



LEA BRIDI

MA in Professional Writing (Aug. '17)

Learning Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Beckley, WV

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

Did not apply. Was contacted by recruiter.

Accepted by:

May

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I interned as an instructional designer, so the experience and knowledge I gained in that area as an MAPW helped me secure the position. This experience included an instructional text design course, my work as a writing tutor at the GCC, and a research assistantship that involved helping Dr. Kaufer create an online rhetorical grammar course.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

On the technical side: TiER1 creates a lot of PowerPoint courses, so I really strengthened my PowerPoint skills. I also learned how to use software called BrainShark, which allows users to convert PowerPoint decks into eLearning courses. On the soft skills side: I learned what it's like to be a consultant, analyzing a client's problem and coming up with a creative solution.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I attended an information session that TiER1 held on campus and was sure to give the recruiter my resume. She contacted me about a month later and asked if I was interested in an interview.

What did you do as an intern at Company Name?

I worked on a variety of projects. I designed systems training courses for a pharmaceutical company and a paint manufacturing company. I also helped put together a proposal for a bank that wanted TiER1 to help them redesign the onboarding training that they used for a specific position.

What was challenging about your internship?

I had to learn how to juggle many projects at once, each with its own tight deadlines.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

There are so many facets to instructional design, especially in a consulting environment. It involves technical writing, visual design, information architecture, project management, and more.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Don't be afraid to give this field a shot. 'Designing corporate trainings' may not sound thrilling, but there's a lot about it that would appeal to your average MAPW. It's all about presenting complex information in the most digestible way possible. You're constantly drawing from style, doc design, and information architecture principles to make it happen. ”



ZACHARY CARLSON

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Technical Writer Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Madison, Wisconsin

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

February 2017

Accepted by:

March 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I was extremely fortunate in that I landed the role as a tech writer despite having essentially no technical background. What helped me overcome that was having some experience with information architecture and usability testing.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

So many! On top of learning to be a better tech writer, I was able to practice usability testing methods and information architecture while learning about programming and software. Google also offers an incredible number of free courses to attend in person or to complete online, covering everything from writing, to cooking, or lock picking or anything else.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

According to my internship host, a big step I took is that I actually applied. Many qualified candidates assume they'll never hear back so they don't apply. Aside from applying, the most important step I took was to practice interviewing. I'm usually extremely nervous in interviews, but after practicing with a friend over and over again, I was confident about anything I might have been asked.

What did you do as an intern at Google?

The largest part of my project was developing a new navigation and information architecture for a website, and I wrote, edited, and revised documentation, including how-to guides and larger conceptual overviews of software and tools used by other tech writers. I also drank a lot of free espresso.

What was challenging about your internship?

There was a lot to learn at first about both the tools I was using and the topic I was writing about, and it took a while to get used to writing in a text editor rather than a word processor. But, there were tons of resources when I had questions and everybody was happy to help me out.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

Google is an incredible place to work, and they have an amazing amount of support for interns. They treat you like a full-time employee, but there is always structure and guidance when you need it. It's clear that they want to invest in you and provide anything you need to be better at your job, whether that means training or mentoring or just a way to have fun and relax.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ I was extremely lucky to get an internship at Google without having any prior programming experience. If you want to work in the software industry, you should learn a programming language. However, if you don't have that background, you should just apply anyway. ”



Maggie A. Geier MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Marketing Office Intern, Summer 2017
Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

February 2017

Accepted by:

March 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

Having a portfolio with a few strong writing samples helped me secure this internship. Also, being able to talk about the skills I would have after the Spring semester course and before starting the internship helped as well.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I would say my writing skills have definitely strengthened from the internship. I learned how to write more directly and more procedurally for parts of the website, but also to write in a different tone for the alumni articles.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I received an e-mail regarding this opportunity in February of 2017 and heard about it from another MAPW as well. I applied by sending my resume and a few writing samples. Next, I had one interview and was offered the internship.

What did you do as an intern at Heinz College Marketing Office?

I wrote a few alumni articles celebrating an alumni's achievement and an alumni press release, but the bulk of my work was actually rewriting content for the website. Heinz College's website is moving from one CMS to another CMS and being redesigned in the process, so I was assigned current pages to review, restructured the content by choosing new components, and rewrote the content. Some of the content I worked on was Admissions, Student Finances, the Admitted Student Portal, and the Alumni Portal.

What was challenging about your internship?

