

PROFESSIONAL WRITING WORKFORCE

With a diverse skill set and a number of jobs available, how well do Professional Writing students fit into the workplace? Through the following examples of PW students, past and present, we can see how they utilize their skills in Michigan jobs and beyond.

PW PROFILES



Casey Wright is currently a User Experience Researcher at TechSmith Corp. Her responsibilities are to ensure that software products are usable and to research how people expect to interact with the software interfaces. When asked about how the PW program prepared her, Casey said, “The best value of the program to me is that, in teaching practical skills of design and technical communication upon the foundation of rhetoric and writing, the program gives students the ability to adapt those skills to any of a very wide array of careers and fields”.



Adam Clegg works at University Relations’ Marketing and Creative Services department as a web developer. Utilizing his skills in CSS, PHP, Flash, AJAX, and JavaScript, he takes web designs and turns them into functional websites.

OTHER EXAMPLES:

Stephanie Green works at Pearson Education, an educational publishing company, as a media assistant. She utilizes her communication and organization skills, which are vital to her job.

John Phillips works at Campbell-Ewald, an ad agency, as a user interface engineer. In his job he utilizes his communication skills by relaying technical information to others in less technical terms.

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5. GM – Career Paths, “Career Paths with General Motors,” General Motors Corporation, http://www.gm.com/corporate/careers/career_paths.jsp.
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10. TechSmith, “Career Opportunities at TechSmith,” TechSmith Corporation, <http://www.techsmith.com/company/jobs.asp>.



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PW ARSENAL:

WEAPONS PROFESSIONAL WRITERS WIELD IN THE WORKPLACE



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The skills Professional Writers possess are in high demand in today’s workplace. This report showcases the applicability of these skills to major companies located in Michigan.

THE ARSENAL

The Professional Writing program equips all of its graduates with a unique skill set. Professional Writers can be found in any of the following situations:

- Writing proposals and grants for non-profit organizations
- Presenting a clear, concise case in a political debate
- Writing press releases for a company
- Collaborating on large scale projects, such as websites or usability testing
- Translating scientific information into articles available for public use
- Writing instruction manuals for electronic products
- Creating business logos
- Blogging and writing posts about national sports teams for a website
- Conducting usability testing for a company’s website or products
- Understanding client needs as Interactive Designers
- Integrating art and text in publications to ensure it is logical, accurate, and easy-to-read
- Writing urban comedy scripts for movies
- Developing training materials for educator groups
- Creating advertising or marketing strategies for restaurants
- Translating documents into different languages
- Designing websites and print projects for businesses
- Editing for magazines
- And much more

The Professional Writer's Skills in Michigan's Job Market	Tailoring writing to a specific audience	Visual design skills	Communicating effectively	Understanding of audience/user needs	Making presentations & speeches	Working collaboratively	Publishing skills	Ability to master new technology	Coordinating large-scale projects	Attention to detail	Conveying complex information in a more understandable way	Careful listening	Able to work with little to no supervision	Creative thinking	Writing press releases/ documents for publication	Ability to confidently make & defend decisions	Strong problem solving & research skills
Fortune 500 Companies																	
Dow Chemical ¹																	
- Marketing/Public Affairs ³	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ford & General Motors ¹																	
- Communications/Public Relations ^{4,5}	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Herman Miller ²																	
- Marketing ⁶	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Plante & Moran ²																	
- Technology Consulting & Solutions ⁷	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Quicken Loans ²																	
- Marketing ⁸	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Technology-Based Companies																	
Google																	
- Global Communications & Public Affairs ⁹	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
- User Experience ⁹		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
TechSmith																	
- Marketing & Technical Writers ¹⁰	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
- User Experience Researcher ¹⁰		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

MICHIGAN'S WORKFORCE & PROFESSIONAL WRITING

The table above matches up some of the skills of the Professional Writer with actual job postings and divisions at the highest-ranked Fortune 500 companies and other technology-based employers in Michigan. Skills attained by Professional Writing students are relevant to not only Michigan's workforce as outlined above but also to a wide variety of other job sectors.

From the federal or local government to financial institutions to pharmaceutical companies, most every employer has a need for employees with good communication skills, strong writing abilities and technological expertise. The professional writer possesses all of these skills in addition to many others. Additionally, the professional writer can offer keen insights and technical abilities to help bring Michigan's workforce and economy into the 21st century electronic age.

PROFESSIONAL WRITING'S FUTURE IN MICHIGAN

As Michigan works to reinvigorate its current job markets and establish new economic and employment opportunities, professional writers have a unique set of skills that will allow them to fit into the existing workforce, easily fulfill many other future positions, and even create new entrepreneurial and creative enterprises of their own.

Whether professional writers are translating complex scientific information into press releases, developing websites for non-profit organizations or working as freelance writers, their abilities and knowledge are versatile and are always in high demand.

Professional writers are adaptable, innovative, intelligent, and hardworking and will continue to be a key component of the growth industries Michigan hopes to create and attract.