careers after graduation. In addition to attending fascinating courses taught by knowledgeable faculty, you can gain experience on the campus newspaper or literary magazine, interact with guest writers and scholars, meet department alumni working in a range of industries, and develop meaningful connections with your classmates. You can learn more about these and many other opportunities later in this handbook.

To help you progress towards your degree at an appropriate pace, I recommend consulting several resources regularly:

- Start with this handbook, which includes critical information about the English major and other requirements. Review it before meeting with your student success coordinator and/or advisor each semester, or whenever you have questions about your program.
- Our department [website](#) and [Instagram](#) will help you stay up to date on upcoming classes, events, and other opportunities.

I also encourage you to connect with your student success coordinator and advisor frequently throughout your time at West Chester. In your first year, you will meet with your student success coordinator to discuss your general education requirements and ensure that you are making the most of your experience at the university. Your departmental advisor will be assigned to you in your second year and will provide you with academic guidance throughout your undergraduate program. You must meet with your student success coordinator or advisor at least once per semester to schedule courses for the next semester, but meeting with them more often will ensure that you are on track with all department and university requirements. Advising is ultimately a shared responsibility between you and your advising team, so be proactive in understanding and meeting your degree requirements.

If you need more support or have questions about the information in this handbook, please email us at English@wcupa.edu or call the department office at 610-436-2822.

The faculty and I look forward to working with you throughout your time in our department.

All the best to you,

Dr. Ashley Patriarca
Chair, Department of English

About This Handbook

This handbook is intended to help you understand the undergraduate English major, learn about available options for courses and activities, plan your progress towards your degree, and consider possible careers. It is **not** a substitute for meeting with your student success coordinator or advisor.

From time to time, there may be changes to degree requirements that occur after we finalize an academic year's handbook. We will always keep you informed of these changes via the English department [website](#) and [Instagram](#). Your student success coordinator or advisor will also be a good source for updated information.

Additional Resources

Undergraduate Course Catalog

The authoritative degree requirements are those in the university's [Undergraduate Course Catalog](#). The online undergraduate catalog has several relevant sections for you as an English major:

- [Academic Policies & Procedures](#): This section of the catalog includes links to information about graduation requirements, transfer or AP credits, accessibility (including accommodations), and more.
- [General Education & Additional Baccalaureate Requirements](#): All new students must choose their general education classes from an approved list for each requirement. You will find updated information about the individual requirements, including descriptions for those approved courses, at the link. You will also find information about the university's current general education pathways: Community Engagement, Digital Literacy, Global Awareness, Health Humanities, and Sustainability.
- [B.A. in English Info](#): This section of the catalog includes information specific to the English major, such as a sample course plan and full list of department courses. Please note that courses featured on that list may not be offered every semester, so consult with your student success coordinator or advisor to determine when you should take specific courses.

RamPortal

[RamPortal](#) is the university's student information system, and you'll use the system each semester to register for classes, keep track of your academic progress, and more.

Because RamPortal is still relatively new, there may be occasional hiccups. Please notify your advisor and the university Help Desk if you notice any issues in your academic records within RamPortal. We strongly recommend that you keep a backup record of your progress, including notes from your meetings with your advisor. The best way to track your academic progress is by using [your advising sheet](#). If you see a discrepancy between your records in RamPortal and your progress on your advising sheet, consult with your advisor immediately to ensure that your progress towards graduation is not affected.

University Email

The English department and the university will only communicate with you via your WCU student email accounts, as will the faculty members teaching your classes. Please check your WCU email account daily!

Advising

Advising is a partnership among you, the student success coordinator with whom you will work during your first year, and the faculty member who will be your advisor throughout the rest of your time at West Chester. You and your advising team share one key goal: your academic, personal, and professional success.

The [WCU Academic Advising website](#) provides you with general information on what is expected in an advising relationship, tools for better communication with your student success coordinator and advisor, FAQs about our general education program and academic policies, and resources for help and special opportunities.

As an English major, you'll meet with your student success coordinator and/or advisor at least once a semester to

- evaluate your academic status,
- plan your schedule for the following term,
- have your enrollment hold lifted,
- discuss your progress and performance, including any difficulties you may be having in your academic program,
- learn about resources on campus that can help you with academic or other problems, and
- learn about opportunities on campus that will support you in your educational and/or professional goals.

Working closely with your student success coordinator and/or advisor will help you in your degree progress and ensure that your course selections are in line with your goals. In addition to pre-registration sessions, your student success coordinator and/or advisor will be available to meet with you throughout the semester to discuss any number of issues, including adding, dropping, or withdrawing from a course; career objectives; preparation for graduate study; and internships and employment opportunities. Please consult with your student success coordinator and/or advisor to find out when and how they are available to meet with you.

Your advisor is also an excellent resource for learning about post-graduation opportunities, including the rich array of careers and/or graduate school possibilities available to you.

While your student success coordinator and/or advisor will offer recommendations and answer questions you may have about the program, ultimately you are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding the content in this handbook, including the program requirements you must complete.
- Keeping an updated advising sheet and bring it to all advising appointments. This will ensure that you are meeting the requirements for graduation, including the completion of 120 credits.
- Checking RamPortal to find your enrollment appointment (that is, your registration date) for scheduling your next semester's courses.
- Signing up to meet with your student success coordinator/advisor before your enrollment appointment so that you will be able to register for classes when your date and time to schedule occurs.
- Consulting with your student success coordinator/advisor regularly, especially when any question arises.

Please check your individual profile in [RamPortal](#) to identify your student success coordinator and/or advisor.

Important: You should not register for any classes until you meet with your student success coordinator/advisor to discuss your next semester and long-term plans. Students who miss advising appointments can struggle to complete their degree according to plan, which often includes a delay in graduation.

How to Schedule Your Classes

1. **Pay any current university bills.** You cannot schedule if you have unpaid bills, parking tickets, health center charges, late library books, etc.
2. **Sign up for a meeting with your assigned student success coordinator/advisor via their preferred method (appointment schedule on office door, online scheduling assistant, email, etc.).** You should arrange to meet with your student success coordinator/advisor at least two weeks before your registration date, which you'll find in your RamPortal profile under the "Registration Notices" menu. This registration date is typically assigned based on the number of credits you have earned. Make sure you note whether your advising appointment is in person or over Zoom.
3. **Develop a tentative schedule of courses that you would like to take next semester.** Also, write down any questions you may have about offerings, your progress in the program, or career directions. These questions can be in a notebook, on a laptop, or even on your phone; just make sure you have them available to you during your advising appointment.
4. **Meet with your student success coordinator (Year 1) or advisor (Year 2+).** Be on time for the advising appointment and bring your tentative schedule of courses and questions to share with your student success coordinator/advisor. Take notes during this appointment, even if your student success coordinator/advisor creates an advising note to summarize what you discussed.
5. **Ensure that your student success coordinator/advisor has removed your advising hold in RamPortal.** Remember: your student success coordinator/ advisor will only remove your advising hold after meeting to discuss your plans for the upcoming semester. If you have met with your student success coordinator/advisor to discussing the upcoming semester and a hold is still on your account, reach out to them ASAP.
6. **Register for your classes in RamPortal as soon as possible following your enrollment appointment.** Registering for classes on time means you have a better chance of getting the courses you need when you need them (which means an easier path towards graduation), *and* it reduces the possibility of the courses you need getting canceled due to low enrollment.
7. **Pay your bill promptly to avoid having your schedule purged (that is, deleted) by the Registrar.** If your schedule is purged, you may not be able to reconstruct it. In most cases, the department will not be able to add you back into classes you have lost – your spot may already be filled by another student.

For more information about the enrollment process, consult the [Registrar's website](#).

Additional Advising Opportunities

- We encourage you to become familiar with the counselors and resources available at the [Twardowski Career Development Center](#) beginning in your first year. Their resources are valuable to you even before you begin to seek internships and/or jobs.
- You can consult advisors of department disciplines—specialists in literature, journalism, professional and technical writing, linguistics, or creative writing—to discuss graduate school options and professional opportunities in those areas.
- Throughout the academic year, we will offer workshops on career possibilities/preparation, and graduate school. We also invite alumni of the department to discuss their experiences in the English major and how those experiences have supported them throughout their careers.