Figuring out the right tone to use for the alumni articles was a little bit challenging at first. Analyzing and restructuring the current website was also challenging because the current website had repetitive or extremely wordy content and dead-end pathways that a visitor could easily become lost in. Our challenge was creating a more streamlined structure that could be easily navigated.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I actually really enjoyed being able to restructure and rewrite web pages. It was fun and satisfying to figure out a solution that worked. Also, I enjoyed writing the alumni articles and hearing about the interesting jobs or cutting-edge devices that Heinz alumni were working on.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“Take your course projects seriously because some of them, especially the ones with clients involved, can serve as excellent portfolio pieces to show to an internship committee or hiring committee. Also, find an organization or more than one organization and work in their marketing department, so you can see how different organizations write in certain tones to target certain audiences.”



Nathan Healy

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Staff Reporter, Summer 2017

Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

February 2017

Accepted by:

May 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

First and foremost, the ability to use the networks I built during my first term as an MAPW were tremendously helpful. Learning to use the tools at my disposal, including the wonderfully connected faculty, was a major advantage. Furthermore, the skills learned in both the Professional and Technical Writing and the Style course allowed my interviews to be focused and effective in terms of efficient, direct communication.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

The opportunity to work in a daily newsroom strengthened my ability to work under tight deadlines, to simultaneously work on multiple projects in a fast-paced environment, and to understand the importance not only of effective time management, but of the need to allow for moments of rest and relaxation as well.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

At the suggestion of my advisor, I contacted a former MAPW student currently working at Chautauqua Institution to express interest in the internship. This contact put me in touch with the current editor of the Daily who requested my resume and portfolio. What followed was a telephone interview and a lot of waiting to hear back.

What did you do as an intern at the Chautauquan Daily?

I worked as a staff reporter, covering the beats of the Chautauqua Opera Company, the Children's School, as well as the Meet the Filmmaker series. In these roles, I wrote stories both previewing and covering events for these programs for daily publication.

What was challenging about your internship?

The most challenging aspect of the internship was understanding that, even though I might have written a certain type of story a half-dozen times, someone might be seeing it for the first time. I aimed to try to keep my stories fresh, appealing, informative, and entertaining at all times.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed the opportunity to work with amazing writers from around the country as well as an amazing, knowledgeable, and dedicated editorial staff. I was given the opportunity to develop my journalistic chops, the freedom to explore my voice, and the trust to make my beats my own for the year. Diving in and living as a "working" journalist for the summer was an invaluable, game-changing experience.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Work in a newsroom. Go to that newsroom every day. Take on the challenge of covering topics you don't know. Give yourself the opportunity to fail. The people who you work for and with don't want to see you fail and they will see that you don't. As a result, you will become stronger and more capable than you would be if you sat on your hands. ”



Michael P. Heslink

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Technical Writing Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Toano, VA

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

November 2017

Accepted by:

April 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

My employers were interested in my writing, editing, and design skills. Throughout my internship, they assigned tasks where I utilized these skills, which they deemed a team asset.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I strengthened my communication skills, by working with my team members and other departments to publish documentation.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I searched for technical writing internships near my hometown. Ferguson has a strong reputation, so I was very pleased when I saw a position available. I quickly applied and several months later, my manager offered me the position.

What did you do as an intern at Ferguson?

I audited the Technical Writing team's SharePoint site, wrote and revised documentation, and designed several new document templates, including an annual report template.

What was challenging about your internship?

I found communication very challenging, however the position gave me the opportunity to improve these skills.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed working in a professional environment, particularly editing documentation with my team members and working with other departments.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“*Technical Writing is not just about writing. It's about working with people from other backgrounds and departments to determine the most effective and efficient means to communicate information.*”



Allyson Hoover

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Editorial Assistant in Pittsburgh, Summer 2017

Hometown: Greenville, PA

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

March 2017

Accepted by:

April 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
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- science writing
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- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I have always made sure to keep abreast of news and trends in the publishing company, and it was fortuitous that my reader interests in YA fantasy matched with Chiotti's needs for an intern.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

Although I had previous editing experience, I was able to work directly with clients on their manuscripts, preparing their projects for presentation to publishers. Danielle Chiotti gave me the opportunity to see the entire process of working as an agent from accepting new clients to securing bids from a publisher and negotiating author rights with companies.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

Danielle Chiotti was a speaker at the professional seminar, which allowed me to make initial contact. When it came time to look for internships, I contacted Danielle about openings for interns. I rapidly received an interview, and finalized my position as an intern through writing a reader's report.

What did you do as an intern at ?

I was tasked with editing manuscripts for bids to publishing companies, reading and responding to query letters, and creating reader's reports from requested manuscripts. On top of the normal work for editorial interns, I was also given the special assignment of revamping a cookbook proposal for a James Beard nominated chef.

