7 Tips for Landing Your Dream English Job

By Mary Grace Joseph, Class of ‘12

Mary Grace Joseph graduated from Texas A&M in 2012 with a degree in English - Literature Track. She currently lives in Houston and works as Public Relations Assistant in the marketing department of Cornerstone Home Lending, Inc.

If the real world appears daunting to you, remind yourself of these two things: You’ll soon have a degree from the greatest university on earth, and Texas A&M has prepared you well! Texas A&M offers stellar academics, valuable traditions, and a worldwide network.

Now let’s talk about the topic everyone is asking you about: your future job. As a recent Aggie English graduate, I wanted to pass along some valuable lessons I learned during my English job search.

1. It’s never too early to go to Career Fairs. When I went to the Liberal Arts Career Fair as a freshman, I got some funny looks. But I made contacts with great companies and was better prepared for each Career Fair after that. I also visited the Education Career Fair and the Business Career Fair.

2. Spend extra time on your resumé. After sending out a simple Word resumé for months, I decided to put in some extra effort and made a snazzy resumé on Adobe InDesign. (InDesign is available on all campus computers). This helped my resumé look more visually appealing.

3. Compile your talent online. In addition to a resumé, I highly recommend creating an online portfolio to showcase your best writing and publications. There are a few different options; I used Behance.net.

4. Skip the online application. During the fall of my senior year, I filled out hundreds of online job applications and heard back from one. So, during the spring semester, I decided to skip the online applications and only apply if I could send my resumé directly to an email address. That was a great decision, as I heard back from over half the people I emailed.

5. Visit the Career Center. The Career Center is a valuable resource for students. I had over a dozen interviews at the Career Center, a few of which led to second round interviews in other cities. I highly recommend checking the job postings online weekly (or daily, like me) for new posts.

6. Know your target companies. In the fall of my senior year, I made a list of my favorite Texas magazines and sent emails to their editors asking about job opportunities, telling them I would follow up in the spring. In the spring, I sent them my updated resumé and reminded them who I was. This led to two Dallas magazine interviews.

7. The Aggie Network is golden. I ultimately found my current job on the job board of the Houston A&M Club’s website, where my current boss, an Aggie, and had posted it. Most cities across the nation have A&M Clubs. Consider visiting the A&M Club meeting in the city you’d like to work in and asking about job opportunities face to face. Also, it is important to realize that employers in the English field generally need to fill job openings immediately, so be prepared to move fast when you graduate.
Poet Spotlight:

Allison Wright

“The Dancing Princesses of Hill Country,” by Allison Wright, is one of the poems featured in Poetry of Place: Mind, Body, and Soul, an anthology created for Dr. Janet McCann’s Fall 2012 English 348 course.

“Dancing Princesses of Hill Country” was the result of a class assignment in which Allison and her classmates were told to write down a favorite fairy tale from memory, then choose a paragraph from an unrelated book to pair with it. The story of “the Twelve Dancing Princesses” was one of Allison’s favorites as a child, and the italicized lines were taken and adapted from a review in Callaloo. Together, they create a poem reminiscent of “found poetry” that is both fresh and fascinating.

While Allison enjoyed studying poetry and collaborating with other students in creating their class anthology, she feels more drawn toward writing Young Adult fiction. One writer she admires is John Green because his stories communicate deeper messages to readers than many of the novels of his contemporaries. Through her poetry classes, Allison grew to admire Emily Dickenson and Walt Whitman, notable because they wrote boldly in an age when no one understood them, and Ellen Hopkins, author of Burned and other unconventional novels written in poetry form. Allison generally writes free-verse poetry, and attempts to make her poems easy to understand rather than abstract. She believes poetry is for everyone and prefers not to alienate readers by being too abstruse.

After graduating with an English degree on the creative writing track in August 2013, Allison hopes to work in publishing and editing, surrounded by stacks of manuscripts that have yet to be enjoyed by the public.

Tayari Jones

Author of Leaving Atlanta visits Aggieland

The author of this year’s Brazos Valley Reads selection, Leaving Atlanta, will visit College Station on April 2nd and 3rd. Tayari Jones is a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award in Fine Arts from the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and is a professor at Rutgers-Newark University.