B.A. in English

West Chester University's B.A. in English prepares you to be the sort of agile and critical thinker that the 21st century demands. Our program offers an array of dynamic courses, and we prioritize smaller classes so you develop one-on-one relationships with our faculty.

The B.A. in English focuses on the study of language; reading, analysis, and critical interpretation; intensive instruction in writing and rhetoric; English, American, and World literatures; and literary, rhetorical, and critical theory. The B.A. also requires students to study an additional language through the 202 level, or to develop an alternative plan in consultation with an advisor (see the [“Language Requirement and Placement”](#) section of the handbook).

In the following sections of the handbook, you'll learn more about your general education requirements and about the English major, including the

1. Core courses,
2. Focus area(s),
3. Electives,
4. Seminars, and
5. Capstone.

General Education Program

Credit Hours

All West Chester University degrees require a minimum of 120 credits, which means that you cannot graduate with fewer than 120 credits even if you have completed all other degree requirements. To make sure you're on track to graduate, check your total credit count in RamPortal's Degree Audit section regularly.

General Education Requirements

Academic Foundations

- English Composition: 3-6 credits (WRT 120/123 and/or WRT 200, depending on your placement in the WRITESurvey)
- Mathematics: 3 credits (MAT 103+)
- First-Year Experience: 4 credits (FYE 100, usually enrolled in your first semester)
- Diverse Communities (DIV)¹: 3 credits
- Interdisciplinary (INT)¹: 3 credits
- Ethics (ETH)¹: 3 credits

Distributive Requirements

- Science: 6 credits, representing two different prefixes
- Behavioral and Social Sciences: 6 credits, representing two different prefixes
- Humanities²: 6 credits, representing two different prefixes
- Arts: 3 credits

Additional General Education Requirements

- Speaking Emphasis (SPK)¹: 9 credits (we recommend SPK 208/230 as your first SPK course)
- Writing Emphasis (WRT)¹: 9 credits

Make sure you choose courses from the Approved Course list for each general education requirement. You'll find this list in the Undergraduate Course Catalog's [General Education and Additional Baccalaureate Requirements](#) section.

We recommend completing your general education requirements before your final year, if possible, to ensure that you have time to complete any remaining major or minor requirements.

In addition to the 48-50 General Education credits, you must fulfill the major requirements of the English Department. A map of a typical program sequence can be found [here](#).

¹ Some English department courses meet these General Education requirements. Consult with your advisor to determine what will best fit your educational goals.

² You cannot take any English course (CLS, LIT, or WRH) to meet your General Education Humanities Distributive requirement.

Language Requirement and Placement

As an English major, you will demonstrate language proficiency by completing a language course at the 202-level, typically by taking four language courses: 101, 102, 201, and 202³.

You can choose from the following languages:

- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Italian
- Japanese
- Russian
- Spanish

Language Placement Test

If you have already taken classes in a particular language and/or you already speak one of the languages listed above, you may wish to take the Languages and Cultures language placement test to determine the level at which you should begin your language study.

If you plan to take the language placement test, contact [Marlies Persch](#), the director of the Language Learning Center in Mitchell Hall room 006A. Please see the [Language and Cultures department website](#) for details.

Please note that you do not earn any credit hours through the placement test! It is solely used to determine which language courses you should take.

Culture Cluster Option

You will meet with your English department advisor when you complete your 102-level language course to make plans for completing a 201-level language course and/or to discuss the possibility of moving to a culture cluster option. If you cannot complete a 201-level language course, you may be advised to complete **three** culture cluster courses of your choosing from the Languages and Cultures department.⁴

You will meet with your English department advisor again when you complete your 201-level language course. In most situations, your advisor will recommend that you complete your language requirement by completing a 202-level language course, but if you cannot complete a 202-level language course, you will work with your advisor to identify **two** appropriate culture cluster courses from the Languages and Cultures department.⁵

If you and your advisor agree that the culture cluster option is the best choice for you at any point, you should ask your advisor to add an advising note indicating this change to your RamPortal Degree Audit so that your graduation is not affected. Once you complete your culture cluster courses, you must also submit a “course substitution request” form to the Assistant Chair via English@wcupa.edu for processing.

If you are considering graduate studies, we strongly encourage you to complete your language requirement to the 202 level: many graduate programs require a language proficiency for admission.

³ If you begin a language at the 101 level, the 101 course will be counted as a general elective.

⁴ Because this option requires an additional course beyond the regular language requirement, it may affect your graduation timeline.

⁵ Because this option requires an additional course beyond the regular language requirement, it may affect your graduation timeline.

Minor/Concentration/Department Electives

There are three ways to complete this six-course (18-credit) section of your undergraduate degree: a minor, concentration, or English concentration with department electives. RamPortal may not be able to track all variations of this part of your studies, so you must use your advising sheets.

1. **Minor:** A minor is an approved program of study in English or other department that will appear on your transcript – for example, Journalism, Art History, Physics, or interdisciplinary minors such as Digital Humanities and New Media or Women’s and Gender Studies.
 - The English department offers six minors: [African/African American Literature](#), [Creative Writing](#), [Film Criticism](#), [Journalism](#), [Literature and Diverse Cultures](#), and [Professional and Technical Writing](#).
 - Several interdisciplinary minors also have strong English department connections, with many courses taught by our faculty: [Digital Humanities and New Media](#) & [Linguistics](#).
 - For information about minors located in other departments, see the [undergraduate catalog](#).
2. **Concentration:** If you want to study in an area for which West Chester does not have a formal minor – for example, Caribbean studies or medical humanities – you can design a structured, six-course (18-credit) concentration in collaboration with your advisor. However, if a formal minor in your proposed concentration area already exists, you cannot choose to create a concentration in that area.
 - This concentration must cohere and must have a clear intellectual foundation.
 - Your advisor should list your plans, including course numbers, in an advising note on your RamPortal Degree Audit.
 - You must declare your concentration while you still have classes to take to complete it: you cannot create a concentration at graduation time.

Adding a Minor

Before you add any minor, you should discuss your plans to enroll in that minor with your advisor and possibly the coordinator of that minor. Once you’ve had these discussions, you can enroll in that minor using [RamPortal](#).

B.A. in English Program Requirements

Overview

The B.A. in English requires you to take a total of 15 courses (45 credit hours) in the English department.

- **Core Courses (4 Courses):** These 4 courses are required for all English majors, no matter what focus area you choose. They will prepare you for your upper-level courses in the department and establish a shared foundation of knowledge that our department considers important for all English majors.
- **Focus Area (4 Courses):** You will take 4 courses in one of our three focus areas (Identity and Representation, Popular Culture & Cultural Studies, or Social Justice & Activism). The courses in each focus area ask you to develop your abilities in analyzing and creating different kinds of texts – poems, novels, longform journalism, film, memoirs, professional reports, and more.
- **Courses towards an English Department Minor/Second Focus Area (4 Courses):** In addition to your focus area, you will also take four courses towards one of our English department or department-related minors or four courses in an additional focus area.
- **ENG 400 Seminars (2 courses):** These small, rotating topics courses allow you to explore exciting topics within English Studies under the guidance of a faculty expert in that area.
- **ENG 499 Capstone (1 course):** This course, which you will take in your final year, asks you to create your own project, which will illustrate everything you have learned and what you can do as an English major.

The rest of this section shares more information about each part of the major. If you're a transfer student, check the end of each section for transfer tips that will help you graduate according to plan. If you have any questions about the information below, please consult your faculty advisor and/or email English@wcupa.edu.

Core Courses (4 Courses/12 Credit Hours)

All English majors will take a common set of courses, called **core courses**:

- **ENG 201 (Introduction to English Studies):** This course emphasizes the basics of analysis, critique, and production in English Studies, and it introduces you to the possibilities of the variety of subfields of English Studies.
- **ENG 202 (Research Methods for English Studies):** This course exposes you to research topics and methods in English in a smaller classroom setting and prepares you to create your own research projects as you move into your focus area courses and the capstone.
- **ENG 206 (Black Critical Theory) or ENG 296 (Theory & Criticism in English Studies):** Each course emphasizes the political, social, cultural, and historical factors that influenced the development of critical theoretical frameworks. You can take either ENG 206 or ENG 296 for your core course in theory.
- **LIN 230 (Introduction to Linguistics):** This course gives you a strong foundation in understanding how language works. You'll learn to apply key concepts of linguistic analysis and to identify how language use is affected by social perceptions.

