

Chaz Lively, B.A. English Professional Writing, 2016

By Katie Hanson and Bryson Keltner

Technical Writer, KirkpatrickPrice

“There is no ‘field of English.’ That shows you that your major/minor can do anything since it is applicable to almost any field.”

Chaz Lively of Leitchfield, Kentucky, graduated from WKU in May 2016. He has accomplished something all students hope for: having a job right out of college.

Chaz works for [KirkpatrickPrice](#) of Bowling Green, a firm that provides auditing services for information security. As a technical writer at KirkpatrickPrice he creates documents and compiles the results of audits from professional auditors. His job requires him to write the documents in a way that is both comprehensible and effective for the client.

Chaz began working at KirkpatrickPrice while he was still in college; he interviewed with and was hired by the company during his penultimate semester at WKU. He recalls working with security standards, collecting data, and writing reports as his initial role for the firm. Chaz states some of his success in getting selected for the position came from his professional writing capstone course and notes the assistance of Dr. Angela Jones, who helped look over his résumé and prepare his job application materials.

At his interview, Chaz provided different pieces of his portfolio: a final technical proposal, a linguistics essay, and a literature essay. He said it was important to show that he could write in different styles and suggests that other writers do the same when applying to jobs.

Chaz started his college career with an interest in writing film scripts. However, after he took English 200, he developed a love for English and decided to change his major. Although he concentrated in professional writing, he still has a love and appreciation



for literature: “There will never be a time where literature won’t be important to the English Major.”

Along with his literature courses, Chaz says his professional writing background helped prepare him for the work world. “It taught me audience analysis,” he said. “I learned how to interpret an audience and write based on what the readers want to hear. It taught me the hierarchy of information too, because you don’t want readers to struggle. If you learn about the people you interact with, you’ll better understand how to write for them.”

Chaz has a lot more advice to offer to potential and current students. He recommends that students “engage in as many organizations as possible.” He says he wishes he would have been more engaged with more resources because clubs and other activities help students gain experience and share their writing.

As far as Chaz’s current life, he’s loving his job at KirkpatrickPrice. There are many millennial WKU graduates there, and he says he loves challenging the millennial stereotype. Some of the things that his job has taught him recently are that some writing components—such as the MLA style that English majors are so fond of—are often debatable and up for discussion in his workplace. He has even attended meetings where his workers clarify a specific rule they will use. He also found that a well-developed vocabulary is especially important.

Chaz has been recently accepted into the master’s in public policy program at George Mason University and will continue to work from a distance for KirkpatrickPrice. He encourages all students to always seek more learning experiences, as well.

