

Abby Ponder, B.A. English Professional Writing, 2016

By Adriana Funke, Megan Wright, & Max Chambers

Marketing Specialist, Maury Regional Health

"[English] is a degree that can be used in a plethora of ways. After all, the world will always need good writers."



Abby Ponder graduated from Western Kentucky University with a bachelor's degree in Professional Writing in 2016, minoring in Literature and Journalism Writing. Ponder worked in marketing for several universities in Kentucky after graduation. In December 2018, Ponder became a Marketing Specialist for [Maury Regional Health](#), a collective of three hospitals and a network of physician practices throughout southern Middle Tennessee.

As a native of Glasgow, Kentucky, Ponder grew up attending events on WKU's campus. She realized that the English and journalism programs, as well as the [Mahurin Honors College](#) and study abroad opportunities, were too good to pass up. Ponder decided on Professional Writing because it was the perfect medley of everything she wanted to pursue: creative writing, journalism, editing, publishing, and writing in the workforce. Ponder loved her time in the English department because it was a community that fostered discussion and encouraged students to grow as writers and as people.

Ponder chose to focus on marketing because of her second internship with the [Potter College of Arts & Letters Dean's Office](#). There, she worked on press releases, social media campaigns, and many other projects. "[It] was my first real-world introduction to marketing, a path that led to some fantastic experiences and a career that I love," said Ponder. She also found that her Editing and Publishing course with Dr. Angela Jones and her time tutoring in [The Writing Center](#) with Dr. Jane Fife were instrumental in building her copyediting experience.

After graduation, Ponder became the Content Specialist for University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg, Kentucky, writing for University Communications & Marketing. In that position, she wrote media releases, feature stories, newsletters, and website content. In fall 2017, Ponder joined the branding, marketing, and communication office at Murray State University, a regional four-year institution in western Kentucky. She believes that both positions prepared her for her current position as a Marketing Specialist.

At Maury Regional Health, Ponder regularly uses many of the skills she learned as a Professional Writing major. “My daily activities consist of helping to manage 15+ social media profiles, copy editing, designing graphics, creating or updating promotional and informational materials, coordinating community seminars, taking photos and, of course, writing – namely writing news releases, blog entries, website content and a monthly system-wide employee newsletter,” said Ponder. She also loves to write creatively in her spare time, which she finds can “flex a different set of writing muscles than what I use in my day job.”

Ponder knows that it is important for English majors to build their résumés and portfolios before they leave WKU. “Be versatile in your writing styles, your extracurricular experiences and your other skills, such as social media, design and more. A large part of marketing and professional writing is being able to adjust your voice and style based on your audience and your platform – conveying complex information in quick and informative bursts. As such, versatility (and brevity) is key.”

