

# Have You Seen This Major?

The Missouri State University Professional and Technical Writing Program offers practical courses, expert faculty, modern computer resources, and extracurricular activities in professional writing. Courses are taught with state-of-the-art software in the newly renovated Siceluff Hall. An internship gives you valuable experience, portfolio pieces, and a head start in the job market.

An active student chapter of the Society for Technical Communication allows you the chance to network with peers and area employers at meetings and conferences. In our courses, you will complete real projects for real clients. We offer a minor in Technical Writing, a major in Professional Writing (both Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science), and a track in the Master of Arts in Writing. We also offer an Accelerated Master's option that allows you to count up to 12 hours toward both a bachelor's and a master's degree.

Technical communicators help bridge the gap between those who create ideas and those who use them. Whether they use words, illustrations, photographs, video, or computer-based multimedia, their objective is the same: to convey scientific and technical information clearly, precisely, and accurately. If you love to write, care about organization and detail, care about your readers' needs, and can communicate ideas effectively, this field is for you.



## WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS MAJOR?

If you enjoy language, like to write, and have at least some affinity for technology, you should consider a major in Professional Writing. If you also enjoy another field, you will find ways to use the skills this major provides toward that field, too. Professional-writing skills span all professions, so what you learn through this major can have a positive impact on the rest of your career. Speak with the professors in our program about the potential our field holds for you.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Dr. W.D. Blackmon, English Department Head, Siceluff Hall 215**

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## ABOUT THE DEGREE

**Does this major require a minor? What minors work well with this major?**

The Professional Writing major (both the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science) requires a minor; some students who choose the Bachelor of Science take a double minor because this degree allows them more flexibility. Since professional writing is part of all professions, many minors pair well with a Professional Writing major. Some of our current students have chosen minors in the College of Arts and Letters such as Creative Writing, English, Communication, Design, Spanish, and Journalism. Other minors from departments across campus also work well, such as Business, Computer Science, Criminology, and Political Science. Because all fields need good writers, you can focus your studies in Professional Writing to match your career goals.

**Does this major require a practicum or internship?**

You will take ENG 574: Technical Writing Internship, in which you work for clients in a paid or an unpaid internship to practice and develop skills you learned during classes. You might develop web content, write documents, edit existing texts, and perform a variety of other tasks you will have learned in classes and projects for your major; the internship gives you a taste of corporate life and a professional opportunity to showcase what you know; it also enables you to gain some professional documents for your portfolio.

**What course(s) should a student take to explore this major?**

ENG 321: Writing II: Beginning Technical Writing

**What are the admission requirements to the major?**

You must have a combined GPA (Missouri State and transfer) of 2.50/4.0 or higher or a GPA of 2.75/4.0 or higher for the most recent 30 hours of course work in order to be admitted to this degree program.

## AFTER THE DEGREE

**How would you describe the demand for graduates with this major?**

Our technology-rich courses equip you for today's job market, and writing and editing courses refine and sharpen your skills. Our graduates get jobs because demand for professional-writing skills continues to grow. From 2011 to 2012, 1,040 new jobs were added to the field, an increase of 2.3 percent, while the entire U.S. workforce grew by only 1.6 percent. The field is projected to grow by 17 percent from 2010 to 2020. The pay continues to grow, too; in 2012, the average annual wage for technical writers was \$67,910 (\$61,460 in Missouri, \$87,893 in the ten highest-paying U.S. metropolitan areas).

**What are some typical jobs for graduates with this major?**

There is a long list of jobs our graduates are qualified to do. Here are some representative job titles: business communicator, content specialist, copyeditor, documentation specialist, editor, environmental writer, globalization and localization specialist, information architect/designer, instructional designer, manual developer, marketing writer, medial writer, paralegal/pre-law, project manager, proposal writer, public-information specialist, publications manager, software writer, teacher and researcher, technical illustrator, technical writer/author, trainer and e-learning developer, user-experience specialist.

**What are some of the most successful graduates from the major doing?**

Graduates from the Professional and Technical Writing Program are working in jobs across the nation and the world at big-name companies, local businesses, and branches of the government, including IBM, the FBI, Fleishman-Hillard, Garmin, Lockheed Martin, Scottrade, Trane, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Navy, and Walmart. In the Springfield area, our graduates work at businesses such as Accenture, Bass Pro, Central States Industrial, Intuitive Web Solutions, Jack Henry & Associates, McKesson, Mercy, and Primary Care Network.

**Do careers in this field require or prefer graduate study?**

A master's degree in professional writing will enable you to earn a higher salary throughout your career, but it is not required for most career tracks in this field. Earning a doctorate will allow you to pursue a teaching career at the university level, and currently the higher-education market is strong for this field.

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**Missouri State**<sup>™</sup>  
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