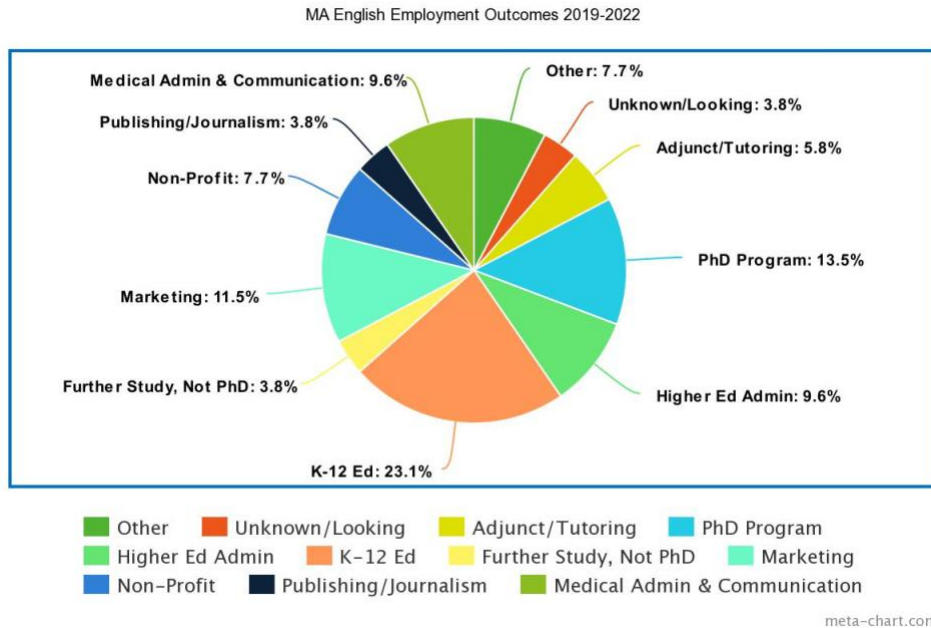
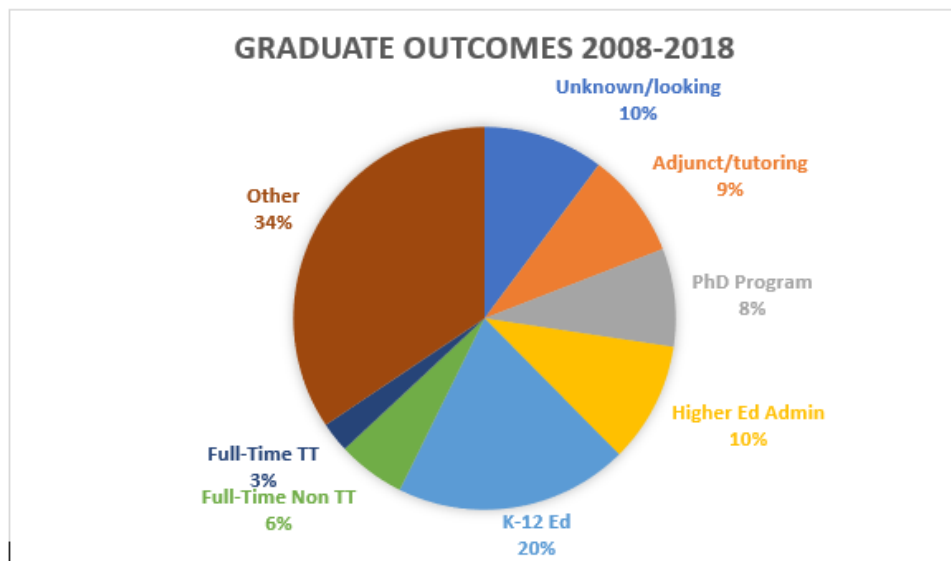