On April 2, Jones will give a public reading of Leaving Atlanta, and on April 3 will hold a book sale and signing, as well as a reading from her latest novel, Silver Sparrow.

Leaving Atlanta
Tuesday, April 2, 2013
7:00 p.m.
Bryan Civic Auditorium

Leaving Atlanta is a coming-of-age story set during the infamous Atlanta child murders of 1979. The novel is told from the perspective of three fifth-graders living through this crisis. Silver Sparrow, also set in Atlanta, is an intriguing tale about two teenaged girls and the secret that connects their families.

Silver Sparrow
Wednesday, April 3, 2013
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Brazos Valley African American Museum
Fall 2013 Course Highlights

**ENGL 302—Environmental Literature**  
**With Dr. Jimmie Killingsworth**  
This is a new course on writings that focus on the relationship of human beings to the rest of the natural world. This semester, the readings begin close to home, with literature on the American Southwest, then expand outward to world literature, covering several genres (including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and films). After a brief introduction to the literature of the land, the course is structured around two major themes—“walking water” and “talking beast”—two images of human existence that emerge from the readings.

**ENGL 348—The Poetry Workshop**  
**With Dr. Janet McCann**  
In this class, students will read, write, and workshop poems in a variety of forms and stemming from a variety of traditions. We will experiment with Ekphrasis (writing about art), Performance Poetry, Formalist Poetry, Postmodernist/Language Poetry, Neoromantic Poetry, and other contemporary forms and styles. Classes will be informal and provocative. We will workshop the poems written, discuss controversial issues concerning the contemporary poetry scene, read award-winning poetry, review a new collection, and write poems under conditions designed to awaken the muse. You will leave the course with a chapbook manuscript completed.

**ENGL/FILM 351—Silent Film**  
**With Professor David McWhirter**  
This course is a survey of major movements, directors and films from the silent period, beginning with the origins of motion pictures and ending with the advent of sound. We'll start by looking at some 19th century technological precursors of the movies, at the earliest experiments in movie-making beginning in the 1890s, and at varied early efforts to develop narrative strategies and vocabularies appropriate to the new medium produced between 1900 and 1910. Our focus, however, will primarily be on American, Soviet, French and German cinemas from 1915-33, and on examining the development of varying narrative and expressive styles and film aesthetics within and beyond these traditions.

**ENGL 392—Religion in American Popular Culture**  
**With Dr. Anne Morey**  
This course examines several nodal points in the interrelationship between popular culture (fiction, film, and other texts, including advertising campaigns) and American religious life from the 1850s to the present. The course will ask these interrelated questions: how has religion been generative of American popular culture, and when religion appears in popular culture, what forms does it take, with what consequences for either popular culture or religion? There will be extensive scholarly and critical reading.

**ENGL 394—Narrative and Digital Technology**  
**With Dr. Laura Mandell**  
What do literature students have to offer game designers, and vice versa? This question will dominate a semester in which we study the basics of plot and narrative structures, and how they work in various media, from scrolls and printed books to movies and games. English majors and other creative writers can learn about how they might work in the field of game design, while game designers can learn, ideally, how to make more artistic games.
Course Descriptions

Single Author Courses

**ENGL 415—Mark Twain**  
With Dr. Jerome Loving  
From funny to funny, and ultimately about the "tragedy of the damned human race." We will read Twain’s early short works and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

**ENGL 415—Richard Wright**  
With Dr. Mikko Tuhkanen  
This course looks at the work of Richard Wright (1908-1960), an African American—and African diasporic—writer of the mid-twentieth century. The class traces Wright’s oeuvre from his earliest short stories in the late 1930s, his famous debut novel *Native Son* and autobiography *Black Boy* (1945) to his later “existentialist” fiction, such as *The Outsider* and *Savage Holiday,* and the 1950s texts on decolonization. We will situate Wright in the literary fields of realism and naturalism, investigate his philosophical sources (Nietzsche, Freud, Sartre, Kierkegaard), and think about his place as an African American writer in the larger field of the African diasporic arts.

