

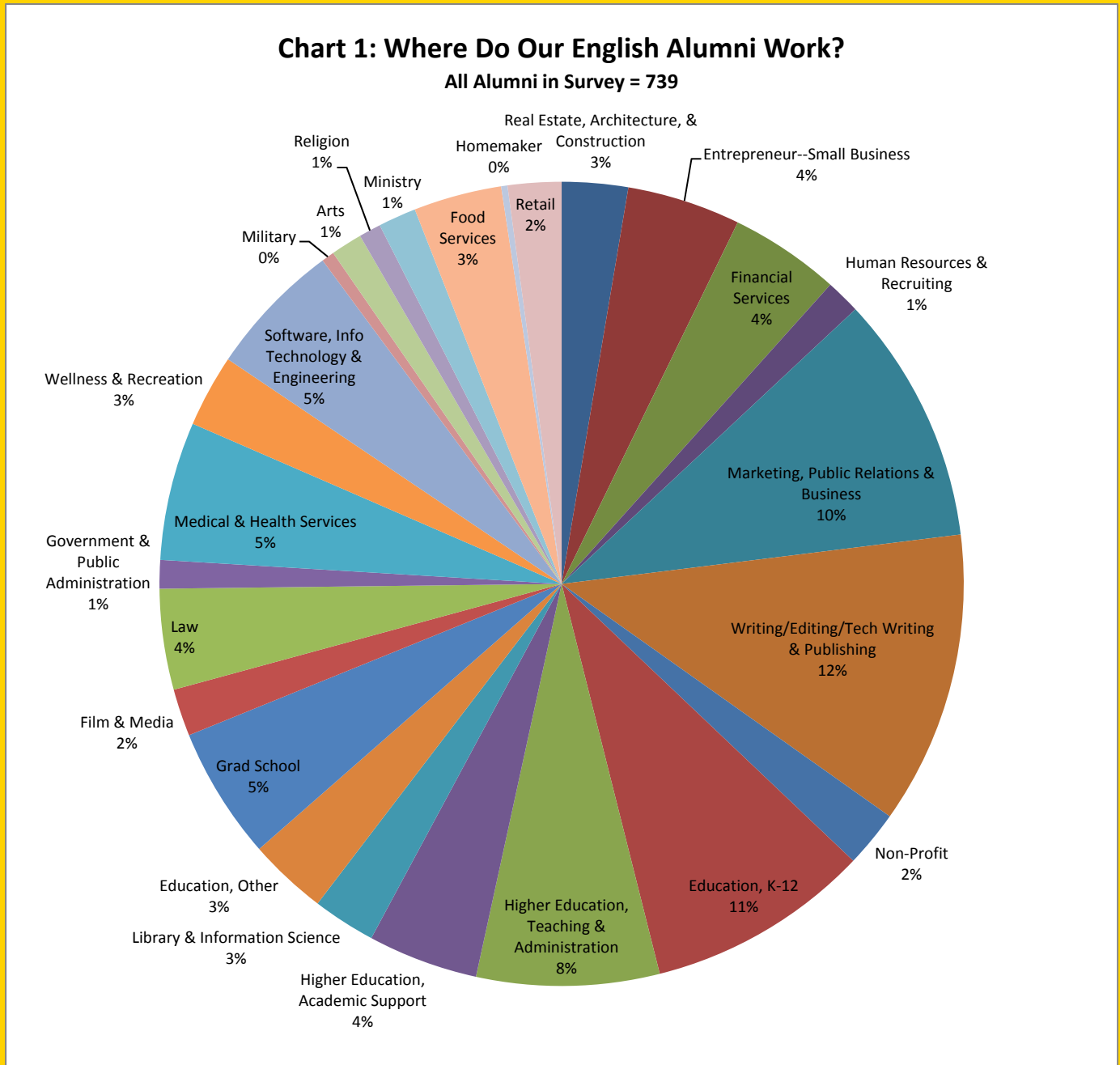
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

WHERE DO OUR UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI WORK?

Flexibility on the Job Market:

Graduates of the Department of English excel wherever people value cultural literacy and the ability to read carefully, think critically, and write effectively. Because these skills are foundational to many pursuits and are always in demand, the English major is a particularly versatile degree in today's job market. The Department of English recently searched a database of 2,137 Appalachian State undergraduate English alumni in the business-oriented social networking service LinkedIn and found 739 alumni there.¹ The results of this survey (Chart 1) demonstrate that our alumni are working across an impressive array of fields.



