

The U of I English Major's Guide to Getting Countless Job Offers

A resource for landing jobs in tech, media, and film

by: Eric Anderson and Christopher Ming

Foreword

Hamlet agonizes whether to be or not to be. Frost's narrator frets over which road to take. Katniss goes back and forth between Peeta and Gale.

Deciding the better of two options may befuddle even our greatest literary heroes (including you, Catnip #teamgale), but as U of I English majors, we face more than two options when it comes to choosing a career. To be or not to be a lawyer? To take the well-worn road into sales or the road less traveled by to social entrepreneurship? To follow your heart into education or to follow your heart into writing? The sheer number of career options a BA in English preps you for can be mind-boggling enough to make the simple "this-or-that" trials of Hamlet, Frost, and Katniss seem like a walk in the park.

Some of these career options have clear paths to them. If you want to be a lawyer, you get a JD. If you want to be a professor, you get a PhD. If you want to do Teach For America, you apply to Teach For America.

Others do not. What do you get if you want to make movies, manage accounts in tech, or edit magazines?

You can start with this guide. It offers strategies to U of I English majors for landing careers in industries for which there is no clear path. In it is the stuff I wish I knew long before May 2010, as I crossed the stage at Foellinger Auditorium to accept my BA in English Lit and walk head-on into... nothing. I had no job or grad school acceptance letter waiting on the other side of that stage. I had no scholarship, fellowship, or internship. I was baffled. How had I done "everything right" but still ended up with nothing?

Well, I hadn't done everything right. I can't be too hard on myself, because I didn't know what doing "everything right" was. With no other options, I ended up moving to Los Angeles to work in entertainment and sort of figured it all out as I went. It was a bumpy road. Steinbeck warns us of the perils of "going west," but I was as desperate as a Joad, shaking my fist at the sky and waiting for a great job to fall out of it. I've since developed more productive strategies to landing jobs and gotten to where I wanted to go (working as a writer/producer in film, TV,

and digital), but it's taken time, false starts, and unfulfilling work experiences. I hope this guide helps you avoid some of that.

We focus on building careers in tech, media, and film because those are the fields we know best, but the strategies hold true for any field that lies within the skillset of an English major to which there is no clear path. Spoiler alert: the strategies are researching and networking, researching and networking, and researching and networking. Researching and networking are why this resource exists. Chris Ming, my friend and former roommate, wrote it, and that's great because no one else could have. Chris had a front row seat to my first two years out of college as I tried to figure out how to break into the entertainment industry using my U of I English degree. The pointers he offers are battle-tested. Today, he helps build online courses that use psychology to help people land jobs, start businesses, and get fit. He also writes about starting a career in Hollywood on his blog, [Fighting Broke](#). Even if you're not interested in entertainment, it contains more in-depth information than we can offer here for starting out in any career for which there is no clear path. Check it out.

Unlike other degrees, your BA in English likely won't come with a job attached to it, and for good reason. The English major prepares you for so many career options, but only you can decide what you want to do. If a clear-cut golden brick road leads straight from U of I to your dream job, great. If a dense, Conradian jungle stands between you and your hazy fever-dream of a career, that's great, too. You have the skills to get there. (You didn't think all that time annotating Victorian novels and cranking out essays was for nought, did you?) We hope this guide offers both advice and encouragement towards putting those skills to work in perhaps the ultimate use of the English degree: becoming the author of your own life.

– *Eric Anderson (BA English, '10)*

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“I Did Everything Right... So Why Haven’t I Heard Back From ANY Companies?”

You did everything you were “supposed to do.” Yet, every time you’re asked, “So what are you doing after graduation?” you grimace.

Because after 4 years of formal education, sacrifice, and hard work, you have no idea.

Well, actually, you have lots of ideas:

“Should I pursue law? Teaching?”

“Should I take a year off and work on my writing?”

“Should I go to graduate school?”

“Should I work in magazines, books, or newspapers?”

“What about sales, marketing, or advertising?”

“How about the Internet? Look at all those words. Someone has to write them...”

“Should I keep sending my resume out on Monster.com and pray I get a job offer?”

In our information culture, good writing has arguably never been more important.

Communicating clearly, interpreting complex information, and banging out 1,000 words that are due in three hours? All skills English majors excel in.

Yet when it comes to moving into a career, it’s easy to flounder.

Meanwhile, your engineering friends secured full-time jobs months ago and your business school friends “networked” into full-time positions thanks to career fairs and job placement services.

