

RU Interested in . . .

ENGLISH

AT A GLANCE . . .

Department at RU:	English
Office Location:	Young 418
Telephone	(540) 831-5614
Faculty Liaison:	Dr. Rosemary Guruswamy
College at RU:	College of Arts and Sciences
Degree Type:	Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, Master of Science
Homepage:	http://www.radford.edu/~engl-web/

AREA OF STUDY

English majors choose courses in such areas as American and British studies, creative and technical writing, language and grammar, literary criticism, and genre studies. Within these guidelines, students can tailor the major to suit their interests and career goals.

plays. Some choose to cultivate their own writing as poets, novelists, storytellers, and dramatists. Some enjoy business and technical writing. Some prepare for teaching careers and study both language and literature.

- **What can I do with a degree in English?**
“But what are you going to do to help the people?” This was the question the mother of poet Marilou Awiakta asked her. The solitary act of reading and enjoying a book can be a “doing.” People with degrees in English “do” just about anything. They continually read. They write everything from corporate memos to novels. They teach others.
- **What else can I do with a degree in English?**
The MLA calls English “the pre-professional major.” Pre-business, pre-law, pre-medicine. Increasingly, employers in business, public relations, human resources, and other areas are looking for writers and editors.
- **What courses of study are available in the Department of English?**
Students continue to enjoy the path of great literature--poems, novels, stories,
- **What personal characteristics should I possess to succeed in the field of English?**
Teachers, research assistants, proofreaders, librarians, corporate editors, journalists, news editors, technical writers, and public relations workers.
- **Specifically, what kinds of employment have Radford University English graduates been able to secure?**
Very good, if they are willing to be creative and diversify. Computer skills and an English major are an excellent combination.
- **What is the current employment outlook for English graduates?**
The skills of an active, alert, and involved reader. The skills of an articulate writer. Clarity, conciseness.
- **What special skills or abilities will I develop as an English major in a liberal arts context?**
When King Lear asked disguised Kent what services he could do, Kent replied, “I can keep

honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me is diligence.” Obviously, Kent was pretending to be an English major. If you get the joke, you would enjoy being one, too.

- **What academic strengths and skills should I possess to be successful in English?**

Be a voluminous reader and an indefatigable writer. Delight in creative research, the active display of point-counterpoint, and the engagement of your mind with others in similar pursuits.

- **Are there introductory courses or experiences?**

Yes. We offer introductory writing, reading, and research courses (English 101 and 102), and introductory literature surveys (English 201, 202, and 203) as part of General Education. We also begin the major with English 300, Introduction to English Studies.

- **What experiential opportunities are available to me in this field?**

We have been able to structure internships for students emphasizing business and technical writing. Student teaching offers practical experience.

- **What minors or concentrations may enhance my education and/or career opportunities in English?**

Study of any foreign language. Study of history, philosophy, psychology, art, music, theatre, journalism, telecommunication, political science, social work, photography, and especially computer science or information management.

RU ALUMNI PROFILE

April Herndon is pursuing her Ph. D. in American Studies at Michigan State University. She received her BA in English in 1994 and a year later came back and became a graduate teaching fellow while earning her M. A. She honed her reading and writing skills so she could pass them on to others through teaching, writing and publication.

- **What additional graduate/professional study or certification is available in this field?**

Master of Arts (which traditionally requires writing a thesis), Master of Science (which does not require a thesis; may emphasize teaching skills), Master of Fine Arts (traditionally an area for creative writers in

poetry, fiction, and drama), Doctor of Philosophy (which traditionally requires writing a dissertation), and Doctor of Education (emphasizes teaching skills and pedagogical theory).

- **Is graduate study necessary to find a job in this field?**

No. Those who want to be college level teachers, however, must undertake graduate study.

- **Are there specific conditions or requirements that I must satisfy to pursue a degree in English at RU?**

Successful completion of English 101 and 102 and one 200-level English course (or equivalent) is the prerequisite to beginning further study in English.

- **As a new graduate in English, what should I expect to do during the first year of employment?**

Write. Write, write, write. Teach. Edit. Compose. Write some more. Wish you had paid more attention to that handbook of grammar and usage.

- **Where can I obtain additional information about career opportunities in English?**

Ask any English professor on our faculty.

For an application to Radford University contact the RU Admissions Office



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