¹ That means that at least 35% of our alumni have posted profiles on LinkedIn—but the real percentage is probably higher. Undoubtedly, we missed some alumni who changed their names or who did not list their Appalachian degrees on their LinkedIn profiles. The use of LinkedIn probably does introduce some bias into the survey, since stay-at-home parents and workers in some industries may be less likely to post there. “Hit rates” by concentration were 35% for Literary Studies (formerly the General Major), 35% for English Education, 43% for Creative Writing, 46% for Film Studies, and 60% for Professional Writing.

Understanding the Numbers in Chart 1:

- Breaking down this data into sectors is not always easy. There is a great deal of fluidity between Tech Writing, Marketing, and Public Relations, for instance. Often Tech Writing bleeds over into Software Design, Engineering, or Financial Services. Often someone working in Higher Education Academic Support might also teach in a university on an adjunct basis. When it was clear for a single individual that his or her current position inhabited two sectors, we have counted it in both sectors. When an alumnus had two jobs in different sectors, we have counted that alumnus in both sectors.
- What's clear is that English is an enormously flexible degree on the job market, and our alumni are working all over the place. Given the size of the survey, small percentages may obscure large numbers. For instance, the 4% of our alumni working in the legal sector represents 35 alumni. The 12% of our alumni working in Writing/Editing/Tech Writing & Publishing represents 95 alumni.
- The pie chart on page one represents all alumni one or more years beyond graduation. The numbers do shift a little—but surprisingly little—if we look at alumni further and further out from graduation. As one might expect (see Table 1), the percentage of students in grad school, food services, and retail gradually declines, and the percentage of students in higher education teaching gradually rises.
- The largest employment sectors—speaking in very broad terms—are business writing/communication (including tech writing, marketing, advertising, PR, publishing, and financial services) and education (K-12, higher education, educational support, libraries, and industrial education), with each representing roughly a quarter of our alumni.

Table 1: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR & YEARS BEYOND GRADUATION	YEARS AFTER GRADUATION				
	1+ years N=739	5+ years N=560	10+ years N=398	15+ years N=296	20+ years N=199
Real Estate, Architecture, & Construction	3%	2%	3%	3%	0%
Entrepreneur--Small Business	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Financial Services	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
Human Resources & Recruiting	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Marketing, Public Relations & Business	10%	11%	10%	10%	9%
Writing/Editing/Tech Writing & Publishing	12%	9%	11%	10%	13%
Non-Profit	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Education, K-12	11%	13%	14%	13%	14%
Higher Education, Teaching & Administration	8%	9%	10%	11%	10%
Higher Education, Academic Support	4%	5%	4%	5%	5%
Library & Information Science	3%	3%	2%	3%	5%
Education, Other (Industry & For-Profit Non-Teaching)	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Grad School	5%	4%	2%	2%	1%
Film & Media	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Law	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Government & Public Administration	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Medical & Health Services	5%	6%	7%	7%	7%
Wellness & Recreation	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Software, Info Technology & Engineering	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Military	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Arts	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Ministry	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Clerical	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Food Services (includes restaurant owners, etc.)	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Homemaker	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Retail	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%

Concentrations within the Major and Employment by Sector:

- **Significance of Concentrations:** It is useful to break down the numbers in Chart 1 by concentration within the major. (See Table 2.) For instance, Chart 1 shows that only 2% of our alumni work in film and broadcast media, but the Film Studies concentration is relatively new in the major and is still comparatively small. It is impressive that 24% of the 18 Film Studies alumni in the survey are now working in film and broadcast media. The youth of the Film Studies program also accounts for the large percentage of its alumni now in graduate school.

- **All Concentrations Are Flexible on the Job Market:** It is no surprise that a large percentage of Professional Writing alumni are working as professional writers and a large percentage of English Education students are working in education, but it is also worth noting that employment in these job sectors is not limited to alumni from these specific concentrations. While alumni do tend to congregate in their special areas of interest, the more important take-away seems to be how flexible alumni are from each of our concentrations.