We strongly recommend completing your core courses in your first two years so that you are prepared for your focus area(s) and seminar courses. If you are enrolling as a first-semester freshman, you will likely be automatically enrolled in ENG 201 during your first semester.

Transfer Tip: *If you are entering as a transfer, you should consult with your advisor before your first semester to ensure you are enrolled in the core courses you need to complete your major according to plan.*

Focus Area (4 Courses/12 Credit Hours)

Our three focus areas offer a vibrant range of possibilities for you as an English major:

- **[Identity & Representation](#):** This focus area examines how language, literature, writing, and other cultural forms construct and represent diverse identities. You will develop a critical understanding of intersecting identities—including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, ability, and others—and consider how identity and representation are inescapably influenced by power and privilege, or the lack thereof. You will also explore how to resist hierarchies of identity and representation by envisioning and enacting liberatory forms of selfhood.
- **[Popular Culture & Cultural Studies](#):** In this focus area, you will critically examine popular culture(s) across a variety of genres, historical contexts, media, and audiences. We understand popular culture to be ways in which culture creates itself in both established and emerging media. Therefore, courses in this area will explore these texts to understand how they shape and reflect societal beliefs, identities, and power structures and to understand how pop culture shapes the production, circulation, and reception of texts.
- **[Social Justice & Activism](#):** This focus area emphasizes text as action; in your courses, you will explore the humanities, specifically English Studies, as a powerful tool for understanding and creating change toward a more just and equitable society. You will move beyond critique of cultural and social issues and engage with analyzing and creating texts that call for meaningful action in a local community and/or the wider world.

You can tailor your studies in any of these focus areas to accomplish a variety of goals, whether those involve advancing to graduate studies or pursuing your dream career (or both).

Courses Toward a Minor/Second Focus Area (4 Courses/12 Credit Hours)

In addition to your focus area, you must either:

1. Take four courses (12 credit hours) in a second focus area or
2. Take four courses (12 credit hours) in the curriculum of a department or department-related minor (African/African American Literature, Creative Writing, Digital Humanities and New Media, Film Criticism, Journalism, Linguistics, Literature and Diverse Cultures, or Professional and Technical Writing)⁶

If you choose to take four courses towards a department minor, you may have space in your program to complete **two** minors, which can be an excellent resume detail when applying for internships or jobs. Consult with your advisor to ensure that this possibility works with your long-term plans.

***Transfer Tip:** If you are entering as a transfer student, you may be able to transfer some courses from other institutions into a focus area or minor curriculum requirement; please consult with your advisor about this possibility.*

Seminars (2 Courses/6 Credit Hours)

We offer multiple seminars (ENG 400s) each semester on topics that students and faculty are passionate about. These rotating-topics courses change each semester, are small (limited to 16 students), and offer you the opportunity to work closely with a faculty member on that topic.

⁶ You cannot count a course towards multiple focus areas or towards a focus area and a minor.

Recent ENG 400 topics include:

- Critical Studies of Disney: Media, Power, and Cultural Representation
- Chicken Little vs. The Gingerbread Man: Fake News and Mis/Disinformation in a Digital World
- Bad Bunny and the Politics of Reggaetón: Music, Culture, and Resistance
- Hidden Stories of WWII in Youth Literature
- “We Are the Union”: Rhetorics of Work, Labor, and Organizing
- Environmentalism in English Studies: History, Language, Change
- Truth and Authenticity in Creative Nonfiction
- Feminist Politics of Emotion
- Native American Literature and Print Culture
- Comics at the End of the World
- Grassroots Journalism
- Sexuality, Identity, and Desire: A Sociolinguistic Approach
- Monsters, Medicine, and Media
- Tuning for Gaming Activism

To complete the major’s seminar requirement, you must take two ENG 400 seminars, typically within your junior and senior years. You should complete your core courses before registering for any ENG 400.

Transfer Tip: All English major seminar courses must be taken at WCU.

Capstone (1 Course/3 Credit Hours)

ENG 499 (English Capstone) is your chance to showcase the knowledge you’ve gained in your time as an English major, whatever your focus area might be. In this course, you’ll develop a research project that emerges from the work you’ve done in your focus area and allows you to show the kinds of work that you can do to graduate program directors and/or future employers. This course also meets the goals of the university’s updated general education program by asking you to reflect on the goals of your major and general education courses.

Because ENG 499 builds on the work you’ve done throughout your major, you will ideally take it during the semester you plan to graduate. Please consult with your advisor at the end of your junior year/beginning of your senior year to ensure the capstone will be offered during your final semester; otherwise, you will need to take the class in your next-to-last semester. You must complete your core courses before registering for ENG 499.

Transfer Tip: Your English major capstone course must be taken at WCU.

Course Lists for Focus Areas

The following pages include the current lists of courses that are part of each focus area. Whenever we update a list, we will notify student success coordinators and advisors so that you have the most up-to-date information possible. Please note that some courses may be offered every semester, while others are offered more infrequently.

Many department courses also fulfill General Education requirements. Each course that also fulfills General Education requirements will be labeled with the appropriate identifier(s) in purple next to the course title:

- **Diverse Communities = DIV**
- **Ethics = ETH**
- **Interdisciplinary = INT**
- **Speaking Emphasis = SPK**
- **Writing Emphasis = WRT**

Although many of our courses are identified as Humanities General Education courses, we do not label them here because you cannot use any English department courses to fulfill that requirement for your General Education program.

In addition, each course that fulfills minor requirements will be labeled with the appropriate identifier(s) in green next to the course title:

- **African/African American Literature = AAAL**
- **Creative Writing = CRW**
- **Digital Humanities and New Media = DHM**
- **Film Criticism = FLM**
- **Journalism = JRN**
- **Linguistics = LIN**
- **Literature and Diverse Cultures = LIT**
- **Professional and Technical Writing = PTW**

You cannot count a course for both your first focus area and a department minor; after completing your first focus area, you can choose to take four courses towards a department minor, even if they are also part of a focus area.

Identity & Representation

- CLS 260: World Literature I (**DIV**) (**LIT**)
- CLS 367: Classical Greco Roman Mythology (**LIT**)
- CLS 368: Greco Roman Culture, Myth, & Society (**INT**) (**LIT**)
- CRW 305: Creative Nonfiction Workshop I (**WRT**) (**CRW**)
- DHM 260: Digital Storytelling (**DHM**)
- ENG 240: Language, Gender, & Sexuality (**DIV**, **WRT**) (**LIN**)
- ENG 340: Sociolinguistics (**ETH**) (**DHM**)
- ENG 345: Women Writing: Autobiography
- FLM 201: American Film (**WRT**) (**FLM**)
- JRN 335: Ethical Issues in News Media (**ETH**) (**JRN**)
- LIT 200: Studies in American Literature
- LIT 213: Asian American Literature (**LIT**)
- LIT 230: Survey of British Literature (**LIT**)
- LIT 302: Studies in the American Novel (**WRT**) (**LIT**)
- LIT 303: Intro to Multi-Ethnic American Literature (**DIV**, **WRT**) (**LIT**)
- LIT 335: Studies in Shakespeare (**WRT**) (**LIT**)
- LIT 338: Studies in British Drama (**SPK**) (**LIT**)
- LIT 339: 18th Century British Novel (**WRT**) (**LIT**)
- LIT 342: Victorian Literature (**LIT**)
- LIT 398: Young Adult Literature (**LIT**)
- WRH 201: Introduction to Rhetoric
- WRH 210: Multicultural Writing (**DIV**, **WRT**)
- WRH 225: Introduction to Professional and Technical Writing (**WRT**) (**PTW**)
- WRH 333: African American Autobiography (**DIV**, **WRT**) (**AAAL**, **LIT**)