You’re happy for them. You just wish someone offered you a bit of direction, too.

Unfortunately, many of the careers an English degree prepares you for don’t have a clear path to them.

That’s okay. We think some of the most interesting jobs lie at the end of these paths -- and that there are more of these jobs now than ever. You *can* have a fulfilling career alongside inspiring people at worthwhile organizations. And the skills to get these jobs are very similar to the ones you’re developing as an English major.

Whether you’re looking for your first summer job after freshman year or you’re graduating this spring, this resource can help you build those paths.

We'll focus on career paths to tech, media, and film opportunities because those are the fields we know best. But once you dive into the strategies and tactics, you'll find they work across all industries, from marketing to publishing to working for a YouTube channel (Eric: *For example, I helped produce an animated show called Outlands for [Felicia Day's Geek & Sundry](#)*).

What's Holding You Back from Offers, Options, and Doing Work You Love?

What if instead of floundering around graduation you had:

- **Job offers** - Company A has already made you an offer. Company B is putting together a counter proposal. And you're meeting the hiring manager of Company C for coffee next week
- **Options** - Of course, you could take NONE of these offers. You still have a year to decide if you want to pursue law school, teaching, or grad school. Or, maybe you'll take the year off to travel instead
- **Passion** - You don't have the answers yet, but it doesn't matter, because you're excited. For you, it's not about the salary -- it's waking up and doing work you're passionate about

What if, when you talk to friends and relatives, you discuss your meaningful post-graduation plans... instead of how you fired off 10 resumes last week into the netherland of anonymous Internet databases and haven't heard back from a single company.

How To Get A Competitive Edge Over Your Peers

“After graduating, I applied to entertainment jobs in LA and New York but got no response. I applied to a few unpaid internships and managed to land one at ROAR. After six months of interning, the person I was working under at ROAR quit on short notice. That’s how I got my first full-time job. Almost five years later I work at Entertainment One, and six months ago I secured representation as a writer.”

– Jeff Girtten, TV Development and Current Programing at Entertainment One (BA Rhetoric and English, ‘10)

This is all possible, if you follow the strategies we outline below, all of which come down to two things above all others:

Research and Network

What exactly do we mean by that?

- **Research:** Discover ways to create solutions that solve a company’s problems
- **Network:** Get in front of the right person and prove you’re the best person to solve those problems

Sounds simple, right?

It is. But I want to stress this: researching and networking your way to your dream job is not easy.

If it was simple and easy, then everyone would do it, and no one with an English degree would struggle to land a job they love.

Fact is, what we’re going to share with you is SIMPLE and DIFFICULT. It’s all the work we know deep down inside we *should* do, but we don’t, because:

- **No one teaches us how.** Applying and landing internship and job opportunities is not a skill we’re taught. Instead, we’re told if we “check the boxes,” these opportunities will come to us. We’re learning that’s not true
- **We don’t know what to say.** How do you write a cold email? How do you show you’re interested in others? How do you earn a response? These are new skills, ones we’ll touch on here
- **It’s uncomfortable.** You’ll have to reach out to strangers. You’ll have to ask for advice. We’ll ask you to go beyond your comfort zone, because that’s where the opportunities are

For these reasons, it's easy to put off your job search.

But landing good jobs takes time because they are connected to people, not online databases, and building relationships with people doesn't happen at the click of a button.

(Chris: Networking is what landed me my current position. I met my current boss at a meetup, and we shared some interests so we kept in touch -- for two years. When a position opened up with his company, instead of submitting an application I was fast-tracked into the role. That's the power of networking.)

If you start taking these steps now, and do the difficult work of building relationships, you won't just have a diploma to show for your last four years.

You'll have job offers.

More importantly, you'll have learned the steps to get offers whenever you want, whether you graduated three days ago or three years ago. You'll have a concrete plan. You'll know who to call, what to say, and what questions to ask.

Three Tools To Land Offers, Get Options, and Follow Your Passion

Let's start with three tools all U of I English majors have access to and the strategies you can use to leverage these tools as you research and network your way to your dream job.

