Introduction
The study of English has long been considered one of the best ways to obtain a liberal education. Courses are designed to develop students’ critical capabilities, to deepen their understanding of diverse cultural issues, and to improve their abilities to analyze and produce complex texts. The department prepares its majors for careers in writing and teaching, as well as for a variety of professions in which high levels of literacy and critical thought are required.

Various concentrations in literature and writing allow students flexible ways to combine interests in the literary arts with personal and professional goals. Community-based learning courses encourage students to integrate their academic skills with experience in the metropolitan area. Indeed, the breadth of knowledge and the communication skills that English majors typically acquire make them attractive to many potential employers and prepare them for graduate work leading to professions such as law.

For those who wish to teach, the English Department prepares majors for graduate work leading to teaching certification or for entry into graduate master’s or doctoral programs in English. PSU graduates in English have gone on to succeed in advanced degree programs at many major universities.

Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes
Analyze and evaluate oral, visual, and written media with attention to originator, audience, purpose, language, subject matter, and context.

Demonstrate familiarity with a broad selection of literature from a variety of historical periods, cultures, and genres, including poetry, novels, short stories, essays, and drama.

Demonstrate, in particularly, familiarity with the range of English and American literature, including from periods prior to 1800.

Describe at least two different critical approaches to literature, and employ them in analyzing and interpreting a literary work.

Explain that is meant by the term, “traditional canon,” and describe how the canon is both augmented and problematized by ethnic studies, gender studies, and/or class-based perspectives.

Frame research questions; plan and conduct inquiry using appropriate primary and secondary sources, evaluate sources; integrate and cite researched information and evidence.

Recognize and explain the uses and effects of literary elements, rhetorical devices, and themes within literary works.

Recognize the distinguishing characteristics of significant literary periods, movements, and genres.

Use effective processes to generate, compose, organize, revise, and present writing.

Write effectively in a range of genres, for varied purposes and audiences.