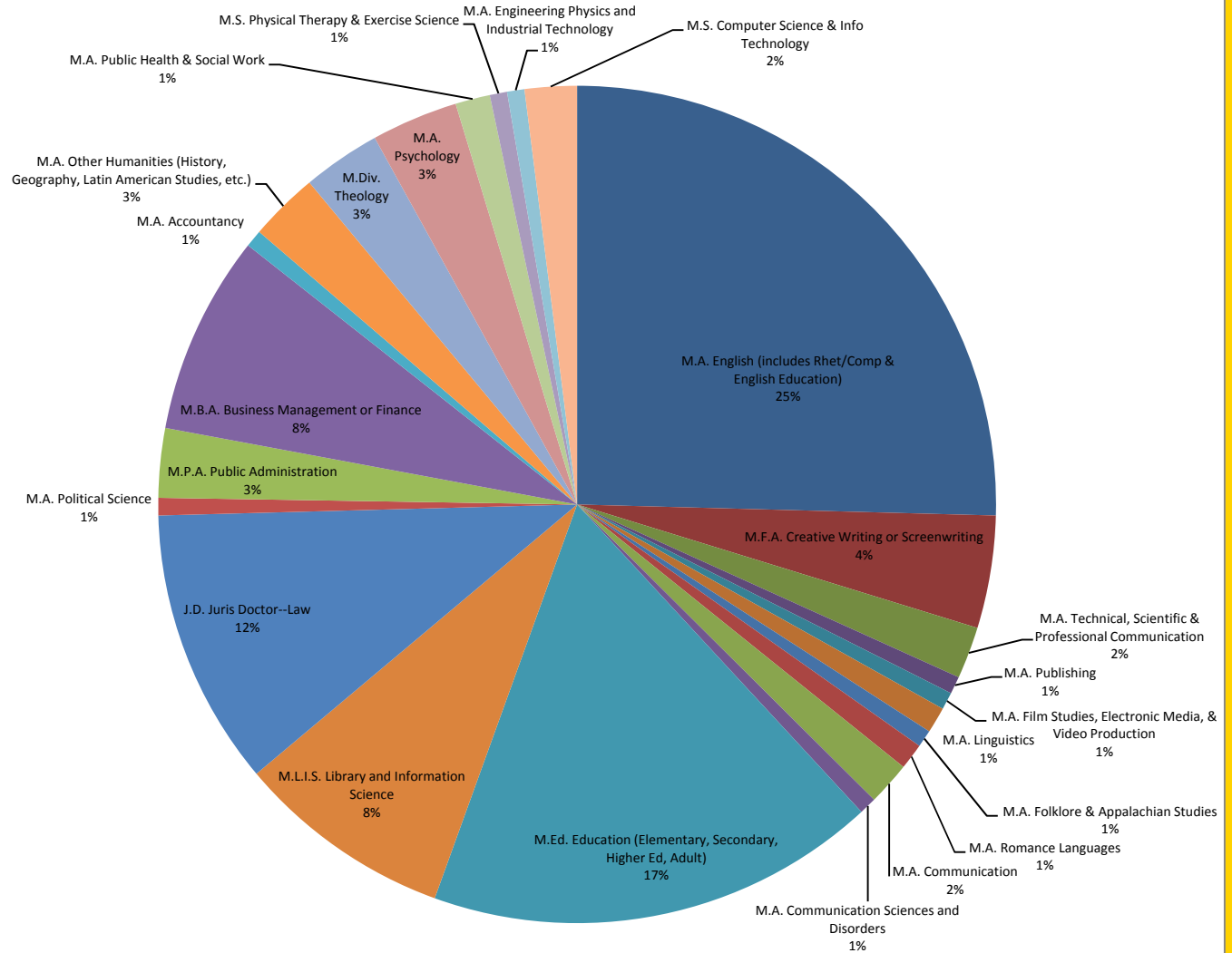
Table 2: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR & BY DEGREE CONCENTRATION	CONCENTRATION				
	Literary Studies (Formerly General Major) N=353	Creative Writing N=142	Professional Writing N=60	Film Studies N=18	English Education N=172
Real Estate, Architecture, & Construction	3%	3%	2%	6%	2%
Entrepreneur--Small Business	2%	6%	0%	6%	2%
Financial Services	7%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Human Resources & Recruiting	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Marketing, Public Relations & Business	10%	11%	12%	18%	5%
Writing/Editing/Tech Writing & Publishing	11%	15%	35%	6%	5%
Non-Profit	3%	3%	2%	6%	1%
Education, K-12	5%	4%	2%	0%	34%
Higher Education, Teaching & Administration	6%	4%	3%	0%	15%
Higher Education, Academic Support	4%	6%	2%	0%	7%
Library & Information Science	3%	3%	0%	6%	2%
Education, Other (Industry & For-Profit Non-Teaching)	3%	4%	0%	0%	4%
Grad School	5%	7%	5%	18%	4%
Film & Media	2%	2%	0%	24%	0%
Law	6%	2%	8%	0%	4%
Government & Public Administration	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Medical & Health Services	6%	4%	5%	0%	6%
Wellness & Recreation	3%	6%	4%	0%	0%
Software, Info Technology & Engineering	8%	5%	4%	6%	1%
Military	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Arts	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%
Ministry	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Clerical	2%	0%	5%	0%	1%
Food Services (includes restaurant owners, etc.)	2%	6%	7%	0%	3%
Homemaker	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Retail	1%	6%	4%	6%	0%