What was challenging about your internship?

Manuscripts are sent by potential clients, and assistants must maintain a critical, objective eye regardless of personal tastes to ensure clients have best fit with the literary agency.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I loved getting to apply the vocabulary and techniques I am learning as a professional writer to describe why I was making editorial choices.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Read and read widely, and as you do note the reactions you have toward the text. What does it do well? Never stop expanding your knowledge on how readers read and what makes a text successful. Lastly, I cannot stress enough how important it is to follow the trends of the publishing industry. ”



Sammi Jamison

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Writing & Communications Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

September 2016

Accepted by:

September 2016

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

I applied for this opportunity at the beginning of my first semester, so I really relied on the critical thinking, writing, and analytical skills I acquired in my undergraduate career to land this internship. I also took a news writing course in college that was super helpful because it helped me learn how to conduct a proper interview and write feature stories, which was one of my main responsibilities as an intern.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

During this internship, I strengthened my technical writing skills, technical documentation skills, interviewing skills, editing skills, design skills, and social media skills. I also learned how to navigate a content management system and collaborate with other members of a marketing and communications team.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

The English department always sends out emails about potential internship and job opportunities. I received an email about this internship and decided to apply because I wanted to do something that would supplement my studies. I submitted my resume and cover letter, interviewed, and got an offer a few days later.

What did you do as an intern at the College of Engineering?

I mainly worked on feature stories and news briefs for the engineering website. Some of my stories were even featured on CMU's homepage. In addition to this work, I created technical documentation, drafted social media content, redesigned department forms, and added content to our content management system.

What was challenging about your internship?

My internship was challenging because the topics I wrote about were incredibly complicated. I didn't know anything about engineering when I started this internship, so writing stories about things like microtissues, soft robotics, sensors, power grids, nanotechnology, and the Internet of Things was very difficult. But because of this, I've learned how to ask the right questions, conduct my own research, and write clearly and concisely for other people.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I really enjoyed collaborating with faculty and students when writing feature stories for the web. Everyone I interviewed was always so eager to talk about their work, and they were always so patient when I asked them questions. I also enjoyed the fact that I had an opportunity to work on a variety of projects. I was always doing something interesting, so I loved going to work every day.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Don't be afraid to ask questions. Technical writing in any capacity is incredibly challenging, regardless of the topic. Recognize when you need help and seek advice from your co-workers or the people you're interviewing. It's more important to get the facts right than it is to pretend like you know everything. People will appreciate your curiosity and your willingness to learn more! ”



Kylie Janoso

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Communications Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Youngstown, OH

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

April 2017

Accepted by:

April 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

My employer was interested in my broad range of coursework, but was most interested in the writing and design samples in my portfolio. It was beneficial to have my portfolio with me during the interview process.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I strengthened my communication skills personally and professionally, as well as my collaboration, time management, and processing skills.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

After reading through the job posting, I filled out the application, as well as emailed my supervisor my resume and portfolio directly. I then had two interviews and was offered the position.

What did you do as an intern at the Scott Institute for Energy Innovation

I was able to work on a variety of different projects including federal energy research, social media management, newsletter creation, promotional material design, and website redesign.

What was challenging about your internship?

Since I worked with a small team of people, I often was pulled between many different types of projects all at once. I had to make sure I was giving adequate attention to each project. It also took some time to learn the style the Scott Institute uses.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I enjoyed being able to work on a diverse group of projects all at once. It allowed me to stay focused and prevented me from burning out. I also enjoyed working with a team of people who I got to know professionally and personally.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ It’s really important to have a current and updated portfolio. During interviews, employers really enjoy being able to see real examples of your work. I think it adds another dimension to your application. ”



Erin Mulhern

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Technical Writing Intern, Summer 2017

Hometown: Kalamazoo, Michigan

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

March 2017

Accepted by:

April 2017

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

My writing samples really gave me an edge in the interview process. Most other applicants did not have a technical writing sample.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

I learned Unix to use the command line interface. I also learned Sphinx and Markdown. I learned a lot about how the Technical Documentation team supports Engineering at LinkedIn. I learned how to write doc in the Engineers' code through the git repository.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I applied, updated my LinkedIn profile and paid to become a premium member for greater visibility on recruiter lists, did a screening interview, prepared and submitted three writing samples, had a phone interview with the tech docs manager, had a video interview with the whole team I'd be working with, and then was hired.

What did you do as an intern at LinkedIn?

I developed, wrote, and tested a Sphinx quick start guide to help Engineers write documentation using the Markdown plugin within their git repositories.

What was challenging about your internship?