**ENGL 415—Sebald**  
With James Hannah  
During this semester, we will study the major works of the German writer, W. G. Sebald. We will examine his fiction in the context of literary influences, European history and geography. We will read the writer’s major works: *Vertigo,* *The Emigrants,* *The Rings of Saturn,* and *Austerlitz.*

Women Writers

**ENGL/WGST 474—Studies in Women Writers: Women Writing History**  
With Dr. Sally Robinson  
The novels we will read in this class re-imagine history from women’s point of view, centering attention on both the grand narratives of public history (wars, political upheavals, scientific discoveries) and the private histories that are often hidden below those grand narratives. Novels will be paired based on common themes: Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace* and Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (gender, disease, and medical history); A.S. Byatt, *Possession* and Louise Erdrich, *The Crown of Columbus* (gender, romance, and academic history), etc.
ENGL 481—American Short Story
With Dr. Alfred Bendixen

One of the distinctive facts of American literary history is an ongoing fascination with the short story cycle—a genre that attempts to combine the sharp focus of the short story with the scope and depth of the novel. Our exploration of this genre will focus mostly on the masterpieces of the 20th century, including works by Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Ray Bradbury, and others.

ENGL 481—Utopia and Dystopia
With Dr. Donald Dickson

Students who take this seminar will study works describing an ideal commonwealth or “utopian” world in the pre-industrial world of early modern Europe (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) and in the post-industrial world. We will also examine the intellectual frameworks, provided largely by Plato and Marx, look at various utopian works in their historical context (some of these ideal worlds are feminist; some are based on religious models; some are totalitarian). In addition, we will look at several “dystopias.” One of the overarching issues we will address is the tension between the individual and the community in each utopia—that is, how much must the individual surrender for the “good” of the community.

ENGL 481—Transnational Literature
With Dr. Marian Eide

“Transnationalism” in its broadest sense names the effort to study nations and cultures in a global context. Transnational literature crosses national boundaries, is written by migrant or exiled writers, and is read by a global audience. In the context of this course, the term will describe literature that fosters international interchange, crosses borders or inhabits borderlands, reflects on the cultural exchanges between imperial culture and colonized expression, and recognizes diversity within a nation.

ENGL 481—Permanence, Change & Tradition: T.S. Eliot & the American South
With Dr. Bedford Clark

T.S. Eliot was a prophetic figure who deplored many of the negative trends that defined the twentieth century. Nowhere was his influence more powerful than in the American South. Indeed, the so-called “Southern Renaissance” might well be dated from the publication of his *The Waste Land* in 1922. This seminar will examine the continued vitality of the traditionalist impulse in American letters against the backdrop of significant cultural, political, and social developments and foster the close reading of literary texts. We will read Eliot’s poetry and representative prose, selections by Faulkner and the Nashville Agrarians, and Robert Penn Warren’s classic novel *All the King’s Men*.
ENGL 481—American Nature Writing  
With Dr. Chuck Taylor

The poet Alexander Pope once said, “The proper study of man is mankind.” Nature writing challenges this notion, and says that while writing is interested in human life, it is also interested in the life of the whole planet. In American Nature Writing, aspects of the natural world—mountains, sea, wilderness, rivers, deserts, plains, even wild animals—become some of the main characters in the story. The United States is a relatively unpopulated country, with much open space, and this fact plays a part in how we define ourselves, evidenced by the large body of American nature writing prose and poetry. These communicate the message that we must go beyond understanding the human world and seek to understand our relationship to the natural world before we can fully understand ourselves.

ENGL 481—Cinematic Representation of Journalism and Mass Media  
With Dr. Terence Hoagwood

This seminar will study fiction films that represent newspapers and television news. Through these examples, we will see that these films also represent features of modern and post-modern culture, and a variety of views on those cultural concerns. Our films will include such works as *Ace in the Hole*, *Face in the Crowd*, *Wag the Dog*, *Mad City*, *Broadcast News*, *Natural Born Killers*, *News at Eleven*, and *Shattered Glass*, and we will read studies of the genre including books such as *The News about the News* by Leonard Downie and Robert Kaiser, and Matthew Ehrlich’s *Journalism in the Movies*.