### Villanova MA English Alumni Career Paths

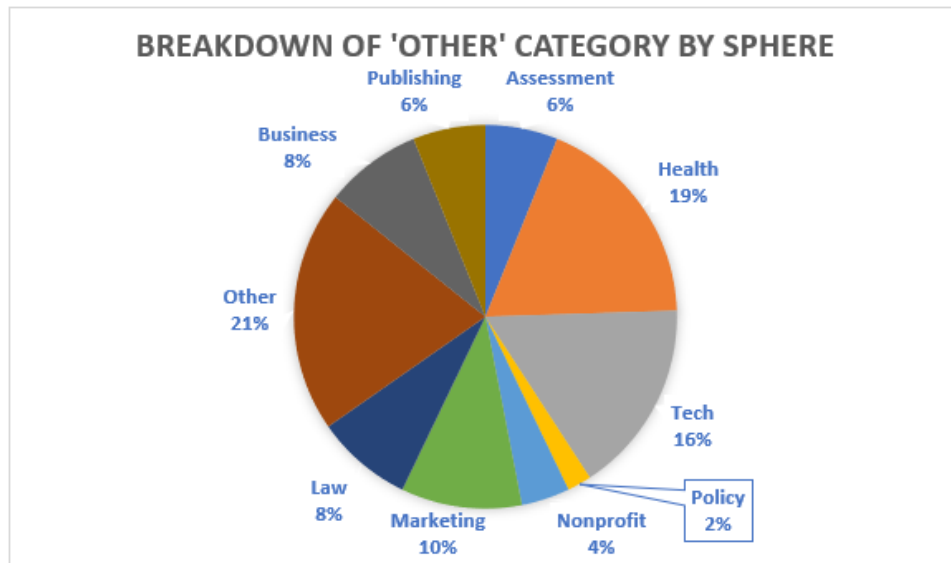
Villanova English MA graduates have job titles like producer, director, editor, analyst, and writer. As can be seen in the below chart of employment outcomes spanning 2019-2022, our alumni work in diverse fields that rely on sophisticated skills in reading, writing, and analysis.



Some of our alumni pursue careers in marketing, editing, and communications related to medicine and technology. In addition, our program is popular with secondary school teachers, many of whom continue to work in the classroom as they complete our courses. Quite a few of our graduates find work related to education in one way or another. The below chart shows our graduates' career outcomes over a ten-year window (as compiled in 2018). As depicted in the chart, there is tremendous diversity in the kinds of work that our graduates do.



Our graduates' careers are so varied that even our 'other' category needs a substantial 'other' category!



In addition, a number of our alumni proceed to further study in PhD programs that are well suited to their personal and professional goals.

#### **Recent Alumni in PhD Programs**

- Theo Campbell '23 MA, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Caitlin Salomon '23 MA, University of Delaware
- Sam Covais '22 MA, Binghamton University
- Em Friedman '22 MA, University of Pennsylvania
- Jonathan Weiss '22 non-matriculated, Temple University
- Kristen Sieranski '21 MA, University of Notre Dame
- Olivia Stowell '21 MA, University of Michigan
- Matthew Edholm '20 certificate, University of St. Andrews
- Matthew Ryan '20 MA, Catholic University of America
- Avni Sejpal '20 MA, University of Pennsylvania
- Joseph Alicea '19 MA, UC Santa Cruz
- Kyle Traynham '19 MA, Claremont
- Angeline Nies-Berger '18 MA, Rutgers University
- Stephen Reaugh '18 MA, Washington University in St. Louis
- William Repetto '18 MA, University of Delaware
- Casey Smedberg '18 MA, University of Connecticut

## Grad Alumni Professional Profiles

**Corey Waite Arnold**

**Video Game Design**



My time at Villanova was invaluable, and the courses I took there enrich my writing daily. Some recent examples: I'm currently writing a post-apocalyptic hard(ish) sci-fi game, and I was a TA for Heather Hicks when she was teaching a course on Apocalyptic Lit, so I think about her research and writing all the time. When I was hired to write that game I was also surprised to find that it speculates a future in which Lagos, Nigeria has become an even more significant global megacity, and has expanded some industries into near space. So I've been able to use what I learned in the Postcolonial Lit class I took with Chiji Akoma. Dr. Akoma introduced us to a number of amazing Nigerian novels in that class, and I even wrote about one set in Lagos, so I'm pleased I can use that research here and there.

