



GUIDE TO MAJORS AT YESHIVA: ENGLISH

Choosing a major can be stressful, but it is important to understand that you can pursue almost any career regardless of which major you choose. While there are some exceptions, most entry-level positions simply require general transferable skills—those that can be learned in one setting and applied in another. Relevant experience through internships and activities is generally more important to employers than a major. It is best to choose an area that you find interesting and where you have the ability to do well.

What is the English Major?

According to YU’s course catalog, “English majors learn to write clearly, read insightfully, think analytically, and communicate persuasively with diverse audiences. Students work with different modes and genres, interpreting literature from diverse historical and cultural contexts and learning how theoretical and cultural vantage points influence the reading of texts.” Students with this major will focus on reading and interpreting literature, writing both critically and creatively, and discussing numerous types of literary works. Excellence in writing is emphasized in all courses, in addition to these specifically devoted to the study and practice of expository and creative writing.

All of these interpretive and expressive skills provide essential analytic and imaginative training for students planning to enter such fields as law, medicine, communications and the new media, business, education, and the rabbinate.

What can I do with a Major in English?

The writing and critical thinking skills developed as an English major benefit students who enter a variety of fields, including law, business, advertising, publishing, journalism, education, and more. Some of the many career options available to English majors include:

- Actor
- Advertising Executive
- Artist
- Auctioneer
- Blogger
- Book Publishing Professional
- Copywriter
- Editor
- Equity Research Analyst
- Film Director
- Financial Writer
- Fundraiser
- Grant Writer
- Journalist
- Literacy Specialist
- Magazine Editor
- Marketing Professional
- Media Planner
- Paralegal
- Politician
- Public Relations Professional
- Teacher
- Television Producer
- Television Reporter
- Web Editor
- Writer

Graduate Study Required

- Lawyer
- Librarian
- Professor
- Theologian / Rabbi

Skills and Abilities

English majors gain expertise in the use of language as a means of communication. Students learn to think clearly and imaginatively, interpret sophisticated written material, and articulate their ideas in person and on paper. Some of the additional skills and abilities cultivated through the English major include:

Research

- Developing hypotheses
- Organizing ideas/information
- Finding and utilizing resources
- Creating interpretations

Critical thinking and analysis

- Analyzing and summarizing ideas
- Comparing information
- Developing critical evaluations
- Thinking independently

Writing

- Abstracting information
- Interpreting data
- Editing and revising
- Writing succinctly and creatively

Speaking

- Influencing and persuading
- Presenting alternative viewpoints
- Making oral presentations

Writing concisely and creatively