PROFESSIONAL WRITING M.S.

Degree: Master of Science
Program Director: Geoffrey Becker
410-704-5196
gbecker@towson.edu

The program provides advanced study in the theory of writing, writing techniques and style, principles/techniques of editing, and the functions of written communication within the professional/occupational setting. Courses aim to develop the communication skills of people seeking to enter or to advance in occupations requiring extensive writing and/or the analysis and reporting of data. Students choose from tracks in writing for the public and private sectors, technical writing and information design, teaching writing, journalistic writing, scientific writing, and creative writing.

Admission Requirements

- A 3.00 is required for full admission and 2.75 for conditional admission. All GPA calculations for admission are based upon the last 60 units of undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study.
- Based upon the applicant's undergraduate transcript and the writing sample, the department reserves the right to require two specified preparatory undergraduate writing courses, passed with the grade of “B” or higher in each course, for admission.

Please complete the online application (http://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/apply), including the following:

- Two letters of recommendation, preferably letters that speak to writing experience and capability.
- Personal essay of 750-1000 words in which you tell us about yourself and about your reasons for wishing to pursue this degree. You may include an additional example of your writing if you wish (10 pages or fewer), but this is not required.

NOTE: Upon admission to the program, the student must meet with the assigned adviser to plan a program of study.

Non-immigrant international students: See additional admission information in Graduate Admissions (http://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/apply/international.html)

Degree Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Required Courses</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 611</td>
<td>RHETORIC: THE PURSUIT OF ELOQUENCE ¹</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 612</td>
<td>RHETORICAL GRAMMAR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 613</td>
<td>THEORY EXPOSITION</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 615</td>
<td>HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROSE STYLE</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 617</td>
<td>EDITING</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 797</td>
<td>INTERNSHIP PROF WRITING</td>
<td>3</td>
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Select 9 units of PRWR 600/700 courses, chosen with advisor, appropriate to track (electives may include 6 units of Thesis)

Select one of the six tracks listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 619</td>
<td>COMMUNICATION IN THE PROFIT/NONPROFIT SECTORS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 621</td>
<td>BUSINESS WRITING</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 623</td>
<td>TECHNICAL WRITING AND INFORMATION DESIGN</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 729</td>
<td>CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTING</td>
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Total Units 9

Technical Writing and Information Design

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<tr>
<td>PRWR 623</td>
<td>TECHNICAL WRITING AND INFORMATION DESIGN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 628</td>
<td>DESIGNING CONTENT FOR THE WEB</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 625</td>
<td>DESIGN LAYOUT &amp; PRODUCTION</td>
<td>3</td>
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Total Units 9

Teaching Writing

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCED 603</td>
<td>TEACHING WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 621</td>
<td>BUSINESS WRITING</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 627</td>
<td>MODERN RHETORIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 633</td>
<td>TEACHING COLLEGE COMPOSITION</td>
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Total Units 9

Journalistic Writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCOM 502</td>
<td>LITERARY JOURNALISM</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCOM 603</td>
<td>CRITICISM IN MASS MEDIA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCOM 621</td>
<td>MASS MEDIA LAW AND REGULATIONS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MCOM 651</td>
<td>MEDIA AND POLITICS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 705</td>
<td>WRITING CREATIVE NON-FICTION</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 713</td>
<td>FREELANCE WRITING</td>
<td></td>
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<td>PRWR 730</td>
<td>WRITING REVIEWS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 731</td>
<td>SCIENCE AND ITS PUBLIC AUDIENCE</td>
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Total Units 9

Scientific Writing

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<tr>
<td>PRWR 623</td>
<td>TECHNICAL WRITING AND INFORMATION DESIGN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 691</td>
<td>RESEARCH TECHNIQUES IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 731</td>
<td>SCIENCE AND ITS PUBLIC AUDIENCE</td>
<td>3</td>
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Total Units 9

Creative Writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRWR 647</td>
<td>WRITING POETRY (3-6 units)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 651</td>
<td>WRITING SHORT FICTION (3-6 units)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRWR 653</td>
<td>WRITING THE NOVEL (3-6 units)</td>
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Total Units 9

¹ ELOQUENCE: THE PURSUIT OF ELOQUENCE
Portfolio

All students in Professional Writing are required to complete a written master’s degree portfolio as a qualifying exam. The portfolio must be submitted between completion of 12 to 18 units of degree work. If deemed unsatisfactory, the portfolio may be resubmitted once. A second failure results in dismissal from the program.

