

2015

A Grand Grad Option

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Recommended Citation

Wheat, Sydnei (2015) "A Grand Grad Option," *Memorandum*: Vol. 3: Iss. 2, Article 24.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/memorandum/vol3/iss2/24>

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A Grand Grad Option

By Sydnei Wheat

Rhetoric and Composition is a great Master's degree for Professional Writing students to pursue. However, it is often the only Master's program that PW students consider throughout their undergraduate days; partly because they believe it is the only graduate degree that can effectively develop their professional skill-set.

Students might not be aware that there are other great Master's programs that are also very compatible with their undergraduate education, such as the Library & Information Science Master's degree (MLIS).

A MATCH MADE IN INFORMATION HEAVEN

English goes hand in hand with Library & Information Science. Both fields deal with research and literature/books. But as its name implies, Library & Information Science is more broadly focused on information and information technology, a characteristic that also forms the foundation of the Professional Writing field.

This graduate degree incorporates many Professional Writing theories and practices such as the focus on the user and usability experience, design and organization, and literacy and dissemination of information.

MLIS also expands upon them as students can choose to concentrate in a variety of specializations. Specializations include:

- archives
- acquisitions
- interlibrary loans
- records management
- data circulation
- database management
- media specialist
- usability/user experiences

Students may also opt to keep their studies general and broad. Graduates of the degree can pursue jobs not only in libraries (academic, public, special) but in any information and research centers or environments that utilize information technology. With an MLIS degree, students have the opportunity to work in almost any area or career field.

STILL INTERESTED?

Unfortunately, very few Bachelor's degrees in Library & Information Science exist, so courses are not readily available to undergraduates. If Professional Writing students wish to pursue a MLIS they should prepare in their undergraduate years by interning or obtaining a student position at an academic or public library.

Taking courses or minoring in communications, business or information systems can also build a strong foundation for those who want to specialize. And for students that may still wish to pursue an MA in Rhetoric and Composition, there are universities that joint or dual degrees in both English and Information & Library Science.

Library and Information Science is a great Master's program for undergraduates who want to explore a different avenue to further their Professional Writing skills.