Popular Culture & Cultural Studies

- CLS 201: Classical Greco Roman Myth in 20th Century Arts (**INT**) (**LIT**)
- CLS 261: World Literature II (**LIT**)

- CLS 270: Life, Death, and Disease (INT, WRT)
- CRW 303: Short Story Workshop I (WRT) (CRW)
- DHM 210: Introduction to Gaming (WRT) (DHM)
- ENG 215: Views on Literacy (INT)
- FLM 202: American Themes (WRT) (FLM)
- JRN 212: Digital Journalism (DHM, JRN)
- LIN 300: Language and the Internet (ETH) (DHM, LIN)
- LIT 272: New Fiction (LIT)
- LIT 274: Feminist Poetry (WRT) (LIT)
- LIT 360: Special Topics in Children's/Young Adult Literature (LIT)
- WRH 205: Composing Cyberspace (DHM)
- WRH 320: The Ethics of Composing with AI (ETH, WRT) (PTW)
- WRH 340: Introduction to Visual Rhetoric (DHM, PTW)
- WRH 343: Visual Rhetoric in Comics and Graphic Novels

Social Justice and Advocacy

- CLS 203: African Studies (DIV) (AAAL, LIT)
- CLS 333: Latina Writing (DIV) (LIT)
- CLS 334: Earth Words/Sustaining Stories (SPK) (LIT)
- CLS 365: African American Film (AAAL, FLM)
- CRW 301: Poetry Workshop I (WRT) (CRW)
- DHM 280: Introduction to Digital Humanities (INT, WRT) (DHM)
- ENG 339: Dialects of American English (SPK) (DHM)
- ENG 375: Client-Based Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- ENG 397: Writing Tutoring (WRT)
- JRN 200: Introduction to Journalism (JRN)
- LIT 202: African American Literature I (WRT) (AAAL, LIT)
- LIT 203: African American Literature II (DIV, WRT) (AAAL, LIT)
- LIT 204: Black Women Writers (WRT) (AAAL, LIT)
- LIT 207: Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (WRT) (AAAL, LIT)
- LIT 309: Thoughts/Writings of Martin Luther King (INT) (AAAL, LIT)
- LIT 370: Creating Space and Place in Literature (WRT) (LIT)
- WRH 301: The Rhetorics of Black Americans (DIV, WRT) (AAAL)
- WRH 315: Propaganda, Power, and Politics
- WRH 335: Activism and Advocacy Writing

Additional Department Courses

Courses in this section may count as electives and/or towards a department or department-related minor. If you are interested in taking any of the courses below, consult with your advisor to determine how and whether they will fit within your program. Some courses may be offered every semester, while others are offered more infrequently.

For more info about any course our department offers, visit the [undergraduate course catalog](#).

- CLS 259: Women's Literature II (DIV)
- CLS 335: Latino Literature in the U.S. (DIV, Spanish Culture Cluster)

- CLS 371: Law & Disorder in Literature (INT) (LIT)
- CRW 201: Introduction to Creative Writing (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 202: Creative Writing I (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 203: Narrative and Lyric Forms (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 302: Poetry Workshop II (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 304: Short Story Workshop II (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 306: Creative Nonfiction Workshop II (WRT) (CRW)
- CRW 400: Writing Seminar (CRW)
- CRW 490: Writing Seminar in the Novel I (CRW)
- CRW 491: Creative Writing Workshop in the Long Form (CRW)
- DHM 220: Foundations of Game Design & Development (DHM)
- DHM 325: Digital Research Methods (INT) (DHM)
- DHM 405: Digital Humanities Practicum (DHM)
- ENG 250: Stylistics: The Language of Literature (WRT) (LIN)
- ENG 270: Book History (WRT) (DHM, LIT)
- ENG 310: Environmental Rhetoric and Advocacy (WRT)
- ENG 320: Usability & User Experience (WRT) (DHM, PTW)
- ENG 331: Structure of Modern English (LIN)
- ENG 335: History of the English Language (LIN)
- ENG 368: Business & Organizational Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- ENG 371: Technical Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- FLM 200: Introduction to Film (ART, WRT) (FLM)
- FLM 400: Film Seminar (FLM)
- JRN 225: Newswriting (WRT) (JRN)
- JRN 305: Introduction to Documentary Filmmaking (SPK)
- JRN 312: Sports Reporting & Writing (WRT) (JRN)
- JRN 315: Magazine Article Writing (WRT) (JRN)
- JRN 325: History of Journalism (JRN)
- JRN 355: Photojournalism: Ethics and Practices (ETH) (JRN)
- JRN 399: Special Topics in Journalism (WRT) (JRN)
- JRN 411: Journalism Practicum (JRN)
- LIT 219: Literature for Young Children (LIT)
- LIT 220: Children's Literature (LIT)
- LIT 250: Victorian Attitudes (INT) (LIT)
- LIT 337: Literature of the Enlightenment (WRT) (LIT)
- LIT 367: Comedy and Humor (INT)
- WRH 197: Becoming a Peer Writing Mentor
- WRH 305: Images of School in Film (WRT)
- WRH 342: Document Design (PTW)
- WRH 345: Professional & Technical Editing (PTW)
- WRH 350: Grant & Proposal Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- WRH 360: Social Media Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- WRH 365: Writing in the Health Professions (WRT) (PTW)
- WRH 370: Science Writing (WRT) (PTW)
- WRH 405: Topics in Professional and Technical Writing (PTW)

English Department Program Assessments

As part of our ongoing commitment to a high-quality undergraduate English major, the WCU English department has developed two means of obtaining feedback about the major: 1) a final portfolio, completed during your capstone course, and 2) an exit survey. You must complete each of these assessments as part of your major.

The Final Portfolio

The final portfolio will primarily include work you've completed throughout the English major. If you are a transfer student, you should submit only work completed in WCU English courses, and all of the pieces in the portfolio should be your individual work (i.e., they should not be collaboratively written).

Although this portfolio will be completed when you take ENG 499 (Capstone), you should be aware of the requirements now so that you don't lose track of any assignments.

The final portfolio must include the following:

1. An assignment from ENG 296/ENG
2. An assignment of your choice from one of your focus area classes
3. The capstone project that you create in ENG 499
4. The English major reflection that you compose in ENG 499

You'll create the final portfolio in your WCU Google Drive, following your ENG 499 professor's guidelines. Bear in mind that you'll need at least two different genres represented among the first three items in the portfolio.

The Exit Survey

You will complete an exit survey during ENG 499 that seeks feedback about what you learned and your satisfaction with the English major. The survey is a valuable opportunity for you to contribute to the quality of the program and shape the program for other students.

How the Scores Are Used

Although the items above are all required for graduation, they are for program assessment purposes only. Any scores will be recorded anonymously, and those scores will be examined ONLY by assessment personnel in aggregate with the scores of other portfolios and ONLY for this single purpose of program assessment. You can be confident that the information in the portfolio will be kept confidential.

Preparing for Graduation

You need to begin your graduation process much earlier than you might think. Planning ahead will reduce your stress in your final year *and* will make you more likely to graduate on time without issues⁷.

At least one year before you plan to graduate, follow these steps:

1. **Meet with your major advisor to review any requirements you still need to complete.** Your general education requirements will be reviewed by both your advisor and the Registrar.

⁷ Graduation clearances for your major are completed after grades have been posted. If there is a problem with unmet major requirements that affects your graduation, you will only learn about them after you walk at commencement. That is why regular meetings with your advisor, plus familiarity with the information in this handbook, are so essential!