Combined Bachelor’s Degree in English and M.S. in Professional Writing

The combined Bachelor’s-Master’s degree program in English and Professional Writing is designed to allow students to complete combined undergraduate and graduate degrees in a shorter time frame, including 6 units taken during summer terms. This program is open only to undergraduates pursuing the Writing track in English. For admission to this track on the undergraduate level, the student must apply to the Director of the Professional Writing Program before the second term of the junior year and meet the following criteria:

- Completion of or current enrollment in 60 units (may include transfer credits)
- Declaration of an English major in the undergraduate Writing track
- Completion of (or current enrollment in) at least 12 units of the English major (3 of these units should fulfill the University’s Gen Ed. 1D requirement with a class from the English Department, ENGL 313, ENGL 315 or ENGL 316)
- Achievement of an overall GPA of 3.3 or better and a GPA in English of 3.3 or better
- Demonstration of a high degree of proficiency in writing, to be determined by the Director of the Professional Writing Program from the student’s PRWR Master’s program admissions materials

9 units taken at the 600-level after completion of the junior year will be double-counted toward fulfilling the 120 units required for the BS and the 36 units required for the M.S. See Undergraduate Catalog for stipulations pertaining to the completion of the bachelor’s degree.

1. Demonstrate ability to focus on a topic, deliver sound, reasonable evidence to support or develop that topic; clearly and logically organize the work and show evidence of craft
2. Demonstrate flexibility in a range of writing styles as well as sentence and paragraph-level command of language
3. Demonstrate line-level competence with grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary

Courses

PRWR 611 RHETORIC: THE PURSUIT OF ELOQUENCE (3)
Concepts of rhetoric, from classical to contemporary, which have shaped persuasive and expository writing. Prerequisites: Two 600-level writing courses or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 611.

PRWR 612 RHETORICAL GRAMMAR (3)
Study and analysis of grammar as an extension of rhetorical effectiveness. Practice in adapting grammatical structure to subject and purpose, to audience, and to writer/audience relationship. Prerequisite: Admission to master’s in Professional Writing (MPW) program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 612.

PRWR 613 THEORY EXPOSITION (3)
Exposition as an empirically based model for factual writing; conventions of diction, sentence form, paragraph and organization; techniques of verifiability and probability; adaptability to different audiences, fields of knowledge, and public purposes; illogical and emotional distortions in expository writing. Prerequisite: Admission to MPW program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 613.

PRWR 615 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROSE STYLE (3)
Theory of English prose style from earliest times to the present. Prerequisite: Admission to MPW program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 615.

PRWR 617 EDITING (3)
Study of fundamental editing theory and supervised practice in editing. Also practice in copy editing, exposure to electronic editing, overview of copyright and libel laws, and instruction in publication design and production. Prerequisite: Admission to a graduate program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 617.

PRWR 619 COMMUNICATION IN THE PROFIT/NONPROFIT SECTORS (3)
Communication process, with special emphasis on writing, within the profit/nonprofit organization. Theories of organization, management styles, and relationship of written messages to the function of climate of the profit/nonprofit organization. Strategies of preparing written communication to meet internal and external needs. Prerequisite: Admission to MPW program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 619.

PRWR 621 BUSINESS WRITING (3)
Major forms of business and industrial writing, including correspondence, memoranda, short reports and long reports. Emphasis on audience analysis and planning of written communication to meet audience needs. Prerequisites: Two 600-level writing courses or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 621.

PRWR 623 TECHNICAL WRITING AND INFORMATION DESIGN (3)

PRWR 625 DESIGN LAYOUT & PRODUCTION (3)
Intensive workshop in developing and editing technical documents: instructions, feasibility studies, investigation reports, proposals, etc. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 623.

PRWR 627 MODERN RHETORIC (3)
Current theories of rhetoric and composition, with emphasis upon the cognitive and social aspects of writing; relationships between language and abstraction, conventions of discourse communities, and various approaches to communication in a pluralistic society. Prerequisite: Admission to MPW program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 627.
PRWR 628 DESIGNING CONTENT FOR THE WEB (3)
User-centered design and development of web content. Rhetorical theory and empirical research supporting best-practice guidelines. Projects in web content selection, information architecture, and writing style. Prerequisites: None.

PRWR 633 TEACHING COLLEGE COMPOSITION (3)
Prepares graduate students for teaching writing in the two-year college, or freshman writing at a four-year institution. Focuses on history, theories and the practice of teaching writing. Prerequisites: Four core courses; paired with Tutoring or Internship. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 633.

PRWR 637 CREATING ON LINE HELP (3)
User-centered design and development of online help. Rhetorical theory and empirical research supporting best-practice guidelines. Hand-on hypertext projects. Prerequisites: None.

PRWR 641 THEORY CREATIVITY (3)
Current theory of creative process, its stages, and its relation to the central techniques of poetry and fiction. Focus on analyzing student writings as they embody creative techniques. Prerequisite: Admission to the MPW program. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 641.

PRWR 647 WRITING POETRY (3)
Poetry writing seminar; analysis of student and published poetry, with attention to craft and readership. Overview of modern theories of poetics and poetry criticism; survey of poetry markets and publishing procedures. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 units. Prerequisite: Any WRIT or PRWR 600-level course or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 647.

