Integrated Baccalaureate and Master’s Degree in Communication

Admission Requirements

• The applicant should apply to the Western Illinois University School of Graduate Studies for admission to the integrated program in Communication.
• The applicant must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 or higher, and a major GPA of 3.25 or higher.
• The applicant should provide a personal statement of purpose and request three letters of recommendation.
• Official transcripts must be sent from each college or university attended.
• The applicant should provide a three-five page writing sample.

Note: Grades earned in all undergraduate coursework completed (including transfer courses) will be used to calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility.

Degree Requirements

The Integrated Baccalaureate and Master’s Degree Program in Communication offers students the choice of one of four degree exit options: (1) Thesis, (2) Creative project, (3) Research paper or (4) Internship. The thesis option (6 sht) seeks to answer a question relevant to an area of human communication. The creative project option (3 sht) is intended for students whose career aspirations are best served by gaining practical experience in the execution of an applied research project. Both options require a research proposal to be presented and the completed thesis/creative project to be defended to faculty and students. The research paper (1 sht) requires students to significantly revise a course paper under the supervision of a faculty member and to take additional courses.

The internship option (1 sht) requires additional coursework and the completion of an approved professional internship experience, and involves delivering a public presentation following the completion of the internship. The minimum required hours for the program are 33 sht.

• The thesis option consists of 6 sht of thesis research (COMM 601) and 27 sht of directed electives.
• The creative project consists of 3 sht of research project (COMM 602) and 30 sht of directed electives.
• The research paper consists of 1 sht of paper revisions (COMM 603) and 33 sht of directed electives.
• The internship option consists of 1 sht of internship presentation (COMM 604), 3 sht of internship experience (COMM 596), and 30 sht of directed electives.

Undergraduate students will be required to complete 120 sht of coursework. As part of the Integrated Baccalaureate and Master’s Degree Program, students may take up to 9 sht of “bridge” courses. A student must be a senior and accepted into the integrated program before taking bridge courses.

Career Opportunities

There are a number of future opportunities available to graduates of our integrated program including going on to pursue doctoral work or seeking employment in such fields as:
• Public relations
• Non-profit management
• Magazine writing and blogging
• Student development
• Director of giving/donation

Program Location:
Macomb and Quad Cities

Contact Information

Questions about the program:
Department of Communication
Nathan Miczo, PhD, graduate coordinator
(309) 298-1507
N-Miczo@wiu.edu

General admission questions:
School of Graduate Studies
(309) 298-1806 or (877) WIU GRAD
Grad-Office@wiu.edu
wiu.edu/grad
Integrated Program Course Requirements

Students in the integrated program are allowed to use nine semester hours of B-level (“bridge”) courses to satisfy both the Bachelor of Arts in Communication degree and the Master of Arts in Communication degree. Students choosing to complete the master’s degree in one year must enroll in COMM 500 in the fall, and COMM 504 in the spring of their senior year. There is a three-course sequence in the graduate program. Failure to complete COMM 500 and 504 will delay a student’s graduation from the program. The following courses may be used as a directed elective: COMM 409G/B, COMM 410G/B, COMM 413G/B, COMM 425G/B, COMM 441G/B, COMM 456G/B, COMM 480G/B. If taken after the undergraduate degree has been completed, those courses should not be taken with the “B” designator.

I. Core Courses (9 s.h)
   - COMM 500/500B Communication Theory (3 s.h)
   - COMM 504/504B Empirical Research in Human Communication (3 s.h)
   - COMM 506 Message Production (3 s.h)

II. Directed Departmental Electives (9 s.h)
    Directed electives must be at the 500 level, excluding COMM 520, COMM 596, COMM 601, COMM 602, COMM 603, COMM 604 and COMM 679.

III. Select one of the following exit options (15-16 s.h):
    A. Thesis
       COMM 601 Thesis (6 s.h)
       Directed Electives (9 s.h)
    B. Creative Project
       COMM 602 Creative Projects (3 s.h)
       Directed Electives (12 s.h)
    C. Research Paper
       COMM 603 Research Paper (1 s.h)
       Directed Electives (15 s.h)
    D. Internship
       COMM 604 Internship (1 s.h)
       COMM 596 (3 s.h)
       Directed Electives (12 s.h)

Total Program: 33-34 s.h

“I have received endless support from the faculty in the Department of Communication, and have been consistently impressed with the high quality of the faculty in the department. Doing the integrated program in such a fantastic department at this great university was a ‘no brainer’ for me.”

— Brenna Smith
Integrated Program Participant, MA, 2018