Graduate Education:

- **Road to Grad School:** 40% of our undergraduate alumni have gone on to earn graduate and professional degrees at the master's level or higher.
- **Diversity of Degrees:** Chart 2 shows where the alumni in our survey have completed master's level and professional degrees (N=310). Again, the flexibility of English is worth noting. Yes, more than a quarter of M.A. and professional level degrees earned by our alumni have been in English (including Rhetoric and Composition and English Secondary Education), with another 14% of degrees in such closely related fields as creative writing, technical and scientific communication, publishing, film, linguistics, folklore, romance languages, and communications, but the diversity of the other graduate degrees earned by English alumni is impressive.
- **Oustanding Performance on Tests to Get into Graduate School:** English majors have traditionally performed extremely well on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)—which is more or less like the SAT for getting into graduate school—scoring almost at the very top in two of the three areas of the test. (See Table 3.) English majors perform near the top on the LSAT for law school, on average outperforming Political Science, Criminology, and Prelaw majors. On the GMAT for entrance into MBA programs, English majors outperform Business majors of all types: Management, Marketing, International Business, Finance, Business Education, and Hospitality. Perhaps more

surprisingly, on the MCAT for entrance into medical school, English majors outperform Biochemistry, Chemistry, Microbiology, Psychology, Biology, and Premedical majors.²

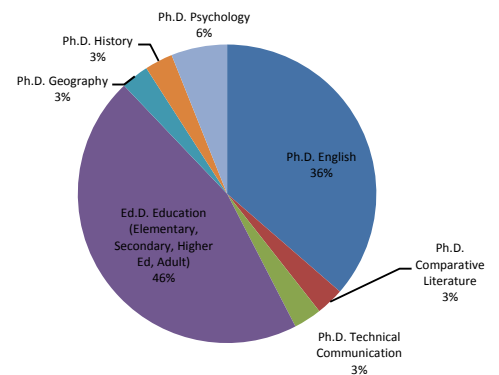
Chart 2: Where Do Our Alumni Earn Master's & Professional Degrees?



Quick Facts about Job Sectors:

- Higher Education:** Of the survey's 59 alumni in Higher Education Teaching and Administration, 41% are working in community colleges, 57% are working at four-year colleges or universities, and 2% are working at for-profit colleges. Notable success stories in this sector include Debra Boyd, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Winthrop University; Kemal Atkins, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Keene State University; Laura Wright, Professor of English at Western Carolina; Eric Wilson, Thomas H. Pritchard Professor of English at Wake Forest; John Bird, Margaret M. Bryant Professor of English at Winthrop University; Stephen Bronack, Assistant Dean and Department Chair at University of West Georgia; Alan Brown, Assistant Professor of English Education at Wake Forest; and Michael Cook, Assistant Professor of English Education at Auburn University.

Chart 3: Where Do Our Students Earn Ph.D. Level Degrees?



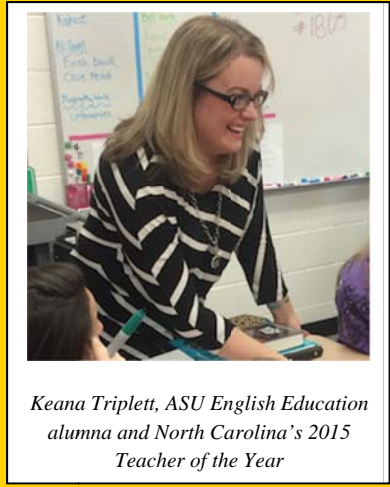
² See the recent NPR story "A Top Medical School [NY's Mount Sinai] Revamps Requirements to Lure English Majors," May 27, 2015. <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/05/27/407967899/a-top-medical-school-revamps-requirements-to-lure-english-majors>

