

Career Profile Report: English Professor and Screenwriter

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Career Profile Report: English Professor

Defining an English Professor

When looking at what it takes to be a professor you will often find that a professor can be defined as someone who teaches at a higher education facility, such as a university. When adding the English component to the job title we look at a very similar definition being, someone who teaches within the English field at a higher education facility, such as a university. Most people think of an English professor as someone who teaches English, being writing and reading. However, at a university, teaching English has many different meanings. It can mean something broad such as teaching the basics of writing or it could be as specific learning about one writer in history, such as, Shakespeare.

English professors are some of the most highly educated professionals. They are constantly conducting research and teach college students how to analyze literature. They also assist students in building and polishing their grammar and writing skills.

Responsibilities of an English Professor

The responsibilities of an English professor are mostly within the realm of the teaching aspect of the job. Many of their responsibilities lay within teaching their students more about the field of English and how they can use it the right way within their lives. Of course they also have the responsibility of knowing the knowledge of the field as well.

They must also be able to deliver lectures, grade assignments, conduct research, and review textbooks. While many of their job responsibilities lie within teaching, they also have many responsibilities outside of teaching. English professors also write and review textbooks that are used on college campuses.

Overall their main goal is to make sure that their students learn what they came into their classroom for and they are leaving you with knowledge that you taught them.

Job Knowledge and Skills Required

Education

In terms of schooling for an English professor it is normally required that you have a Bachelor's degree. This degree doesn't necessarily need to be completed with an English major but should have something that involves the topic or have the teaching element involved in it somehow. Professors will also need to be able to complete a graduate program somewhere. This is the time where you will focus on your English concentration and on how to teach that to others. More so than not, professors will also have their Ph.D. Not all professors will have both their graduate and Ph.D., but will most likely have one of the two along with their undergraduate degree.

In order to be an English professor you must have a graduate degree in English or a closely related subject. A lot of skills are required to be an English professor such as reading comprehension, speaking, active listening, critical thinking, active learning, instructing, learning strategies, writing, complex problem solving, judgment and decision making, monitoring, social perceptiveness, science, time management, management of personnel resources, service orientation, coordination, systems analysis, systems evaluation, and operations analysis. These skills are essential because as an English professor you must be able to listen and communicate effectively with your students. You must also be able to manage time wisely in order to create and grade assignments as well as meet with students when necessary. In addition to effective communication and time management skills you must also be able to operate and navigate different grading systems and teaching resources.

After Education

Individuals who are focused on going into the field of teaching of higher education should obviously look for job opportunities in the English/teaching field. Throughout this time you are able to work on building both your writing and teaching portfolio for future employers. They should also look for internships in the field during their time while in school or immediately after to again, help build their reputations and their portfolio for future opportunities.

It is important for someone who wants to be an English professor to have a very well put together resume. They should try to gain all the experience and knowledge that they can through internships and other opportunities, because it is a competitive field. There isn't a high turn around for English professors. Many English professors are hired and aim to receive tenure so job openings are not always available.

Skills Required

When looking at some of the required skill set for an English professor you need to consider some of the following skills:

Reading Comprehension: Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

Speaking: Needing to be comfortable speaking in front of others in order to effectively be able to teach.

Critical Thinking: In some instances an English professor will be asked to chime in on a topic and they will need to be ready to put in their input on topics and help others with their work.

Instructing: This will be a necessary skill in order to successfully teach students

Writing: This skill is a must. English professors will need to be able to write (or have some skill in the field) in order to know how to effectively teach how to do it. They will also need to be able to communicate through writing with their students at times.

Time Management: This is not one of the absolute musts of an English professor, however, it will be helpful for them to be able to manage their time between their personal life and their work life.

Coordination: Being able to adjust yourself with your behavior and beliefs to the group of people you are with is important.

When teaching you have to be someone unbiased and hide some of your beliefs because you aren't able to share certain parts of your life with your students.

Required Experience

When employers are looking at potential English professors, they tend to look more at the ones who have some experience in teaching, especially within the English field. Whether you were an actual teacher or an intern of some sort it is a major advantage for you when showing possible employers your resume.

Career Profile Report: Screenwriter

Defining a Screenwriter

Screenwriters make the purpose for all the producers, directors, designers, composers and crew members to all come together while working on films or movies. They write the play by play of scenes and situations so everyone can visualize and have a united idea of the same direction. For example, to imagine making a movie as similarly related to building a house, the screenwriter draws up the blueprint of everything from the rooms to the curtains. However, when making a movie or TV show, the blueprints hold characters, plot, and physical environment in situations. Screenplays include aspects such as lighting, action, movement and mood of characters, and a storyline. All the while fulfilling a screenwriter's role, the job requires talent and creativity. A screenwriter has to keep the audience interested and utilize unique format and style. Being such a talent driven profession, most screenwriters work as freelancers and pitch ideas to producers in hopes of commission.

Responsibilities of a Screenwriter

Becoming a screenwriter takes more than creativity. The responsibilities call for a person who is self-motivated, patient and a team player. Writing the entire production and outline for a team of people puts the writers under pressure of deadlines. They often develop and redevelop their ideas working under the opinions of everyone in the production and on a timeline that has been agreed upon. Having to take the consideration of others into account, it can get frustrating rewriting several scenes. These stresses also push writers to have to cooperate with others. Beyond the process of creating films, the actual content requires attention as well. The writing itself has to visually bring the characters and story to life. The writer has to know how different ways that the scenes affect the audience. The main role is writing a detailed story that provokes mental images and emotions.

Education, Experience, and Skills Required

Education

The steps necessary to qualify as a screenwriter can be a lot less formal than other fields of writing. To start, being a professional screenwriter requires little to no formal or higher education. Screenwriting, like many other forms of creative writing, is built upon the writer's previous knowledge of writing and experiences they build up over time. However, that does not mean one cannot pursue a formal education in screenwriting. Aspiring screenwriters can take screenwriting and film courses at colleges and universities if they wish, and can pursue either a BA or MA in screenwriting. Taking courses in other fields of writing can also help with story development or general writing/grammatical improvements.

Experience outside Education

Aside from formal education, many screenwriters learn from experience. Some screenwriters initially have jobs in another part of the creative field (e.g., working as a film editor) or as a freelance writer. Writing screenplays in your freetime and having friends, family, or others critique it may not be as helpful as getting advice from a professional screenwriter, but it still can improve you and your writing. Watching films and finding screenplays to read, whether it be online or in print, are also fantastic ways to improve your writing and better understand the ins and outs of screenwriting.

Skills

Screenwriters, much like all other professions, require a select set of skills in order to create compelling and interesting narratives. Some of those skills include:

- Creativity - Excellent screenwriters do not just write well, they write stories well. Much like authors, screenwriters need a strong sense of creativity in order to write compelling, interesting, and original screenplays.
- An Understanding of the Medium - Screenwriters need to be familiar with movies/TV shows as a medium and how they affect their audiences.
- Excellent Creative Writing Skills - Although screenplays are different from novels or short stories, they still require colorful and stimulating language to grab audiences. Great writing in screenplays can make characters believable, likable, etc. and movie plots engrossing for audiences.
- Able to Handle Criticism - In any creative profession, criticism from peers and critics is commonplace. As a result, screenwriters need to be thick-skinned to take any criticism thrown at them, and recognize constructive criticism from ridicule.
- Discipline - Because screenwriting is an informal process, it is best to have the self-control and motivation to create a schedule and stick to it. When just starting out, discipline is necessary to complete projects and get exposure for you and your work.

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