PRWR 651 WRITING SHORT FICTION (3)
Short-fiction workshop. Analysis of student and published fiction with attention to plot, narrative technique, characterization and readership. Survey of short-fiction markets and publishing procedures. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 units. Prerequisite: Any PRWR or WRIT 600-level course or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 651.

PRWR 653 WRITING THE NOVEL (3)
Workshop on the planning, writing and publishing of the novel. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 units. Prerequisites: One PRWR or WRIT 600-level course and consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 653.

PRWR 655 APPLIED RESEARCH FOR INFORMATION DESIGN (3)
Techniques for researching and analyzing targeted audience groups; writing up results to guide the design of information products. Rhetorical theory and empirical research supporting best-practice guidelines. Hands-on projects. Prerequisites: None.

PRWR 660 SEMIOTICS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL WRITER (3)
Recognizing and interpreting the symbols, signs and implied messages of cultural environments. Focus is on creating and controlling these elements in professional writing. Prerequisite: Any PRWR or WRIT 600-level course or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 660.

PRWR 670 TOPICS IN WRITING (3)
Specialized focus on particular formats, theories or practices in professional writing. May be elected twice. Prerequisites: Two 600-level PRWR or WRIT courses or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 670, WRIT 671, WRIT 672, WRIT 673, WRIT 674, WRIT 675, WRIT 676, WRIT 677, WRIT 678 or WRIT 679.

PRWR 677 TOPICS IN WRITING (3)
Specialized focus on particular formats, theories or practices in professional writing. May be elected twice. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 670, WRIT 671, WRIT 672, WRIT 673, WRIT 674, WRIT 675, WRIT 676, WRIT 677, WRIT 678 or WRIT 679.

PRWR 691 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING (3)
Major sources of primary and secondary information; observation, interview, survey, controlled experiment and library resources. Gathering, synthesizing and interpreting data using statistical analysis and computer programs. Techniques of poetry and fiction. Focus on analyzing student writings as they embody creative techniques. Prerequisite: Admission to the MPW program. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 691.

PRWR 705 WRITING CREATIVE NON-FICTION (3)
Workshop in the writing of creative non-fiction (essay, lyrical essay, memoir, narrative journalism, etc.); analysis of student and published work. May be repeated one time for a total of 6 units. Prerequisites: PRWR 611 or WRIT 611, PRWR 615 or WRIT 615, or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 705.

PRWR 711 PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL (3)

PRWR 713 FREELANCE WRITING (3)
Freelance writing for magazines, newspapers, corporations, associations and technical journals. Analyzing markets, creating jobs; understanding copyrights, contracts and agents. Prerequisite: PRWR 613 or WRIT 613 or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 713.

PRWR 729 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTING (3)
Designing and marketing programs, and training writers in business and government. Finding clients, developing workshops, evaluating programs. Students engage in consulting activities. Prerequisite: Recommended PRWR 625 or WRIT 625. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 729.

PRWR 730 WRITING REVIEWS (3)
Develop proficiency in writing and marketing reviews of books and other fine/performing arts presentations. Emphasize reviewing strategies and avenues for publication. Discuss student reviews, critical stances, role of critic and aesthetics. Rhetorical analysis reviews. Prerequisite: Any 600-level PRWR or WRIT course or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 730.

PRWR 731 SCIENCE AND ITS PUBLIC AUDIENCE (3)
Addresses scientific writing as analyzable discourse, increasingly issue-oriented, public and available to nonscientists. Choosing issues, writing queries and articles. No background in sciences necessary. Prerequisite: Admission to a graduate program or consent of instructor. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 731.

PRWR 795 INDEPENDENT STUDY IN WRITING (3)
Directed independent study in selected areas of graduate-level writing. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor and graduate adviser.

PRWR 797 INTERNSHIP PROF WRITING (3)
Writing, editing, layout/design or communications consulting under the supervision of professionals in a work setting. Course may be taken only once. Prerequisites: Minimum of 15 credits completed in the program with a 3.00 average, successful completion of qualifying examination, and special permit from program director. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 797.
PRWR 897 PROFESSIONAL WRITING THESIS (6)
Original writing of publishable quality, using skills emphasized in the course work of the program. Content and design of project to reflect goals and interest of student. May be based on extensive library, laboratory or field research, or may be entirely creative. Prerequisites: Completion of all course work for M.S. in professional writing, 3.50 GPA and consent of program director. Not open to students who have successfully completed WRIT 898.

PRWR 898 PROFESSIONAL WRITING THESIS (3)
The previous course, PRWR 897, taken over two consecutive semesters.

PRWR 899 THESIS CONTINUUM (1)
Continuation of thesis work.