In terms of skills: I learned to write under deadline, to develop ideas in conversation via seminar, to take, give, and implement feedback, to draft, to edit. All kinds of stuff. Plus I wouldn't have gotten any interviews for the work

I've done so far without "MA in English" on my resume. It's a super flexible degree and I'm grateful to have it.

**Em Friedman**

**PhD Study**



I study medieval Christianity and mysticism in conjunction with contemporary critical theory. The interdisciplinarity of my project works well in an English department because it allows me to move between subfields (like medievalism and black study/queer/feminist theory) while also drawing from adjacent fields in the humanities (like theology and philosophy).

I had a wholly great experience with Villanova's English M.A. program. My first year classes introduced me to literature I am still working on, and the coursework and thesis grew my confidence and experience in closely reading and theorizing my chosen texts/periods. I feel well prepared for PhD coursework, and a bit ahead of the curve as I know what I want to keep working on. I also met mentors (both professors and peers) who I envision will be career-long interlocutors. I attribute my admission to several top PhD

programs to the support and guidance of these teachers and friends.

I gained experience self-managing multiple academic projects with various deadlines simultaneously: my second year included finishing edits for a journal article, writing final papers for classes, TAing as a teaching intern, applying to PhD programs, helping organize Villanova's Women and Gender Conference as the GWS Graduate Assistant, and researching and writing a 100-page thesis. Though challenging at the time, I gained valuable skills managing my unstructured time and breaking down large projects into smaller goals, which serves me greatly in terms of work/life balance as a PhD student.

**Sarah Gregory**

### **High School Teaching During MA Studies**



I have been in education for seven years, the last four of which I spent as a high school English teacher at a small private school in Lancaster County. Since it is a small school, I taught a different schedule each year, including a variety of English-related courses for grades 9-12. For the 2022-23 school year, I went part time in teaching to begin the English MA program at Villanova full time. For me, the best part of teaching high school English is that it combines many things I love and can do well: working with students, facilitating discussions, tutoring in writing, and studying literature deeply and broadly.

*Regarding balancing teaching with being in the Villanova MA program:* Once I got into a routine with my schedules, the work was pretty manageable with a few exceptions: grad school term paper time, high school grades being due, and AP exam lead-up. While the first semester was a big adjustment, I

tried to keep adapting. What helped me avoid the pile up was writing everything out on one big calendar, and then scheduling time each day to look ahead and get started on bigger assignments. I also used to spend a lot longer commenting on my own students' essays than I should have, trying to provide encouragement and advice for each possible thing, and I had to let go of that expectation on myself, completely changing the way I provided feedback. In the end, this shift actually ended up making me a better teacher, and I saw some of my students improve their writing more than in previous years!

My work in the Villanova English MA has absolutely filtered into my high school teaching. There were many literature-specific things I learned that applied directly to my AP Lit or World Lit courses; for example, I taught "Araby" to AP Lit students, and we read *Dubliners* in a *Ulysses* course I took. I also took a course on the "Ethnic Canon" that helped me to reconsider the way I was writing and developing curriculum at my school. I think another benefit of teaching and being a student at the same time is a sense of camaraderie with my students. We were able to share the fact that we had assignments, reading homework that needed to be completed, and were trying to improve our writing and discussion abilities. This led to some really wonderful personal growth for myself, but also made me a better teacher and allowed several students to open up to English in a way they hadn't before. And, of course, developing my own skills in English only made me better at teaching those same skills.