2. **Count your credits!** You need at least 120 credits to graduate due to state regulations⁸.
3. **Apply for graduation.** Once the Registrar's Office receives your application, they will review your general education requirements. To give the Registrar's Office time to process your graduation, you should apply one year before you anticipate graduation. Applying one year ahead of graduation gives you time to adjust your course selections in your final semesters and prevent any delay in your graduation date. For specific deadlines and other information related to graduation, consult the registrar's [Graduation and Commencement](#) page.
4. **Review your General Education Evaluation with your advisor.** After the Registrar's Office evaluates your general education requirements, they will email a copy of that evaluation to your WCU email address. Discussing the evaluation with your advisor will allow you to adjust your upcoming course schedule to account for any remaining requirements, if needed.
5. **Meet with your minor advisor(s) at least one semester before your planned graduation semester.** This discussion will help you make sure you meet all minor requirements before graduation; for example, if you are a student in the Professional and Technical Writing minor, you need to begin the search process for your required internship at the beginning of the semester *before* you plan to take the internship.
6. **Meet with your advisor before the first week of your last semester (prior to the Drop/Add period).** At this meeting, check your remaining requirements one more time while you still have time to adjust your schedule.

Common Issues

The following issues are the most common ones we see that affect graduation:

- **You do not have 120 credits.** In many cases, you can resolve this issue by adding another course to your schedule to achieve that 120-credit minimum. There are a few possible reasons for missing the 120-credit minimum:
 1. Remedial classes and course repeats do not count towards the 120-credit minimum.
 2. Using one class to meet multiple requirements can leave you a few credits short of the 120-credit minimum if you don't take another class to make up those credits.
 3. You took a 2-credit class instead of a 3-credit class. This often happens with PEA classes (ex., Golf, Aerobic Conditioning) and/or some science labs. If you have completed all program requirements and simply need 1-2 extra credits, you might consider a PEA course here.
 4. You didn't transfer in all your transfer courses. Consult with your major advisor and the registrar's [Transfer Credit Center](#) to determine which courses will transfer. If you did not receive transfer credit for a course that you and your advisor think matches with a course at West Chester, you have the opportunity to [appeal that decision](#). Complete the [Transfer Credit Appeal form](#) and submit it (along with a syllabus from the course) to the appropriate academic department ASAP.
- **You have not completed the minor/concentration/electives section of your B.A. English advising sheet.** If you're enrolled in a minor, make sure you've completed all of the

⁸ Remember: Having 120 credits does not automatically mean that you have earned a degree; you also must satisfy your general education, major, and minor/concentration requirements.

requirements for that minor. If you're completing a concentration, make sure you've discussed that concentration with your advisor *and* that your advisor has left an advising note on your Degree Progress Report that fully describes your concentration.

- **You attempted to count an Interdisciplinary course as one of your General Education distributive courses.** Although Interdisciplinary courses can also fulfill General Education Academic Foundation (Ethics, Diverse Communities) or Additional Baccalaureate requirements (Writing Emphasis, Speaking Emphasis), they cannot count as a GenEd distributive course (Arts, Sciences, etc.). Make sure you complete all General Education courses correctly so that you can graduate in your intended semester.

Additional Information for All English Majors

See this section of the handbook for information on:

- [Internships](#)
- [Undergraduate Research Opportunities](#)
- [Student Awards and Scholarships](#)
- [Student Organizations](#)
- [English Department Affiliations](#)
- [Career Opportunities for English Majors](#)
- [Graduate Study Opportunities for English Majors](#)
- [Letters of Recommendation](#)

Internships (ENG 395)

We encourage you to pursue an internship during your time at West Chester. The advantages are numerous: internships enable you to apply your reading and writing skills to real workplace situations, make informed decisions about your career plans, and build valuable contacts.

Maybe you know exactly what you want to do after you graduate—or maybe you have no clue. An internship can help you explore a professional area to help you make such decisions, to help you test how you apply your reading and writing skills in work situations, and to allow you to build professional connections. And if you aren't sure what you want to do after you graduate, an internship experience can help you make informed decisions about the kinds of work you really want to pursue after graduation. Perhaps most important, completing an internship tops the list of what employees weigh heavily in hiring recent graduates; in fact, it can be a deciding factor between two otherwise equally qualified candidates.⁹ More, students who complete internships report having higher salaries and higher levels of job satisfaction compared to students who don't have internship experience.¹⁰

Our students have completed an exciting array of internships—in publishing, broadcasting, event planning, marketing, public relations, journalism, social media, political campaigns, legal research, environmental advocacy, and more—both on and off campus. Recent placements include Philadelphia-area publishers, local media, public-relations organizations, Philadelphia sports teams, corporate groups, law offices, national volunteer and nonprofit organizations, archives, museums, libraries, and select campus placements.

Not sure where an internship fits in your program of study?

- **Majors:** You can apply ENG 395 as elective credits in the “second focus area or department electives” or to the 18-credit “Minor or Concentration” sections of your program.
- **Minors:** Consult with your minor advisor for guidance, as some minors may require an internship.

Internship Coordinators

- **English major:** [Dr. Joshua Raclaw](#)
- **Professional and Technical Writing minor:** [Dr. Megan Schoettler](#) or [Dr. Kyle Vealey](#)
- **Journalism minor:** [Dr. Benjamin Kuebrich](#)

Finding an Internship

You should plan for the internship search process to take at least 3 months. For example, if you would like an internship for Semester 2 of Year 4, then you should start searching by the *beginning* of Semester 1 of Year 4. That may sound like a long time, but it takes time to decide what you want to do, prepare search materials, locate potential internship sites, and complete the steps of the application process—usually while also maintaining your regular semester workload.

We strongly recommend that you begin the process of finding an internship by exploring a few of the many resources available to you, including:

- The [internship section](#) of the English department website and
- The Twardowski Career Development Center [website](#) or in person at Lawrence 225.

⁹ National Association of Colleges and Employers, *Job Outlook 2022*.

¹⁰ Gault et al., 2000, 2010; Knouse & Fontenot, 2008.

Once you've reviewed these resources, you should begin your internship search. As part of this process, you should

1. **Meet with the appropriate internship coordinator to discuss your options.** You should also let people in your network - your professors, friends and professional colleagues - know you are looking for an internship and ask them if they know of any openings.
2. **Research companies that interest you.** As part of this research, identify the members of your network with connections to those companies, and reach out for more information. In this step, you're not asking for a job, but for information that can help you build your network.
3. **Attend job and internship fairs on campus.** The Career Development Center holds a number of these fairs throughout the year. For each of these events, bring your polished, updated resume, and dress in a way that makes you feel comfortable and professional.
4. **Build or update your online presence.** [LinkedIn](#), [RamNation](#), and other professional networking sites are places that can open the door for employers to seek you out. We also recommend joining the [Department of English group on LinkedIn](#) to network with fellow students and alumni who are working in industries or with companies that you find interesting.
5. **Search for open internship positions using [Handshake](#), [LinkedIn](#), or even broader job boards like [Indeed](#).** We recommend starting with the first two options: Handshake is a resource specifically designed to match employers with WCU students, and LinkedIn allows you to tailor your search based on your listed skills and experiences.

Once you've identified possible positions, you are ready to begin the application process:

1. **Create or update your job materials.** You'll need a version of your resume for each type of position; in other words, the resume you send out for a social media internship should not be the same one you send out for a magazine writing/editing internship. You'll also want to compose a customized cover letter that displays your strengths and fit for each position, even if the job does not explicitly require a cover letter. If an internship ad requires any other materials (such as writing samples or recommendation letters), make sure you have updated copies of those materials.
2. **Get feedback on your job materials.** Remember that the Career Development Center and/or your internship coordinator will review your job materials with you to evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of the materials. Set up a feedback appointment well in advance of the application deadline to give yourself time to revise if needed.
3. **Submit your polished resume, cover letter, and any other required job materials *before* the deadline/review start date if possible.** Sometimes review begins before the deadline, and you don't want your application to be overlooked in favor of earlier applications.
4. **Prepare for possible phone, video, or in-person interviews.** The Career Development Center offers [online mock interviews](#) to help you practice!
5. **When you get an invitation to an interview, be on time or even early so you aren't too stressed.** Bring a notebook & pens, as well as extra copies of your work, and dress in a way that makes you feel comfortable & professional. Account for both potential traffic *and* parking time when deciding how early you should leave.
6. **After the interview comes the hardest part: waiting.** You could be waiting on a decision for several weeks. If you haven't heard anything within two weeks or so, send a polite email to your interviewer that expresses your continued interest in the position & asks if there's anything else they need as they continue their decision-making process.