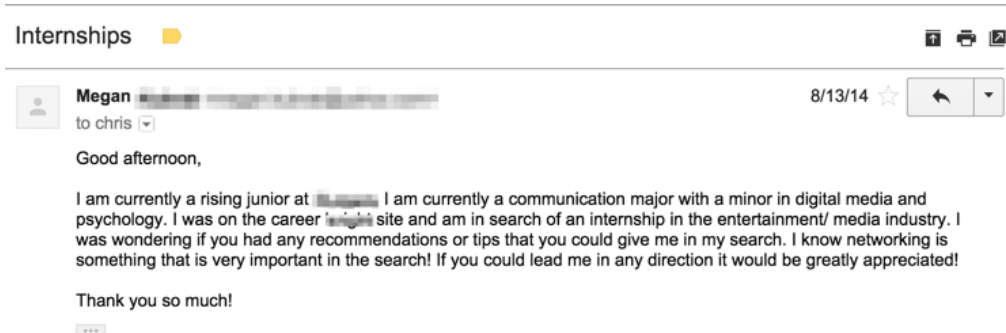
Here are the three tools we'll cover now:

1. [The Alumni Mentoring Network](#)
2. [The English Department Internships Listing](#)
3. Resume and Job Letter Critiques (at the [Career Center](#) and the [English Department](#))

1. The Alumni Mentoring Network

The Alumni Mentoring Network is one of the most powerful tools universities offer. Your alumni have already gone through the fire. They know what missteps to avoid, where to look for opportunities, and who to talk to.

Too bad it's also the most misused tool. Let me show you what I mean:



Ugh. SO many things Megan did wrong in this email:

- She didn't address the mentor by name
- She clearly copied and pasted this email
- She did zero research on her mentor

You can sum up everything wrong in three words: "Me! Me! Me!"

If you want a response (and an opportunity to develop a relationship) follow these Do's and Don'ts on using your alumni network:

Do's On Using Your Alumni Mentoring Network:

- **Do get to know your mentor before you reach out.** Start with their LinkedIn. Read their website or blog if they have one. If they've done interviews, read those. Everything you uncover will influence HOW you reach out to them. Dale Carnegie puts it best: "The simplest way to seem interesting is to be interested in others"
- **Do let them know how you got their email.** This should come in the first or second sentence. It'll be their first question on their mind. Answer it immediately
- **Do respect their time.** Get to the point. Make your ask as quickly as possible
- **Do show you did the work, then ask a specific question.** Let them know your options and which one you're leaning towards, THEN ask for their recommendation. For example, "I've considered A, B, and C, and I'm thinking that B is the best option. Do you agree?"
- **Do follow up.** These alumni makes themselves available because they want to help and because they want to build relationships with up and coming people in their field (like you), NOT to answer one-off questions. Follow up with your results from their advice, and find an opportunity to offer value in return

Don'ts On Using Your Alumni Mentoring Network:

- **Don't ask for a job.** Your alumni are there to guide you and mentor you, not pass out jobs like candy
- **Don't copy a template.** Don't copy a template, changing just the name. You're not fooling anybody
- **Don't talk about your hopes & hang-ups.** Your alumni don't want to hear your views on the economy, your education, or the job market
- **Don't consider this a magic bullet.** One reply from a single person -- no matter how wise or connected they are -- is not going to change your life. Don't expect anyone to solve your problems. They can point you in the right direction, but you still have to do the hard work
- **Don't send a resume.** At least for the introductory email. If they want to see it, they'll ask

2. The English Department Professional Development Opportunities

The English Department conveniently curates for you lists of [internships](#), [local part-time and summer jobs](#), [publication work](#), [leadership and volunteer opportunities](#), and other ways to get relevant professional experience (such as the [Virtual Job Board](#), [I-Link](#), [bridgemycareer.com](#), and – once you graduate – the [Alumni Career Center](#)).

These are great leads. (Eric: *Really great leads. My summer job throughout college was as an RA at the Center for Talented Youth (CTY), which I found about through an English Department email. At CTY, I befriended Chris, who was also working as an RA. As far as*

this guide and my career go, then, all roads lead back to an English Department job listing.) But, while you can get lucky with the odd blind submission to a job posting, these leads can still be tricky to land if you decide to blindly submit your resume without researching and networking.

Consider this:

- Everyone gets access to these same opportunities
- Everyone has a similar cover letter and resume
- Everyone is coming from the same source

To land meaningful professional experience while you're still in college -- and in the future, jobs -- seek three advantages:

1. Your application needs to be a cut above your competition (research!)
2. You apply to positions where there are few other candidates (research and network!)
3. You get referred by a trustworthy source (network!)

Seeking at minimum even one of these advantages in every application helped us land interviews and roles with companies like Google, Escape Artists, Maxim Magazine, plus work with a number of screenwriters and authors.

Today we'll focus on number one: How do you craft an application that's a cut above your competition?