TABLE 3: AVERAGE GRE SCORES BY INTENDED GRADUATE MAJOR

Based on the performance of seniors and nonenrolled college graduates who tested between August 1, 2011, and April 30, 2014
 Scores from ETS: https://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre_guide_table4.pdf

Verbal Reasoning			Quantitative Reasoning			Analytical Writing		
1	Philosophy	160	1	Engineering, Materials	162	1	Philosophy	4.4
2	English Language & Literature	157	2	Mathematical Sciences	162	2	English Language & Literature	4.2
3	Library & Archival Science	157	3	Banking and Finance	161	3	Political Science	4.2
4	Religion & Theology	157	4	Engineering, Chemical	161	4	Religion & Theology	4.2
5	Anthropology	156	5	Physics and Astronomy	161	5	Anthropology	4.1
6	Art History	156	6	Economics	160	6	Art History	4.1
7	History	156	7	Engineering, Industrial	160	7	History	4.1
8	Physics and Astronomy	156	8	Engineering, Electrical	159	8	Education, Higher	4.0
9	Political Science	156	9	Engineering, Mechanical	159	9	Education, Secondary	4.0
10	Foreign Languages and Literature	155	10	Chemistry	158	10	Foreign Languages and Literature	4.0
11	Earth & Atmospheric Sciences	154	11	Engineering, Civil	158	11	Library & Archival Science	4.0
12	Economics	154	12	Computer & Info Sciences	157	12	Psychology	3.9
13	Education, Secondary	154	13	Architecture & Enviro Design	154	13	Sociology	3.9
14	Mathematical Sciences	154	14	Biological & Biomedical Sciences	154	14	Biological & Biomedical Sciences	3.8
15	Art Studio	153	15	Earth & Atmospheric Sciences	154	15	Chemistry	3.8
16	Biological & Biomedical Sciences	153	16	Philosophy	153	16	Communications & Journalism	3.8
17	Chemistry	153	17	Accounting	152	17	Earth & Atmospheric Sciences	3.8
18	Education, Higher	152	18	Agriculture & Natural Resources	152	18	Economics	3.8
19	Engineering, Chemical	152	19	Business Management	151	19	Education, Curriculum Instruction	3.8
20	Engineering, Materials	152	20	Education, Secondary	151	20	Education, Elementary	3.8
21	Psychology	152	21	Political Science	151	21	Physics and Astronomy	3.8
22	Public Administration	152	22	Religion & Theology	151	22	Public Administration	3.8
23	Sociology	152	23	Art History	150	23	Art Studio	3.7
24	Agriculture & Natural Resources	151	24	Art Studio	150	24	Education, Administration	3.7
25	Banking and Finance	151	25	Foreign Languages and Literature	150	25	Education, Counseling	3.7
26	Communications & Journalism	151	26	English Language & Literature	149	26	Education, Special	3.7
27	Education, Curriculum Instruction	151	27	Communications & Journalism	149	27	Engineering, Chemical	3.7
28	Architecture & Enviro Design	150	28	Education, Administration	149	28	Family & Consumer Science	3.7
29	Business Management	150	29	Education, Curriculum Instruction	149	29	Health & Medical Sciences	3.7
30	Education, Elementary	150	30	Education, Higher	149	30	Mathematical Sciences	3.7
31	Engineering, Civil	150	31	Anthropology	149	31	Agriculture & Natural Resources	3.6
32	Engineering, Mechanical	150	32	Health & Medical Sciences	149	32	Business Management	3.6
33	Family & Consumer Science	150	33	Library & Archival Science	149	33	Education, Early Childhood	3.6
34	Health & Medical Sciences	150	34	Psychology	149	34	Engineering, Materials	3.6
35	Accounting	149	35	Public Administration	149	35	Social Work	3.6
36	Education, Administration	149	36	Sociology	149	36	Accounting	3.5
37	Education, Counseling	149	37	Education, Elementary	148	37	Architecture & Enviro Design	3.5
38	Education, Special	149	38	History	148	38	Banking and Finance	3.5
39	Engineering, Industrial	149	39	Education, Special	147	39	Engineering, Civil	3.4
40	Social Work	149	40	Family & Consumer Science	147	40	Engineering, Industrial	3.4
41	Education, Early Childhood	148	41	Education, Counseling	146	41	Engineering, Mechanical	3.4
42	Computer & Info Sciences	147	42	Education, Early Childhood	146	42	Computer & Info Sciences	3.2

