

professional writing

Professional Writing is a major ideal for students interested in specializing in writing as an area of expertise. The major helps students develop advanced writing skills, with emphasis on writing in digital environments (e.g., web authoring, multimedia writing); on writing for/in diverse disciplines, communities, and cultures; and on editing and publishing.

The major prepares students for careers in professional editing and publishing, technical writing, information development, and web authoring. **This writing degree program emphasizes the organizational, disciplinary, and cultural contexts for writing.**

Majors work with their PW advisor to choose among one of three specialty tracks:

- Digital and Technical Writing
- Writing in Communities and Cultures
- Writing, Editing, and Publishing

Core courses for the major include:

- WRA 202 Introduction to Professional Writing
- WRA 210 Introduction to Web Authoring
- WRA 260 Rhetorics of American Cultures
- WRA 360 Visual Rhetoric for Professional Writers
- a senior-level writing workshop or internship

PW courses include:

WRA 202 Introduction to Professional Writing. Principles of rhetoric and composition applied to professional writing, including field definition, document design, research tools and practices, genres and conventions, and professional style.

WRA 210 Introduction to Web Authoring. Reading, analyzing, evaluating, and authoring web sites. Principles of writing and design for web delivery. Practices of web accessibility.

WRA 260 Rhetorics of American Popular Culture. Rhetorical analysis of consumer, corporate, organizational, and popular cultures appropriate to professional settings.

WRA 308 Invention in Writing. Theory and practice of invention in writing. Strategies and theories of generating and exploring thought in civic and professional writing contexts.

WRA 320 Technical Writing. Practices of effective writing in the workplace; emphasis on technical, scientific, and electronic-mediated writing; audience and organizational needs, information design, ethics, technical style, usability testing, and team writing.

WRA 331 Writing in the Public Interest. Various forms of public writing and rhetoric and their roles in democracy and public culture.

WRA 341 Writing Nature and the Nature of Writing. Analysis of the language of scientists, poets, essayists, naturalists, environmentalists, and biologists, and on responses to and representations of the natural environment.

WRA 355 Writing for Publication Workshop. Practice of skills in revision and editing using a rhetorical approach.

WRA 360 Visual Rhetoric. Writing- and design-intensive document design course. Visual literacy, design, and rhetoric and the effects elements in print and online documents have on audience.

WRA 361 Rhetoric, Persuasion, and Argument. Traditional and contemporary approaches to rhetoric, persuasion, and argument relating to a wide variety of approaches (e.g., feminist, digital/electronic, political, postmodern).

WRA 370 Editing and Style in Professional Writing. Theories, practice, and processes of editing in professional writing contexts. Focus on rhetoric and style.

WRA 410 Advanced Web Authoring. Developing and maintaining large-scale, interactive web sites. Emphasis on visual design, usability, ongoing site management, and accessibility.

WRA 415 Digital Rhetoric. Theoretical, social, political, economic, and ethical dimensions of electronic writing and publishing. Focus on computer-mediated writing spaces.

WRA 417 Multimedia Writing. Visual rhetoric and design theories applied to digital short subjects. Write, direct, critique, and produce motion-based digital compositions that include multiple media.

WRA 420 Advanced Technical Writing. Applied theory and specialized practices. Topics include user-centered design, project and document management, information and interface design, issues in digital writing, and technical editing.

WRA 444 Writing in American Cultures. Analysis of rhetorical practices in selected American disciplines, communities, and public cultures.

WRA 446 American Indian Rhetorics. Theoretical approaches to Native rhetorics. Historical and contemporary debates about the production and reception of visual and written Native texts.

WRA 453 Grant and Proposal Writing. Researching and writing grants and proposals for corporations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government agencies.

WRA 455 Portfolio Seminar. Workshop for students preparing professional document portfolios, in print and digital formats, including application materials for career, graduate study, and professional positions.

WRA 493E Internship in Professional Writing. Supervised work as writers and editors in a corporate or organizational setting, with classroom component.

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