Also, don't get discouraged if you don't get an offer after an interview! You may need to apply to several places before you find a good fit.

Registering for an Internship

Once you have received an acceptance offer from an internship site, you will work with your faculty supervisor to complete the paperwork to officially enroll in the internship course, ENG 395. You will need to submit two forms to your faculty supervisor: 1) the Student Attestation Regarding Clearances and 2) the Internship Agreement Form.

Student Attestation Regarding Clearances

The Student Attestation Regarding Clearances form indicates that you have completed the two background checks required by the university: the [Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Clearance](#) and the [Child Abuse History Clearance](#). Instructions for how to complete these clearances can be found on the [internship section of the English Department website](#). Once you have completed your background checks, please fill out the *Student Attestation Regarding Clearances* form and submit only that form to your faculty supervisor—never your clearances.

Internship Agreement Form

You will fill out the Internship Agreement Form and submit to your faculty supervisor. You, your internship supervisor, and a faculty supervisor will all need to sign this document.

As an attachment to this form, please include a formal list of internship duties and responsibilities. This list can either be on an official letterhead from your internship's organization or in a forwarded email from your internship supervisor.

Once your faculty supervisor has this paperwork, they will start the process for enrolling you in ENG 395, which changes depending on whether your internship is paid or unpaid. If the internship is paid, then your faculty supervisor will be able to enroll you right away.

If the internship is unpaid, your faculty supervisor will send the paperwork to the Dean's Office for approval. The Dean's Office will reach out to your internship supervisor and provide them with one last form to complete. This is called an *affiliation agreement*, which is essentially a legal contract between the university and an internship organization. Once your internship supervisor has signed and returned the affiliation agreement, your faculty supervisor can then enroll you in ENG 395.

When an affiliation agreement is required, there may be a 1-2-week delay between submitting your completed paperwork to your faculty supervisor and officially enrolling in ENG 395. Because of this potential for delay, you should complete your paperwork as quickly as possible after receiving your internship offer.

Once you are enrolled in ENG 395, you'll be ready to begin your internship at the start of the semester.

Internship Requirements

During the internship, the following minimum requirements for work must be fulfilled:

- You must perform the required number of hours doing contracted tasks at the internship site. You will earn one academic credit hour by completing 45 hours of work in an internship. That means that if you plan to earn 3 credits for an internship, you will complete 135 hours on site at your internship.
- You must maintain regular contact with your faculty internship advisor, meeting at least three times over the course of the semester.
- You must maintain a collection of samples of their work throughout the internship.
- You must confer regularly with your on-site internship supervisor.

- At the end of the internship, you will share a portfolio of your work *and* a reflection on that work with your faculty supervisor. Consult with the faculty supervisor for specific details about what to include in your portfolio.

It is your responsibility to demonstrate that you have met the academic requirements for an internship.

Internship Policies

To register for ENG 395, you'll need to meet the following requirements:

- Be enrolled as a major or minor in the English department.
- Have completed at least 80 credit hours.
- Have completed at least 6 credit hours in your minor, if you are taking ENG 395 to fulfill a PTW or JRN minor requirement.

Most students take ENG 395 for 3 credit hours in a term. Sometimes, though, the amount of work you are doing in an internship means you could potentially earn 6 credit hours for ENG 395 in a single term. However, you'll need to discuss this possibility with your internship coordinator first.

You will also need to make sure your internship meets these credit hour requirements:

- You can complete up to 12 total credit hours of internship credit as an undergraduate.
- If you wish to take more than 6 hours of internship credit in a single term, you will need to receive approval for the plan from the appropriate internship coordinator.

Any exceptions to these policies must be approved in writing by the appropriate internship coordinator.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities

Our students work frequently with individual faculty members on research and creative projects. Here are some of the research opportunities available to you as an English major.

For more information, please visit the [English department website](#).

EAPSU Conference

The English Association of the Pennsylvania State Universities (EAPSU) is a regional professional organization whose members come from the faculty and students of the 14-state university English Departments in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). EAPSU's spring conference gives English students across PASSHE a venue for presenting scholarly work.

For more information, contact [Dr. Timothy Ray](#).

Summer Undergraduate Research Institute

Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (SURI) aims to enrich the undergraduate experience and prompt students to grow beyond consumers of information into creators of knowledge. Applications are typically due early in the spring semester for projects to be undertaken in Summer Session I. In the past, students have received a stipend of \$1,500 and free room and board while having the opportunity to pursue a project of their own making and work closely with a faculty mentor.

For more information, visit the [Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website](#).

Student Awards and Scholarships

The English Department is proud to offer several awards and scholarships in recognition of the outstanding achievements of our students. Honorees are announced at various times throughout the fall and spring semesters and are usually recognized at both the English Department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony and the College of Arts & Humanities annual Student Recognition Ceremony. Recipients are chosen by English Department faculty. To apply for any self-nominated awards or scholarships, visit [WCUPA Scholarships](#).

Alan W. France Memorial Writing Award

Eligibility: Students in General Education Writing Courses

Established in 2002 in honor of our esteemed colleague Al France (who taught in the English Department from 1989 until his death in 2001), this award is conferred each spring on a student in a general education writing course (WRT 120, WRT 123, or WRT 200) from the past twelve months. The award recognizes the best essay exploring relationships among language, thought, and culture. Students may be nominated by an instructor (with the student's permission) or may nominate themselves. Winners receive a cash prize, a memorial beret, and recognition at the department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony.

Best Seminar Paper Award

Eligibility: Students in ENG 400 Seminars

Established in 2005, the Best Seminar Paper Award is presented each spring semester to the student who has written the best paper in an ENG 400 research seminar for the designated academic year. Seminar papers from the previous summer to the current spring semester are eligible for the award. Individual faculty members nominate students from their seminars, and the winner receives a cash prize and recognition at the department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony.

EAPSU Outstanding English Major Award

Eligibility: All English Majors

The [EAPSU](#) Outstanding English Major Award is given each spring to an English major who has an outstanding GPA, has participated in English-related extracurricular activities, and has authored a distinguished essay in an English course. Four nominees with the highest GPAs and 80-110 credits are identified by faculty and asked to submit one "A" paper of significant intellectual or artistic merit, along with a submission form and a list of activities. The winner then presents the paper at the annual EAPSU conference the following fall, and receives a cash prize, a plaque, reimbursement for the cost of attending the conference, and recognition at the department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony.

English Department Faculty Scholarship

Eligibility: Incoming English Majors

The English Department Faculty Scholarship, funded by the English faculty, is awarded each spring to a declared English major who will be entering WCU the following fall, either as a first-year or transfer student. Nominees with outstanding GPAs and SAT/ACT scores are identified by the faculty and invited to submit a five-page, non-fiction writing sample. Scholarship funds are divided over the two semesters of the winner's first year at WCU. To retain the prize for the second semester, the recipient must attain a GPA of 3.0 in the first semester and must remain an English major and maintain full-time status in both terms.

Herbert Mitchell Scholarship

Eligibility: Incoming English Majors

Established in 2014 after a landmark gift to the university by WCU alumni Herbert and Gloria (Hedley) Mitchell, the Herbert Mitchell Scholarship is awarded each spring to two incoming English majors who show exceptional scholastic achievement and community involvement. Nominees with outstanding GPAs and SAT/ACT scores are identified by English faculty and asked to submit statements detailing their accomplishments and future goals. Winners receive scholarship funds of \$2,500 annually for four years. To retain the scholarship, the recipient must remain an English major, attend classes full-time, and maintain a GPA of at least 3.6 in the major and 3.4 overall.

John Feely Hopkins Short Story Award

Eligibility: Graduating Senior Creative Writing Students

Instituted in 2002, the John Feely Hopkins Short Story Award is presented each spring to a graduating senior whose portfolio of short stories exhibits imagination, artistic merit, high literary quality, and growth in content and commitment, as determined by members of the English Department's Creative Writing faculty. The winner receives a cash prize and recognition at the department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony.