Do's on Crafting an Application:

- **Do your research.** Just like you researched members of your alumni network, spend the time to research the organization or company you aspire to work at. Scour their website, uncover past projects, and read any and all interviews with the CEO
- **Attack the problems, not the job description.** Show you did your research by attacking the problems the company needs solving and sell yourself as the solution. Maybe their social media needs an overhaul or their editorial staff needs a proofreader. Even if you can't single-handedly solve the problem, identifying it makes you stand out
- **Put your network to use.** The English Department's resources listing is just a starting point. Ask other people in your network -- family, friends, employers, professors -- if they know about other opportunities. Reach out broadly, do your researching and networking, and come up with a plan of attack to address their problems

Don'ts on Crafting an Application:

- **Don't apply to every opening.** You're not the right fit for every job -- and not every opportunity will help you achieve your particular goals. Be picky. Find opportunities you're actually interested in and focus your energies there -- you (and the organization that hires you) will be better off
- **Don't recycle cover letters.** Every company has different needs and wants, no matter how similar the posting may seem. A marketing intern and market analysis intern require different skillsets. Sony Pictures and Sony TV have different goals. Your approach should reflect these differences
- **Don't go through the front door.** When you're applying to a large and well-known company, don't send your application to the email listed in the job posting. The actual person checking that email address will be inundated with responses. All your work attacking problems may slip unseen through the cracks. Use your network, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc. to get your application flagged for review -- and seen by who matters

3. Get Your Resume and Cover Letter Critiqued

We've read hundreds of resumes and cover letters. Most are bad.

They're bad for all kinds of reasons. They don't fit the job. They're formatted strangely. They're too long. They're full of typos. They're too wordy. Most of all, they don't reflect that the job-seeker has done the research to understand the company and solve its problems.

But you're an English major. This is your time to shine.

[Here's resume and cover letter advice offered by the English Department](#)

We'd like to add these Do's and Don'ts:

Do's on Getting Your Resume and Cover Letter in Shape:

- **Have a narrative.** Craft your story around the position and company you're applying for. If it's at a literary magazine, curate your literary experiences in a professional or academic setting. Worked at the Daily Illini? That's in. Created fliers for an event at one of your RSOs? That's in. Worked construction one summer? Maybe not. The point is, your resume is not your job history, it's the narrative of how and why you can help the person reading it
- **Show, don't tell.** Yep, the Rhet 105 rule applies here, too. Which is more powerful: "Excellent communicator with extraordinary interpersonal skills, willing to take on any challenge" or "Coordinated publication of 63-page magazine between Editorial, Advertising, and Business Affairs teams in one-month to a circulation of 150,000 readers"? Which one is telling and which one is showing?
- **Keep the language simple.** There's a temptation to be overly verbose in your resume ("Acquired stimulants at accelerated timelines to ensure delivery of product

within deadline.”) Don’t. Hiring managers know how to read between the lines (“Delivered coffee.”) If it’s compelling in normal language, leave it in. If it’s not, take it out

Don’ts on Getting Your Resume and Cover Letter in Shape:

- **Don’t waste time fussing over format.** Yes, the resume must look presentable and there can’t be any typos. Beyond that, don’t spend time fussing over format
- **Don’t worry about the “weight” of the paper.** Same as above. No one cares if you used card stock or 75% recycled from OfficeMax -- what matters is the value you bring to the company
- **Don’t skimp on the cover letter.** Think of your cover letter as the “tip of your spear”: A cover letter gets your resume read... which gets you an interview... which gets you a second interview... which gets you the job. But if you clumsily hack through a cover letter (or worse, copy and paste from a template) you can’t advance to the next stage

Here’s what a typical job posting in the film and television industry looks like. If you applied to this job, how would you implement the Do’s and Don’ts above? (Remember: Every Monday the English Department emails a curated list of new job postings -- reach out to Kirstin Wilcox if you’d like to receive this list.)

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Christopher Ming to Writer's

... (a literary management company that represents the authors of the books THE WOLF OF WALL STREET, LIFE OF PI, SHUTTER ISLAND, LA CONFIDENTIAL, BOARDWALK EMPIRE, etc.) seeks a new assistant to three literary managers.

One year industry experience preferred -- this is for someone who *wants* to work in representation.

Duties are standard assistant duties: rolling calls, scheduling, submission log maintenance, and tracking of bookings. For the right candidate, there are *many* opportunities to deal with clients directly, to learn to the ins-and-outs both film/tv contracts and book contracts, and find new clients.