**Aiden James Kosciesza**

**Higher Ed Teaching**



I teach courses in English composition and literature, humanities, and gender studies at the Community College of Philadelphia. Recently, I've accepted a new TT position as an assistant professor of communication at Central Michigan University, where I will start soon.

The advantages of working as a community college professor are academic freedom and working with our incredible students. Teaching English offers a lot of flexibility in terms of course material, so by designing my own syllabi, I can make sure that I'm always teaching something that I'm passionate about. My students are diverse and motivated, and it's rewarding to help them refine their voices as writers and reach their professional goals.

The English MA developed my critical thinking and analysis skills, which I use in everyday life—for example, when reading between the lines of a politician's speech, or carefully reviewing a legal document. More recently, I have turned those skills to media analysis. In 2019, I entered the doctoral program in Media and Communication at Temple University, where I am now wrapping up my dissertation. I've used skills developed during my English MA work to analyze media texts, and have published academic journal articles on reality TV, video games, and ethical research methodologies.

**Alex Liska**

**Higher Ed Administration**



Until recently, I served as Coordinator for Student Affairs at Neumann University, but I have recently accepted the position of Director of Retention & Sponsored Programs at Neumann. As Coordinator for Student Affairs, I supported the student experience through a myriad of functions including event planning, assessing campus engagement, parent and family engagement, building campus traditions, advising the budgets of the Student Government Association and all clubs, and more. Something that was both challenging and immensely rewarding in that role was fostering the growth of student leaders by helping them discover their own worth and potential. I am now very excited to embark on the new journey of Retention work here at Neumann, as another way of supporting the student experience and excellence at Neumann University.

The Villanova English MA helps me in my present work because it gave me the skills to digest, understand, and apply the ideas in dense texts such as scholarship on Student Development Theory and studies about campus engagement. It made me a more critical thinker and a better professional.

**Michael Nace**

**Medical Communications**

I am the Brand Director for Rare Disease Advisor (RDA), which is part of Haymarket Media's network of Advisor websites. RDA is a news-driven web brand that fills informational gaps within the rare disease community with much-needed news, perspectives, and resources.

Having a background in writing that includes digital content chops is particularly valuable in the medical communications industry. If you can combine these skills with a keen understanding of sectors within the industry, it can prove quite valuable to companies such as Haymarket. This is particularly true if you can combine writing and editing with a background in biology or the life sciences. I



highly recommend pursuing medical communications, as there is a pressing need for business professionals with strong writing, editing, and communications skills.

Honing my skills as a writer and learning how to communicate complex ideas formed the foundational building blocks of my career. Having an MA in English from Villanova led me to work early on as a copywriter — first at a company and later as a freelancer. As I grew my client base, they pushed me to learn new skills in addition to writing, such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media, and digital content writing. Eventually, a freelance opportunity turned into a full-time job that introduced me to digital news publishing and medical communications. None of this could have happened if I didn't identify primarily as a writer and content creator.

As someone who has hired and managed dozens of people in my career, I can tell you that having an MA in English is an excellent degree to hold when applying for a wide range of roles within medical communications. On the editorial side, we're always actively looking for professional writers and editors with advanced degrees in English. Beyond that, there are several areas within Marketing that also directly benefit from business professionals with a background in English.

**Franki Rudnesky**

**Journalism**

As a staff writer, I research, interview sources and curate information to write articles related to the happenings in Philadelphia and the surrounding region. I particularly love writing about all the vibrant events, restaurants, fashion and people that make the city unique. I always enjoyed writing, social media and being creative, and this job allows me to marry so many of my interests together. It can be challenging to experience writers' block at times and to find new and interesting story ideas, but many of the skills I learned through my studies allow me to push through.

I definitely think my English MA from the prestigious Villanova University made me stand out as a candidate to be considered for a role at a respected media outlet in Philadelphia. During my interview, I talked about my thesis work which helped me to express my creativity, critical thinking, research skills and work ethic. Every day in my job I use those skills which the MA program helped me to hone.