Viola Marple Scholarship

Eligibility: Non-Graduating Female English Majors

The Viola Marple Scholarship scholarship, established in memory of former English faculty member Viola Marple, honors two non-graduating female English majors who exemplify the highest standards in scholarly achievement and service, as determined by the English Department faculty. Requirements include a minimum GPA of 3.51 and 61-90 credit hours earned. Nominees who meet these qualifications are asked to submit a brief statement, and the two winners are determined by an English faculty vote. Winners are named each spring and recognized at the department's year-end Student Reception & Awards Ceremony, and scholarship funds are disbursed evenly over the following fall and spring

semesters. The award is co-administered by the WCU Alumni Association.

College of Arts & Humanities (CAH) Outstanding Student Award

Eligibility: Student with 60-95 Credits, Majoring in any CAH Discipline or Minor in a CAH-Only Minor

The College of Arts & Humanities (CAH) Outstanding Student Award is given each spring to a junior or senior who is majoring or minoring in a CAH discipline and who demonstrates exceptional intellectual or creative achievement and strong extracurricular and service activities. Students must be nominated by a CAH faculty member and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.2; nominees submit an application with two letters of recommendation (one from the nominating faculty member & the other from another faculty member or organizational leader). The nomination and application deadlines are usually announced by the CAH dean's office early in the spring semester and typically fall in late February or early March. (Note: although this award is administered by CAH—and not the English Department—we include it here so you are aware of this opportunity. English majors are well represented in the ranks of past winners!) For complete information, please contact the [CAH Dean's Office](#).

Student Organizations

The English department and the broader West Chester University community offer many opportunities for you to get involved with your academic community. Getting involved can be a great way to make friends on campus and get published, too!

English Club

The English majors' student organization offers a number of activities for students - hosting open mike nights, publishing *Literati* (featuring undergraduate poetry, short stories, art, etc.), and more!

Contact: [Dr. Timothy Ray](#), English Club Advisor.

Sigma Tau Delta

Sigma Tau Delta is the English majors' honor society and offers opportunities for scholarly exploration in the form of publications and conferences. Students are selected for admission based on their academic performance. If you are eligible for this honor society, you will be notified via your WCU email.

Contact: [Alison Ersheid](#), [Megan Schoettler](#), and [Jamie Woodlief](#), Sigma Tau Delta Advisors.

Creative Writing Club

The Creative Writing Club offers you the chance to honor your craft as a creative writer in a positive and nurturing environment.

Contact: [Prof. Maureen McVeigh-Trainor](#), Creative Writing Club Advisor.

Pre-Law Advisory Program and The Pre-Law Society

The purpose of the Pre-Law Advisory Program is to familiarize students with the process of applying to law school (including the LSAT), the criteria for admission, and the financial implications of attending. The Pre-Law Advisor is available to discuss application preparation and strategies. The Pre-Law Society hosts events, in collaboration with the WCU Law Alumni Chapter, and speakers to discuss issues including the realities of attending law school and the present-day practice of law. Members also have opportunities to tour local law schools, attend a law school class, and complete a practice LSAT. Membership is open to all students within the university community, regardless of major.

Contact: [Prof. Julie Pfaff](#), Pre-Law Society Advisor.

WCU Writing Center

The WCU Writing Center, located in FHG Library 251, is always looking for students with good writing skills who are interested in tutoring their peers. Such student tutoring experience is helpful for those who want to teach writing or learn more about writing; it can also aid in building a resume. If you volunteer at the Writing Center, you will attend several training sessions, enroll in ENG 397 (Writing Tutoring), and take your commitment to the center seriously. If you are a graduate student, you can take ENG 600 (Tutoring Composition) to learn about tutoring in more depth and to gain more experience at the center.

Contact: [Prof. Ilknur Sancak-Marusa](#), Writing Center Director or [Prof. Jamie Woodlief](#), Interim Writing Center Director.

Daedalus

Daedalus, an interdisciplinary magazine of the arts, is a showcase for the work of student writers, artists, and photographers. Any WCU student may submit work to the editors for possible publication.

Contact: [Dr. Kristine Ervin](#), *Daedalus* Faculty Advisor

The Quad

The Quad is the student news service of West Chester University. It is managed by a student staff of writers, editors, photographers, and multimedia journalists, with a faculty member as advisor. In addition to its primary role of disseminating news of campus events, *The Quad* gives you practical experience in reporting, editing, photography, videography and multimedia journalism, as well as in advertising, social media marketing, web design, distribution, and business operations. Numerous *Quad* alumni have gone on to successful careers as print, broadcast, and multimedia journalists. Getting involved with *The Quad* can be a valuable first step toward launching a career in the news industry.

Contact: [The Quad Editor](#), 610.436.2375, Sykes Union Building 253, or [Dr. Ben Kuebrich](#), *The Quad* Faculty Advisor.

Serpentine

Serpentine is West Chester University's annual archive of the experiences, events, and people of our campus community. The yearbook is fully student-operated, and it is advised by a faculty member. *Serpentine* offers you many opportunities to showcase your expertise and skills in writing, graphic design, social media, marketing, editing, and desktop publishing skills.

Contact: [Prof. Pete Duval](#), *Serpentine* Faculty Advisor.

WCUR

The campus radio station at West Chester University offers experience in all phases of radio broadcasting, from on-air activities to radio production, management, and advertising. Operated entirely by students, WCUR offers practical work opportunities in a learning atmosphere. WCUR has been rated as a top college radio station.

Contact: [Dr. Jeremy McCool](#), WCUR Faculty Advisor.

English Department Affiliations

The organizations and programs listed below all bear strong ties to the English Department. Many are directed—or were founded—by English Department faculty; others benefit from especially strong participation by English faculty and students. In all cases, these affiliations promote values central to English Studies, enrich the learning experiences of our students, and contribute to the cultural life of the university and the larger community.

WCU Center for Creative Writing and Poetry

The Center for Creative Writing and Poetry promotes the study and appreciation of creative writing. Founded in 2000 as the WCU Poetry Center, the Center offers a diverse slate of activities, programs, and awards that helps to expand its mission of bringing creative writing to an ever-widening audience.

Contact: [Prof. Maureen McVeigh-Trainor](#), CCWP Director.

College Literature: A Journal of Critical Literary Studies

[College Literature](#) has long been one of the premier literary studies journals in North America, publishing original and innovative scholarly research. Founded in 1974, the journal has its editorial offices at WCU.

Contact: [Dr. Megan Corbin](#), *College Literature* Editor.

Writing Center

The [Writing Center](#) offers free writing consultation services to all members of the WCU community. The center is directed by English faculty and regularly employs English majors and graduate students as writing tutors.

Contact: [Prof. Ilknur Sancak-Marusa](#), Writing Center Director or [Prof. Jamie Woodlief](#), Interim Writing Center Director.

West Chester Writing Project

[The West Chester Writing Project](#) is one of the oldest and largest sites of the National Writing Project. Founded in 1980, WCWP works in multi-dimensional ways to improve the teaching of writing and literature in schools and communities.

Contact: [Dr. Pauline Schmidt](#), West Chester Writing Project Director.

Frederick Douglass Institute

WCU's [Frederick Douglass Institute](#) seeks to advance multicultural studies across the university curriculum and sponsors research, programs, awards, and teaching that honor the legacy of Frederick Douglass. The Institute was founded in 1995 by Emeritus Professor of English Dr. C. James Trotman.

Contact: [Dr. Chris Awuyah](#), Frederick Douglass Institute Director.

Digital Humanities and New Media

[Digital Humanities and New Media](#) explores ways that technologies can inform, inspire, and enrich humanities research. Classes help students connect the ubiquitous digital media we each encounter every day to our critical understanding of what it means to be human. We interrogate and create games, we build websites to share our research, we craft digital storytelling projects to connect with audiences, we tinker with code, we construct and populate databases, and we critically examine and harness social media, all in order to answer humanities research questions. Along the way, students build new skills and

literacies, leaving DHM courses with transferable technical skills that extend well beyond the college classroom.

Contact: [Dr. Andrew Famiglietti](#), Digital Humanities and New Media Director.

Women's and Gender Studies

WCU's [Women's and Gender Studies Department](#) shares with the English Department a commitment to empowering students to challenge preconceptions about race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. English professors have served as past WGS program directors, and many teach for the program as affiliated faculty.