Standard rock-star assistant qualities apply (diligent, self-motivated, communicative, tough-skin, etc.) Beyond that, you must love books (reading, and also the business of) as a majority of our business comes from book-to-film deals. You must have ridiculous multitasking skills as you handle three desks and your own tasks.

Big pluses: knowledge of both the LA Hollywood *and* NY Book landscape, and experience in book-to-film deals. Again, for someone who wants to work in representation.

Please send resumes (as attachments, not in the body of the email) to: [redacted] In the body of the email, please include a brief cover letter (two paragraphs max) why you feel you're the right candidate based on the description above. To be clear, please don't rehash the resume, just explain what value you'd bring to the company.

Submissions that don't follow these instructions won't be considered.

Position to start 1/27/2014, with training to start asap.

Your cover letter: Not a “rehash” of your resume

Okay, you've done your research, crafted a tight resume and cover letter, and networked your way to the person who you're going to send it to. You're ready to go, right?

Not quite.

Did you know you can have your resume and cover letter critiqued before you submit? You did? Great, so have you called and scheduled your appointment yet?

Listen, when you've made it this far, call the Career Center at 217-333-4346 to schedule your critique. Kirstin Wilcox also offers to review your resume and cover letter (email Kirstin [here](#)).

Interested In a Storytelling Career?

We want to highlight ONE option that's available to you: a career in film and television. Stories of every shape and texture are being shared every minute, whether you follow breaking news or the "reality" on *The Real Housewives of Orange County*. Both narratives require writers, producers, and dozens of other roles to craft the story.

Or, if you have your own story bouncing around inside your head, there's never been a better time to bring it to life yourself.

The democratization of project financing has leveled the playing field, thanks to crowdsourcing platforms (Kickstarter, IndieGoGo, etc.) [Zach Braff can retain final cut to *Wish You Were Here*](#) and [Ann and Phelim Media can bring attention to a story ignored by the national media](#). Storytellers without brand names can make, post, and market their work.

The tools the pros use are more affordable than ever as well. Sequences of *Captain America* and *Iron Man 2* were shot on a [Canon 5D Mark II](#). The 5D Mark II retails for \$2,399 on [Amazon](#). Plus [31 other films shot on DSLR cameras](#) (and [these shorts were filmed entirely on iPhones](#)).

YouTube launched Michelle Phan's beauty social network, a sampling program, and a collaboration with L'Oreal for a makeup line, [for a collective annual sales of \\$84 million](#). Vine celebrities [make anywhere from \\$20,000 to \\$50,000 per ad campaign](#).

But don't let the money, technology, or brand names fool you. At the end of the day we're talking about one thing: storytelling.

While the barrier of entry may be lower than ever, the demand for quality is higher. There's a lot of noise out there. Whether you're doing your own thing on YouTube or working at Warner Brothers to get their next tentpole franchise to finish #1 at the box office, you'll face the challenge of needing to stand out.

This is where all the time you spent interpreting texts as an English major will pay off, though you'll be interrogating those texts with some new questions. In addition to critiquing a text (or script, video, sizzle reel, etc.) for its literary qualities, you'll be critiquing it for its entertainment and brand value. Is it a good story? Is there an audience for the story? Will it get people talking? Does it align with our company's / studio's / network's goals?

Working as a Reader: The gig that cashes in on all those 3 - 5 page essays

One entry to mid-level job in film and TV that English majors are particularly well-suited for is the "reader." As the title suggests, you read and write about screenplays, teleplays, novels,

short stories, or whatever else your boss throws at you... only instead of grades, you get a paycheck.

Readers write coverage. Coverage is to the film business as essays are to the English major. Coverage is a 3 - 5 page report that typically contains a logline (1 - 2 sentences that summarize the story), an overview (1 - 2 paragraphs that summarize the story), a summary (1 - 2 pages that summarize the story), and comments (1 - 2 pages where you defend your position on whether this is a project worth pursuing.) In your coverage, you'll grade the script with a RECOMMEND, CONSIDER, or PASS:

RECOMMEND means drop whatever you're doing right now and read this, for I've found the next GODFATHER, SHAWSHANK, STAR WARS, BREAKING BAD, etc.
CONSIDER means the text has enough merits that it's worth passing up the chain
PASS, the most common grade, means not to waste your time

In your coverage, you'll not only assess story quality, but also how good of a fit the project is for the company you're consulting for. (Chris and Eric: *We both worked as script readers at a horror/action film company. In addition to the script's formal qualities and entertainment value, we also took into consideration the how expensive it would be to make the movie and how many shooting locations we would need.*)

The reader serves many roles. You arm your bosses with smart things to say in meetings. You save your bosses from wasting their time on scripts that are clear PASSES. You give your bosses notes so, when they consult with the writer, they can improve upon the script. You separate the wheat from the chaff so that the best stories get produced, which means better movies and shows, which means profits, prestige, and (ideally) a promotion for you.

