Program of Study
The Department of Broadcasting and Journalism offers a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. People are storytellers. Narratives are the main ways we explore, understand, and explain our time and world to each other. Journalism helps students learn to gather information and relate material with clarity and brevity across multiple platforms. Content is key. The Journalism major requires core courses in basic newswriting and reporting, media law, and research methods. Students complete their Journalism coursework by choosing an emphasis such as news/editorial, public relations, or advertising. Some examples of content in each area include the following:

- **News/editorial** – newswriting, sportswriting, editing, reviewing, photojournalism, etc. Students can cover city council meetings and presentations by visiting speakers, interview athletes and artists, and take part in press conferences with government officials and other public figures.
- **Public relations** – PR principles, campaign strategies, etc. PR students make plans for businesses, nonprofits, and other clients.
- **Advertising** – copy and layout, media planning, etc. Writing copy, planning various media, and creating visuals complement interaction with commercial interests.

In addition to being an excellent major, Journalism also makes a great minor when coupled with an assortment of major fields: broadcasting, political science, business, graphic communication, or health, to name a few. Journalism adds value to students’ talents by strengthening communication skills. Journalism graduates become lawyers, entrepreneurs, grant writers, and creative designers as well as reporters, editors, and photographers.

*My four years at Western remain pivotal in my life.* – Jim Slusher, assistant managing editor, *Daily Herald*

*Being part of WIU’s award-winning Western Courier staff provided me with great clips, terrific guidance, lasting friendships, and a little extra scratch each week. . . . Three out of those four things landed me in the journalism career I enjoy today.* – Chris Ward, *Wizard* magazine, freelance journalist, and author of *Political Power: Barack Obama* (Bluewater Productions)

It is suggested that aspiring journalists in high school write all kinds of material—and read even more. At community colleges, they are encouraged to use media of all kinds and to try a variety of courses. Transfer credits may be accepted; for transfer policies and procedures, contact the Admissions office at (309) 298-3157.

**Faculty**
Journalism faculty members bring decades of real-world experience at daily newspapers, magazines, blogs, radio stations, an advertising agency, and TV stations, among other work. Several remain active in writing and researching, producing journalism, scholarly articles, books, and conference presentations.
Student Activities
Recognized student organizations for Journalism majors and minors include chapters of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), the American Advertising Federation (WAF: the Western Advertising Federation), the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), and the Society of Professional Journalists (Western SPJ). Learn more at wiu.edu/osa.

Special Opportunities
Students are encouraged to contribute to the student-run newspaper, the Western Courier, which publishes three times per week, or to take advantage of opportunities with University Relations or other campus media. In the classroom, Journalism has a student-faculty ratio that encourages close working relationships between teachers and students, a computer lab, electronic classrooms, and internship opportunities. Our students have gained valuable experience, references, and industry contacts at sites ranging from newspapers in Topeka, Pekin, and Burlington to magazines in the Quad Cities and Peoria, to Ebony magazine and WLS-AM in Chicago.

Honors in Journalism
To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15% of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. A comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 or more semester hours. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors.

General honors seminars in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences provide students with the opportunity to explore key academic issues with distinguished faculty members. In the major, honors students take Journalism courses for honors credit, and in their senior year, they complete an extensive writing project comparable to a thesis. Students must maintain a minimum 3.4 GPA overall and in honors courses.

Scholarships
Scholarships range from awards earmarked for certain geographic areas to grants for community college transfers with experience in student media. Other general scholarship help is available through the department office, (309) 298-2888; WIU's Scholarship Office, (309) 298-2001; or on the Web at wiu.edu/scholarship.

After College
Journalism graduates are not confined to print media, of course. Although WIU’s Journalism graduates work in daily and weekly newspapers in a variety of markets, they also have careers in public relations offices of corporations, the offices of public officials and political figures, advertising agencies, nonprofits and advocacy groups, and magazines. Others pursue graduate study in journalism, liberal arts fields, business, law, or education. As Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Thomas Friedman says, “Imagination is the single most important characteristic; the liberal arts is the best fountain for imagination.”

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