Contact: [Dr. Liam Lair](#), Women's and Gender Studies Chair.

Rustin Urban Community Change Axis (RUCCAS)

Created by English professor Dr. Hannah Ashley, the interdisciplinary [Rustin Urban Community Change Axis \(RUCCAS\) program](#) offers students across campus the opportunity to work with youth in urban settings in hands-on, community-engaged ways that can help to bring about real social change.

Contact: [Dr. Hannah Ashley](#), RUCCAS Coordinator.

WCU English LinkedIn Group

You can join the WCU English LinkedIn Group as a current student or as an alumnus. Our LinkedIn group helps you stay in touch with former classmates and faculty and fosters networking opportunities between current majors and alumni.

Contact: [Dr. Ashley Patriarca](#), LinkedIn Group Administrator.

Career Opportunities for English Majors

As an English major, you are learning skills—critical thinking, research, writing, editing, collaboration, and more—that will serve you well in many different careers. The number of possibilities can sometimes seem overwhelming, so it's smart to start thinking about what you might like to do well before your final semester. To help you as you make these decisions, we offer several resources:

- **Twardowski Career Development Center:** You should take advantage of the [Twardowski Career Development Center](#) and its services as soon as you begin attending WCU. The Career Center can assist you with creating career goals, practicing for interviews, networking with representatives of different industries, and more. The career center's resources are also available to you *after* graduation, which is a pretty rare benefit.
- **Internships:** Internships can help you discover what you like (or don't like) in a potential career, so we encourage you to try at least one internship during your time at WCU. You can earn credit for an internship by taking ENG 395 (Internship). See the [Internships](#) section of the handbook for more information about finding and completing internships for credit.
- **"What Can You Do With an English Degree?" Event:** This annual event brings alumni back for a panel discussing how their WCU English degree has helped them succeed professionally. A speed-networking event in which students have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with alumni follows the panel discussion. We encourage you to attend these events each year so that you can connect with alumni and to learn more about the many professional opportunities available to you as an English major. For more information about the "What Can You Do with an English Degree?" event, contact [Dr. Eleanor Shevlin](#).

Careers for English Majors

What can you do with an English degree? Just about anything you want to do. Careers in journalism, publishing, editing, public relations, advertising, marketing, government, television, radio, technical writing, and business administration are all excellent post-graduate options for English majors.

Consider these possible industries/fields:

- Advertising
- Banking
- Entertainment (Film, TV, Radio)
- Government/Politics
- Journalism
- Law
- Library Sciences
- Management
- Marketing
- Medicine
- Nonprofit Advocacy (Grant Writing, Etc.)
- Publishing
- Teaching
- Technology

You might also consider these job titles in your searches:

- Admissions Counselor
- Archivist
- Attorney
- Communications Coordinator
- Community Services Director
- Content Writer/Strategist
- Copywriter
- Creative Assistant
- Documentation Consultant
- Documentation Specialist
- Editor
- Editorial Assistant
- Freelance Writer
- Information Designer
- Information Developer
- Journalist
- Librarian
- Literacy Instructor
- Literary Agent
- Lobbyist
- Marketing Coordinator
- Media Planner
- Medical Writer
- Multimedia Designer
- Multimedia Journalist
- Paralegal
- Production Coordinator
- Program Developer
- Proofreader/Copy Editor
- Professional Writer
- Proposal/Grant Writer
- Public Affairs Officer
- Public Relations Specialist
- Researcher/Research
- Sales Representative
- Social Media Coordinator/Specialist/Writer
- Speech Writer
- Technical Writer
- UX Researcher/Specialist
- Web Content Strategist/Editor/Writer

For more ideas and trends for various fields, see the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Graduate Study Opportunities for English Majors

Graduates with a B.A. in English are also qualified for graduate studies in many areas: literature, linguistics, rhetoric and composition, law, professional and technical writing, journalism, film, and many other humanistic disciplines. With experience and additional education, graduates may teach in colleges and universities. With certification, they may also teach in secondary schools.

Information Sessions

The department hosts regular information sessions, typically in the fall, for students planning to attend graduate school in English Studies. You'll also want to reach out to your advisor, faculty members who teach in the field you plan to pursue, and faculty members who know your work well, to discuss potential programs, funding, recommendation letters, personal statements, and other considerations.

WCU Graduate Studies

If you're interested in attending graduate school at WCU, we offer several exciting graduate study opportunities that may interest you as an English major: the M.A. in English, the Graduate Certificate in Publishing, and the M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

- **M.A. in English:** Our [M.A. in English](#) focuses on the study of language, literature, rhetoric and composition, pedagogy, creative writing, and critical theory. Our diverse selection of courses cultivates scholarly knowledge and enhances cultural literacy in an atmosphere that engages students intellectually and creatively. We prepare students to succeed in advanced graduate programs (such as the Ph.D. in English or the M.F.A. in Creative Writing), to teach English in secondary schools or two-year colleges, and to excel in a range of careers that value writing expertise and analytical thinking. For questions about the MA in English, please contact the Graduate Coordinator, [Dr. Justin Rademaekers](#).
- **Graduate Certificate in Publishing:** The [Graduate Certificate Program in Publishing](#) prepares you for various careers in publishing including copyeditor, content writer, developmental editor, production manager, acquisition editor, marketing associate, and more. It also prepares you to work in various media positions, communications fields, corporate publications, and marketing at large. Contact the Director of the Graduate Certificate in Publishing, [Dr. Eleanor Shevlin](#).
- **M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages:** If you're interested in Teaching English as a Second Language, contact the Director of WCU's [MA- TESOL program](#), [Dr. Jelena Colovic-Markovic](#).

Graduate Study Exams (GRE, LSAT, etc.)

Many graduate programs require you to take a common exam and report your scores as part of your application to their programs (similar to taking the SAT or ACT before your undergraduate program).

- **GRE:** Although the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is becoming a less common requirement for graduate programs, some programs still request your GRE scores as part of your application. If you plan to apply to graduate school within five years after graduation, you should probably take the GRE at the conclusion of your senior year. Ask your advisor and check out the [ETS website](#).
- **LSAT:** To apply to law school, you need to take the LSAT (Law School Aptitude Test). If you plan to attend law school, you should take the LSAT during your senior year. Discuss your plans with your advisor and review the [LSAC website](#). You should also consult with the University Pre-Law advisor, [Dr. Sandra Tomkowicz](#).

Letters of Recommendation

This information is primarily for those intending to go to graduate school; however, much of this advice also applies to those seeking letters of recommendation for jobs and scholarships.

For most graduate school applications, you will need to include three letters of recommendation from individuals who can address your abilities, suitability, and promise for graduate study. For law, library/information sciences, and other professional school applications, having a recommender who is a professional in the field would work well. For applications to English or similar academic programs, you will probably want to have three letters from academics/faculty members in the field. In selecting faculty members to approach for a letter, you should consider who knows you and your work best. Those who know you well and have ties with the university or program to which you are seeking admission are particularly good to approach—as are those who are well-known in the field you wish to enter.

When asking someone to write on your behalf, phrase your request in a way that allows the person a gracious way to decline. For instance, a professor may not feel that he or she could write the strong letter you need to gain admission. Also, plan in advance. You should give your recommenders *three weeks or more* before the letter is due.

As part of your planning, you should prepare a packet for your recommenders. This packet should include:

- A list of programs to which you are applying – and the deadlines for the receipt of materials at each school.
- Any forms that should be included with the letter. Complete all portions of the form that ask for your personal information. Be sure to check the box that waives your right to see the letter. If you do not waive your rights to see the material, the letter will hold less weight.
- A draft of your personal statement or essay that you are sending with your application.
- A copy of your resume.
- A statement in which you offer a brief summary of the work you completed for the course(s) you took with the recommender and the grades you earned. Such information will jog the recommender's memory and allow the person to add specific details that will enhance the letter. Feel free to include any information (course-related or otherwise) that you feel would help the recommender highlight your talents for graduate school, your maturity, and/or your reasons for selecting particular programs.
- URLs for the recommendation submission websites and any relevant instructions.