- **K-12 Education:** Of the survey's 172 alumni from the BS in English Education, 54% went on to work in K-12 education, and 20% went on to work in higher education. Among the myriad of successful K-12 teachers and administrators to come out of our program, we are especially proud of James Brooks, 2012 inductee into the National Teacher Hall of Fame; Patti Tate, 2012 South Carolina Teacher of the Year; Jason Rhodes, 2012 Henderson County Teacher of the Year; Jeana Link, 2015 Catawba County Teacher of the Year; Charity Sutphin, 2015 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Teacher of the Year; Matthew Scialdone, 2015 Wake Country Teacher of the Year; and Keana Triplett, North Carolina's 2015 Teacher of the Year.
- **Library and Information Science:** Alumni in this sector are working everywhere from public libraries (42%), to public schools (26%), to higher education (21%), to industry (11%). One alumna, Erin Iannacchione, Directs IntellaTurn Biopharma Research and Information Services. Another alumna, Faye A. Chadwell, is the Donald and Delpha Campbell University Librarian at Oregon State and is also Director of Oregon State University Press.
- **Film and Broadcast Media:** Alumni in this sector include producers, directors, videographers, photojournalists, and educational outreach coordinators for PBS. One alumnus is a production and process manager at CNN; another is a content coordinator at CNN; and still another is a director of business development at Telemundo Media, NBCUniversal.



Keana Triplett, ASU English Education alumna and North Carolina's 2015 Teacher of the Year

- **Professional Writing:** This is a major sector of employment for our undergraduate alumni, with 22% of them working in the field. While 47% of Professional Writing concentration alumni work in this sector, it's important to keep in mind that the bulk of our alumni working in this sector (83%) come from other concentrations. (See Table 2.) Chart 5 shows how this sector breaks down for our alumni. Under



Marketing and Advertising we include marketing directors, business analysts, digital media specialists, e-commerce managers, and content writers at marketing and advertising firms. In the area of Public Relations, we find a director of communications for Maryland Legal Aid, a public information office for NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, a director of client relations for AMF Media Group, and a production associate for a PR firm specializing in celebrity branding. In the area of technical writing, we find content writers, research writers, editors, and copyeditors. One alumnus leads an Information Development Team at IBM, several are managing editors for popular and industry publications, and many are working as technical writers. In several cases, tech writing positions have led to jobs in software development and as project managers at engineering and telecommunications firms.

- **Publishing:** We have had alumni working at publishers such as Oxford University Press, Harper Collins, UNC Press, Algonquin Press, and McFarland. One alumna, Emily Thomas Meehan, is currently Director, Editor in Chief, and Associate Publisher at Disney Book Group.

- **Financial Services:** This sector includes everything from banking and investments to the insurance industry. Alumni in this sector include Sunjay Pandey, Vice President for Digital Product Design at Capital One; Sabrina Stephens, Senior Vice President at North State Bank (and author of two novels); Patrick Hale, Assistant Vice President for Financial Solutions at Merrill Lynch; Cary Anne Melton, Senior Vice President at Chubb Limited; and Jay Casey, President at Intellectus Partners Venture Capital and Private Equity Investing.
- **Medical & Health Care:** Among alumni in the survey, employment in this sector varies from a neurologist to veterinarians, pharmacists, psychotherapists, audiologists, speech and language pathologists, physical therapists, nurses, clinic directors, directors of ambulance services, sales managers for medical devices, health care recruiters, directors of mental health services, mental health service case managers, electronic medical records specialists, holistic nutrition counselors, and pharmaceutical sales specialists.
- **Law:** Of the survey's alumni working in the legal sector, the overwhelming majority (85%) are working as attorneys. Among these attorneys, there is a wide variety of specialization, including higher education legal counsel, insurance litigation, governmental affairs, immigration law, construction and business litigation, real estate law, labor law, non-profit law, criminal defense, and telecommunications law. Some alumni success stories in this sector include Cheryl Daniels Howell, Albert Coats Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC Chapel Hill; Gill Beck, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Department of Justice & Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve; Preston Hartman, Assistant Attorney General, Colorado; and many partners in legal firms.

