

WRITING AND DIGITAL MEDIA, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Berks

Program Description

The major is intended to prepare students to write effectively in a variety of workplace and academic settings. Methods of instruction draw upon the strategies and techniques of practicing writers outside of the University, including workshops, peer conferencing, collaborative writing, portfolio preparation, and internships. At the same time, theory courses provide the necessary background to help students understand and appreciate the larger issues surrounding the writing and reading of texts.

As a liberal arts degree, the Professional Writing major is appropriate for students who wish to develop a set of applied communication skills to prepare for a wide range of professional positions or for graduate or professional schools. The degree differs from most current English majors in at least three ways:

1. a practical orientation prepares graduates for employment, in addition to post-graduate English studies;
2. a multidisciplinary focus integrates courses from the liberal arts, business, and information technology; and
3. a required internship ensures that students actively apply their skills.

What is Writing and Digital Media?

If you enjoy expressing thoughts and ideas through the written word, the B.A. in Writing and Digital Media may be the right degree for you. A degree in Writing and Digital Media will prepare you to write effectively in a variety of workplace and academic settings. It involves the use of precise language to convey information in a way that is easily understood by its intended audience, and it may be used to inform, persuade, instruct, or encourage action. Employers seek graduates with effective writing skills, and the broad nature of this degree opens doors to a variety of careers and to graduate school.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You enjoy communicating thoughts, ideas, and concepts through the written word.
- You are interested in a degree that emphasizes writing and will provide skills that employers seek.
- You like the flexibility of a broad, liberal arts major that will prepare you to enter a variety of fields or to enter graduate school.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WRITING AND DIGITAL MEDIA (<http://berks.psu.edu/ba-professional-writing/>)

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have third-semester classification (<http://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Professional Writing, a minimum of 123 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	21
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	39

6 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 3 credits of GH courses and 3 credits of GS courses.

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if foreign language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Knowledge Domains

- **Arts (GA):** 6 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 6 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 6 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)

- **Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses:** 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3

credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

Foreign Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

Other Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the General Education US/IL requirement.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified

by Senate Policy 82-44 (<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
COMM 234		3
COMM 270	Introduction to Multimedia Production	3
COMM 271	Principles of Journalism	3
DIGIT 100	Introduction to Digital Humanities	3
ENGL 211W	Introduction to Writing Studies	3
ENGL 214	Introduction to Creative Nonfiction Writing	3
ENGL 420	Writing for the Web	3
ENGL 471	Rhetorical Traditions	3
ENGL 472	Current Theories of Writing and Reading	3
ENGL 491	The Capstone Course in Professional Writing	3
ENGL 495	Internship	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
COMM 1	Newspaper Practicum	
COMM 2	Newspaper Editorial Staff	
COMM 260W	News Writing and Reporting or ENGL 110 Newswriting Practicum	
ENGL 130	Reading Popular Texts	
ENGL 213	Introduction to Poetry Writing or ENGL 215 Introduction to Article Writing	
ENGL 229	Digital Studies	
ENGL 250	Peer Tutoring in Writing or ENGL 297 Special Topics	
ENGL 415	Advanced Nonfiction Writing	
ENGL 417	The Editorial Process	
ENGL 419	Advanced Business Writing	
ENGL 429	New Media and Literature	
ENGL 474	Issues in Rhetoric and Composition	
ENGL 480	Communication Design for Writers	
ENGL 494	Senior Thesis in English	
ENGL 496	Independent Studies	
GD 100	Introduction to Graphic Design	

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

Berks

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2021-22 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contain suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

Writing and Digital Media, B.A. at Berks Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15 or 30H (GWS) [†]	3 CAS 100A or 100B (GWS) [‡]	3
General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3 General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3
World Language Level 1	4 World Language Level 2	4
General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3 DIGIT 100 (GH) [†]	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3 General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3
First-Year Seminar	1	
	17	16

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 211W	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D (GWS) [‡]	3
ENGL 214	3 COMM 234N (GH & GS) [†]	3
World Language Level 3	4 General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3 General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3
General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)	3 Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Knowledge Domain	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
	17.5	16.5

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
COMM 270	3 ENGL 471 [*]	3
COMM 271	3 Supporting Course Selection	3
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Knowledge Domain	3 Elective	3
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Knowledge Domain	3 Elective	3
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Other Cultures	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 420	3 ENGL 472	3
ENGL 495	3 ENGL 491	3
Supporting Course Selection	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3	
	15	12

Total Credits 124

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GHW, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS, and Integrative Studies). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate an Inter-Domain course and Z is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in Other Cultures.

See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/>).

¹ The following courses are offered Spring Semester only: ENGL 202B.

² For Supporting Course Selection, consult adviser for list.

Career Paths

The Writing and Digital Media degree provides an excellent academic foundation for students to hone their written communication skills. The flexible nature of the program allows graduates to enter a variety of career fields

Careers

The Writing and Digital Media degree provides valuable written communication skills sought by employers in a wide variety of fields. Graduates will be well prepared for positions in media and publishing outlets as editors, news analysts, and reporters; in corporate settings as advertising copywriters, public relations specialists, and technical writers, and in a variety of academic settings.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE WRITING AND DIGITAL MEDIA PROGRAM (<http://berks.psu.edu/ba-professional-writing/>)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

The B.A. in Writing and Digital Media also prepares students for graduate study in fields such as rhetoric and composition, journalism, creative writing, and other related programs, as well as business and law.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<http://berks.psu.edu/ba-professional-writing/>)

Contact

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