

## **The Most Marketable Degree**

*By Nicole Bell*

There's no need to question what you can do after graduation with this major. A Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication degree provided me with a skillset marketable to a variety of employers. My professors have intentionally targeted the most valuable skills for post-graduate work and educated us accordingly.

The entry level courses in the major provide all graduates with a comprehensive understanding of creative and technical writing. In my first WRTC class, I created a blog where I conducted three formal interviews and produced transcripts; each blog dealt with a different political topic. With courses like Language, Law, and Ethics I learned the technical skill behind legal writing and case reviews. I wrote a contemporary review on the Elizabeth Holmes Theranos trial as the case was unfolding and another analysis on Virginia state laws and witchcraft. In my introductory level editing course I learned all the technical functions of Microsoft Word, like track changes and other editing tools.

In Document Design, I learned how to use industry standard applications like Adobe InDesign and Illustrator to produce professional-level work. I created a grid-based feature spread in InDesign; the topic was based around vegetarian eating. I also made my own branded business set, consisting of a business card and logo.

My rhetoric classes taught me to think of institutions and traditions from different angles. The study of rhetoric is still not appreciated in some disciplines, so my courses focused on how rhetoric can be applied to modern day studies. I still studied philosophers like Plato and Socrates, while learning about new theories like Big Data and how language has changed because of it. Understanding Big Data helped me transition my technical writing to take account for new ways of collecting data and relating them to theoretical ideas. I wrote a rhetorical analysis on how the Constitution engrained systematic sexism in America strictly by the language used.

I have worked with multiple clients through my WRTC courses. The first was the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Center where I learned technical editing for businesses. I took a team lead role on the project and maintained client communications. I learned how to write Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) in order to work with clear guidelines. I then worked with a local for-profit entity, Greens & Grains, where I developed marketing and hiring materials during a time of unemployment. My courses enabled me to not only market myself, but organizations outside of the university as well.

The tools and skills taught to me have made me a well-trained professional. I am leaving college with multiple client experiences, numerous projects to build my portfolio, and comprehensive

understanding of industry-standard software. I have even built my professional branding through my classes. I am prepared to enter the workforce in a variety of fields because my degree was programmed to set post-graduate candidates apart.