ENGL 481—Post-Movement Chicano/a Literature  
With Dr. Juan Alonzo

In this course, we shall explore the passage from essentialism to contingency in Chicano/a literary production after the Chicano/a Movement—roughly from the 80s to the present. The Chicano/a Civil Rights Movement of the 60s and 70s influenced a parallel and efflorescent literary movement whose principal concerns were cultural liberation and a recognition of the uniqueness of Mexican Americans in the U.S. While much of the cultural production of this period is couched within nationalist ideas of Chicano/a identity, Chicano/a literature in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries expresses a more nuanced understanding of the social and cultural circumstances that come to bear on identity formation. Recent Chicano/a literary production articulates contingency, indeterminacy, and skepticism of fixed notions of Chicano/a identity.

The Film Studies Program presents: **The Kurrus Essay Award**

**Kurrus Award for Best Paper on a Film Topic Written by an Undergraduate**

If you have written a paper on a film-related topic for any of your Texas A&M courses, please consider submitting it for the Kurrus Award. The paper must have been written for a class between 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013, a minimum of 2,000 words, on any topic, provided the subject obviously relates to the study of film. It must also use some research (with at least three secondary sources). The paper may have been revised subsequent to its submission for a grade in the course for which it was prepared.

Papers will be judged by a committee of three A&M professors. The award is typically a cash prize of $200-$400 (depending on the number of awards), and the winner(s) will be recognized publicly at the English Department awards ceremony in April.

**Deadline: March 29, 2013**
Spring Break in London!


UPREP

Fall 2013
Deadline to apply: April 1, 2013

Overview
The English Department is offering four Undergraduate Professional and Research Experience Program (UPREP) projects for Fall 2013. Students selected will do the following:

1. receive $750,
2. serve as a research or project assistant for a faculty member for up to 100 hours
3. submit an evaluative report of their experience at the end of the term, or develop an ENGL 485 in conjunction with the project.

Please complete the application online (type your information and responses on the online form). Print and sign the application, then either scan and attach the completed application to an email to t021325w@tamu.edu or bring the printed application to 352 LAAH. Students may apply to more than one professor, but will need to complete an application for each one.

Opportunities
- Professor Donald Dickson: Journal Editing (Seventeenth-Century News) and Scholarly Editing (Oxford edition of the Prose Letters of John Donne)
- Professor Lucia Hodgson: Communications, Coordination and Collaboration for Critical Childhood Studies (Glasscock Center Seminar)
- Professor Britt Mize: “Medieval Legends of Judas Iscariot.” Fasken Historical-Literary Study Award
- Professor Marian Eide: Oral History Project "After Combat." John Paul Abbot Award

For detailed information on each opportunity, visit http://www.english.tamu.edu/undergraduate/programs/uprep.
These are a few of our **FAVORITE** THINGS:

**FIRST LINES**

For each edition of *The English Aggie*, we will feature a section of “favorites.” Students will have the opportunity to respond with their “favorites” on the Texas A&M English Undergraduate Facebook Page.

- “Dear friend, I am writing to you because she said you listen and understand and didn’t try to sleep with that person at that party even though you could have.” *(The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky)—Angela Ghazizadeh
- “Up the airy mountain, down the rushy glen, we daren’t go a-hunting, for fear of little men.” (“The Faires” by William Allingham)—Courtney Koslowski
- “In the land of Ingary, where such things as seven-league boots and cloaks of invisibility really exist, it is quite a misfortune to be born the eldest of three.” *(Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones)—Molly McGee
- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (The Bible)—Adrian Monjaras
- “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.” *(A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens)—Katie Paulukaitis

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**Upcoming Events**

**Pre-registration begins on April 11**

Class schedules for the Fall 2013 semester have been posted! Visit [http://www.english.tamu.edu/undergraduate-studies](http://www.english.tamu.edu/undergraduate-studies) to schedule an appointment with your advisor. Don’t forget to bring your degree plan and any questions you might have before pre-registration begins.

**Stay Informed**

Wishing you had more opportunities to use those excellent essays, creative fiction, and poetry that are languishing on your hard-drive or in the back of your mind? Like “Texas A&M English Undergraduates” on Facebook or follow @TheEnglishAggie on Twitter to stay informed about contests, magazines, and journals to which you can submit your work.

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8 a.m.—12 p.m.
1 p.m.—5 p.m.

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