**Kyle Traynham**

**Secondary Education**



I teach upper school English, grades ten and eleven, at Harvard-Westlake School in Los Angeles. I teach literature, writing, close reading, and the importance thereof.

I had a great time at Villanova with great professors like Crystal Lucky, Jean Lutes, Travis Foster and Kamran Javadizadeh—an alum of Harvard-Westlake school, who was actually taught by my current department chair. The program provided me with the skills that I needed to obtain this job because of the level of thinking that goes into teaching literature. It trained me to think about literature and close reading in a way that was there from college, but they added to the palette, in terms of thinking about literary theory, thinking about how to approach a text through certain theories and through certain lenses, whether a feminist lens or a queer lens, whatever the

lens is.

I think being able to read and to write clearly and cogently with poise helps in any situation that you're in. Everyone needs to be able to write a letter or an email; everyone needs to be able to look below the surface and make connections and use logic.

Literature and the humanities allow me to think about the world and my place in the world. Literature has this way of forcing one to become an empath. (As of fall 2023, Kyle has started in a PhD program at Claremont).

**Jonathan Weiss**

**Attending as a Non-Matriculated Student; PhD Study, Law**



I had been practicing law for 26 years when I decided to pursue my Ph.D. in English, which had been a long-time dream. I had previously earned both my B.A. and M.A. in English. After speaking to several different people at different universities, including Mike Malloy at Villanova, I decided to enroll as a non-matriculated graduate student at Villanova. The reasons were threefold.

(1)-(2) In order to apply to a Ph.D. program, I would need a current writing sample, and I would need current letters of reference; and

(3) I wanted to make sure I enjoyed taking classes again.

I enjoyed both of my Nova classes tremendously. Taking the classes helped me to become more current with respect to literary theory (the last theory class I had taken was 30 years ago) and literary studies in general (e.g., current research and essay writing protocols).

Notwithstanding the generation gap, I learned a lot from the other MA students (and hopefully they learned from me). Finally, when it came time to apply to Ph.D. programs, both my professors at Nova wrote letters of reference for me. I also was able to use one of my class essays (with subsequent revisions) as a writing sample.

Taking classes at Nova was invaluable in terms of my ability to apply and get accepted into an English Ph.D. program. The support I received at Villanova was fantastic. I was able to obtain letters of reference from my two MA professors at Villanova (who believed I had the abilities to succeed in a Ph.D. program). In addition, the MA program offered support with regard to the Ph.D. application process. This included seminars where prior Villanova graduates spoke about the application process as well as input from professors on the application process—without which, I would have had an incredibly difficult time trying to navigate the process.



## **Professional Preparation**

Villanova's MA in English offers a variety of options for students looking to integrate their English studies with career readiness.

**Professional Research Option:** This [option](#) for second-year graduate students is an independent study in which students identify one or a cluster of professions in which an advanced degree in English is a benefit. Students work on a research paper that explores the history and future prospects of the field of interest, interviewing current professionals and generating materials like resumes and cover letters. Students make the fruits of their research available to others in the program by adding a bound volume of their project to the [PRO library](#).

**Teaching Internship:** Villanova offers a [Teaching Internship Program](#) that allows you to work one-on-one with a graduate faculty member as a teaching intern. Unlike other graduate programs that require students to serve as TAs, TIP is a strictly optional program that offers you a unique opportunity to assist a faculty member in the teaching of an undergraduate English course. Teaching interns meet with the faculty member weekly to discuss the class, design and execute lesson plans under their guidance, and confer with students on their written work.

**Career Center:** Villanova MA students and alumni can take advantage of the university's [career center](#), as well as the English department's [graduate placement committee](#). This committee is happy to help students and alumni with advice and with review of application materials for further educational programs, including in fields related to, but outside of, English.

**LinkedIn and Handshake:** Our alumni and current students are invited to join our program's private LinkedIn group (with over 150 members) as well as Villanova's own Handshake networking platform.