The most challenging part of my internship was leaving my fiance and my cat, flying across the country, and living with three strangers for nearly three months.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

LinkedIn is an amazing company full of amazing people. My mentor and manager each had 1:1 meetings with me weekly and were always available to answer questions. The tech docs team made me feel at home and I loved working with them. The projects that I worked on were meaningful; in fact, the document I wrote has already been adopted for regular use and the Engineers have reacted very positively to it. My project was "real" tech writing work, not just "intern" work.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

☞ Learn everything that you can about programming. The more you know about Python or Java, the better you'll be able to write for software engineers. You have to have a constant curiosity for learning new technologies and you have to be willing to learn things like the command line, JavaScript, and Python in order to really be an amazing technical writer. ☞



Jake Shriver

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '17)

Technical Writer Intern, Summer-Fall 2017

Hometown: Smithsburg, MD

Internship Type:

n paid
n unpaid

Applied by:

September 2016

Accepted by:

October 2016

Internship Category:

corporate communication
editing & publishing
grant writing / fundraising
healthcare communication
information architecture
journalism and news media
non-profit communication
public relations & marketing
science writing
n technical writing
n user experience strategy
writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

If you want to be a tech writer, you'll benefit from having a tech background. I stood out because of my double major in mathematics and statistics, and because of my previous coursework in computer science.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

More than anything else, I learned how to strategize, and I developed a robust writing process. Writing professionally is a lot different than writing for school; you have to do it 9-5 every day, not at 3 a.m. fueled by deadlines and caffeine.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

Start early. Attend every information session you can. Attend open interviews. Tech companies fill their seats really early in the school year, and it's really hard to get in later. Network at professional seminars. Keep your LinkedIn profile up to date, and actively use it.

What did you do as an intern at Salesforce?

I was a tech writer on the Infrastructure Engineering Documentation team. I would help strategize solutions to problems, plan, and implement solutions. Most often, this was researching, interviewing subject matter experts, and writing documentation, but it varied.

What was challenging about your internship?

I spent the first three weeks doing nothing but reading and attending meetings. I had to not only learn how my company worked, but how our infrastructure worked. I had to learn a lot.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

The opportunities I was presented with were wonderful. I was granted leadership of a big monthly meeting, I wrote documentation that has been published and is currently being used by compliance engineers, and I had my ideas valued by supported and shared by managers and VPs.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Learn as much as you can as fast as you can. Apply for jobs early. Teach yourself xml. Learn style, software doc, and instructional text design. My job involved much less writing than I expected and much more content strategy. Internal doc is less about delivering polished documents and more about devliering the right docs at the right time. ”



Charlotte Underhill

MA in Professional Writing (Dec. '16)

Proposal Writing Intern, Summer-Fall 2017

Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Internship Type:

- paid
- unpaid

Applied by:

Did not apply - my resume was passed around by contacts in the D.C. area

Accepted by:

Mid April

Internship Category:

- corporate communication
- editing & publishing
- grant writing / fundraising
- healthcare communication
- information architecture
- journalism and news media
- non-profit communication
- public relations & marketing
- science writing
- technical writing
- user experience strategy
- writing for multimedia

What skills did you have that gave you an advantage in securing this internship?

My employer was impressed by the variety in my writing experience and the technical writing-oriented courses I've taken as an MAPW.

What skills did you strengthen or learn at your internship?

Federal proposals are extremely limited in page length and content, so I significantly honed in on my editing skills.

What are the steps you took to land your internship?

I applied for many internships, but ultimately, I was contacted by a company I hadn't applied to. I had a phone "interview" with my managers, but they really just wanted to know when I could start.

What did you do as an intern at CACI?

My primary job was to create Master Contract Descriptions that detailed work CACI had done on previous federal contracts, so that the Proposal Writers could highlight the company's expertise when competing to win new project contracts. I also helped edit and write sections of new proposals.

What was challenging about your internship?

The world of federal contracts is much larger and more complicated than I ever imagined, so it took a long time for me to learn how everything works. And it doesn't help that people speak almost entirely in acronyms. Once I had a better grasp on the various processes and schedules involved in proposal writing, it was easier for me to produce accurate work the first time around.

What did you enjoy about your internship?

I got to work on multi-billion dollar contracts for clients like NASA, the Army, the NSA, etc., and it made me feel like I was a part of an important process.

What advice do you have for students interested in this field?

“ Be prepared for tight deadlines, irregular work loads, and strict writing expectations. The government has very specific criteria for every detail of proposals, so there is limited room for creativity. Proposal writers also have odd schedules - it's very common for them to work 80 hour weeks for two months and then take three months off work. ”