

Majoring in English at the University of Portland

Humans are the storytelling animal. Stories are as essential to our daily diet as food, water, shelter, and love – and we take in these narrative nutrients through such forms as films, websites, novels, videogames, gossip, *Netflix*, poems, and plays. What if we took the ideas invested in these stories more seriously? What if we had a chance to learn how creative stories – instead of merely providing escape – can be **tools** to help us develop vital skills and solve a lifetime of problems? Concentrating your studies in English enables you to analyze (and even create) the stories our society thinks through.

Majoring in English is a deeply practical decision that leads to highly skilled and employable graduates. Our faculty train you in habits of analytical precision, pattern recognition, philosophical reflection, psychological interrogation, empathy, creativity, compassion, and argument formation. These skills form a strong foundation for our graduates, who go on to careers in business, education, technology, journalism, nonprofit work, creative writing, and law.

UP English faculty are accomplished. Their track record of awards, publications, and conference presentations attest to their professional expertise, and they bring their training from universities across the nation to invest UP's curriculum with rigor and cosmopolitan insight. Still, what distinguishes our faculty most of all is a warm, humane approachability. All of them are eager to build one-on-one relationships with you through classes, office hours, and hearing about your reflections and ambitions.

The English major: ten courses (Introduction to Literary Studies, two literary surveys, four electives, two seminars, and a final-semester capstone). **The English minor:** any five upper-division English courses. **The Writing minor:** at least three writing workshops (fiction, poetry, screenwriting, playwriting, reporting, nonfiction), plus any two upper-division English courses or further workshops.

UP currently has 78 English majors, 10 minors, and 12 Writing minors. Because our major requires only ten courses, over a third of our majors also major in other fields, and over half add minors (we always encourage innovatively bridged concentrations!).

See our website for English course listings, profiles of our faculty, major requirements, student handbook, department blog, and information on our resources and events, including copies of our annual creative publication *Writers*, news about our Northwest Undergraduate Conference on Literature, and listings of our visiting writers series. <https://college.up.edu/english/>



English Department Full-time Faculty

Further University of Portland English Dept. Details

-**UP's English major** is for minds that enjoy the puzzles of communication, imagination, representation, and reality's complexities. We use literature as a tool for figuring out not only what *is* but also *what can be*.

-**A major or minor in English gives a student rich opportunities to work closely with our ten full-time faculty.** Class sizes are small (18-30) so that all voices are heard in our discussion-based curriculum. **Majors** pursue ten English courses, and English 225 Introduction to Literary Studies should be among their first, as it sets the foundation for the curriculum. Majors take two literary survey courses, two research-based seminars, and four courses in various topics of interest. A senior capstone course completes the experience, which involves the completion of an independent project (in the form of a work of literary criticism, a substantial work of creative writing, an online resource, a comprehensive podcast, etc.).

-**Majors take courses** that include British and American literature surveys, creative writing (poetry, fiction, screenwriting, nonfiction), world literature, studies of regions, the environment, ethnicity, gender, and seminars in specific research subjects (e.g. posthumanism, otherness, travel, specific eras).

-**English majors emerge with a career-enriching set of skills.** Literature gives you practice in thinking through difference, cultivating empathy, expanding the possibilities of interpretation, and thinking daringly. You learn to be strong listeners, precise analysts, good storytellers, and confident wordsmiths.

-**Majors cultivate these skills *outside of class*,** as our department offers a variety of extra-curricular opportunities. Students participate in – and contribute to – our close-knit community and gain experience by working as contributors and editors of our student-run creative publication *Writers*, social media experts designing our department newsletter, and as interns for our Northwest Undergraduate Conference on Literature. In recent years, our majors have pursued internships at such places as *Tin House*, *Portland Monthly*, *Willamette Week*, and Oregon Immigrant Project. The English major honor society *Sigma Tau Delta* leads the department in many activities, including the fall semester English Social, taking students to writer lectures downtown, and attending November's annual Portland Book Festival.

-**After college, a quarter of our majors earn graduate degrees** (law, Master of Fine Arts in creative writing, library science, MATs & MAs in education). Recent graduates have been accepted to MA and PhD programs at Washington U, Oxford, NYU, U Texas Austin, McGill, Southern Methodist U., Northwestern, UCSB, U Illinois Urbana-Champaign, U British Columbia, Chapman U, and Oregon State University. Twelve percent win places in **competitive volunteer/teaching/service programs**: Fulbright fellowships, Teach For America, Peace Corps, JET, Jesuit Volunteer Corps, etc.

-**In their careers,** one in five go into business (marketing, management, public relations, software development). A sixth go into education (teaching, residence life, administration), and another sixth pursues writing (journalism, creative writing, editing, new media). Still others go into healthcare, social services, nonprofits, arts, and law. Our graduates work at a diverse set of places such as Nike, Britain's Imperial War Museum, Street Roots, Mercy Corps, Artists Rep Theater, HarperCollins, and in Hollywood writing for film and TV.