For English majors, being a reader is a place to hang your hat. Good coverage stands out. Good loglines can be used to sell projects internally. Good overviews can end up as the DVD jacket summary. Good comments can translate into story notes or even scenes. And for English majors, it's satisfying to directly apply the degree in a creative business setting.

Starting out in entertainment

Early on in your career, it's typical to have to take jobs in fields of storytelling that you don't think are 100% you. (Eric: *I never thought, for instance, that I'd be building scripts for [Felt](#), a puppet show designed for LGBT viewers.*) But over time careers are determined by your taste, your ability to realize this taste in storytelling, and the extent to which others share it.

What can you do now? Next time you're interpreting a text for class, think: is this a successful story? What is it trying to do to the reader? What would I do to make it better? If a company was optioning this story to turn into a web series, TV show, or film, would I want to work for that company?

Who Hires English Majors? (Here's the Dirtiest Secret in the Job Market)

You want to know the dirty secret about the job market in tech, media, and film?

Once you're out in the job market...

Companies are interested in what you can do for them -- NOT just the degree framed behind your desk!

Remember, companies focus on two things when it comes to hiring:

1. How well do you understand their problems and goals?
2. How equipped are you to solve those problems and achieve those goals?

(You'll answer these questions in your **research**.)

And the key to getting countless job offers is:

1. Getting in front of the right person
2. Convincing them you can meet those goals mentioned above

(You'll accomplish this through building your **network**.)

In this guide, you're hearing the same message over and over again: research research research, and network network network.

With the right research, you can dig into what any company needs. With the right networking, you can position yourself in front of the right people. Then it's just a matter of demonstrating how you can help them with persuasive writing and speaking.

You know, the same skills you're practicing as an English major at U of I.

"I got my job through networking with fellow Illini. I studied Rhetoric and had a passion for business as well. I belonged to a student consulting group where a friend of a friend referred me to Google. After a long four month application process, I got an offer and started in the Google Chicago office two weeks after graduation."

– **Matt Anderson, Associate Product Marketing Manager at Google (BA Rhetoric, '11)**

"I was able to get my first job (and truthfully all jobs after) by networking. I reached out to everyone I knew from school or who I had met at an internship, asking for advice, guidance, and even about

job openings. At the time, I felt uncomfortable as I didn't want to bother anyone. But now, I see how my willingness to put myself out there displayed a tenacity that is essential to any job in news."

– Kaye Foley, Associate Producer at Yahoo (BA Rhetoric, '11)

What You Can Do Today

There's nothing stopping you from learning how to bring value today.

Use the resources at your disposal on the [English Department website](#), as well as the guidelines presented here.

Here's what you can do next:

- If you're interested in learning more about tools and programs U of I offers, reach out to Director of Internships, Kirstin Wilcox, at kwilcox@illinois.edu
- Locate an alumni working in tech, media, or film and reach out. Start with the alumni mentorship network, and use this [guide on cold emailing](#) to craft your email. And then? Send it! We can't tell you the number of people who've connected their friend/colleague/sibling/cousin to us, only for them never to actually get in touch
- Again, the English Department sends out five job ops in these fields every Monday. Implement the skills we covered here to apply to one of them

If you're interested in learning more about the film and television industry ("Do I have to move to LA or NY to pursue a career in film and television? How will I find my first job? Where do I even start?") check out the Hollywood career blog [Fighting Broke](#) and feel free to email us directly with your questions, concerns, and feedback.

Happy researching, happy networking, and best of luck in turning your English major into your dream career!

Eric Anderson ('10) is a TV and web writer/producer in Los Angeles. He's worked on projects such as the Discovery Channel miniseries "American Underworld," Logo's "The Straight Out Report," and many low-budget horror and action movies. Email him at eranderson6@gmail.com.

Chris Ming worked in management, production, and with A-list screenwriters in Los Angeles. Currently he builds online courses that use psychology to help people get jobs, start businesses, and get fit. He writes about building a Hollywood career at fightingbroke.com. Email him at chrisming@fightingbroke.com.