Curriculum
Coursework emphasizes strategies for leading, managing and marketing sport enterprises, as well as the economic and financial applications of sport. In addition, students are exposed to the cultural capital, ethical, legal and socially-inclusive foundations of sport in the United States and around the world.

Students pursuing a Master of Science in Sport Management may choose either a thesis (38-40 semester hours [sh]) or a non-thesis (42 sh) option for completing the degree. Both options require students to complete KIN 511 Measurement and Statistical Analysis (3 sh) and KIN 512 Research Methods in Kinesiology (3 sh), a core of eight sport management courses (24 sh) and a capstone internship experience (4 to 6 sh). Students in the thesis option complete an additional 4 sh of thesis-related coursework, while students in the non-thesis option complete 6 to 8 sh of elective coursework.

Career Opportunities
An MS degree in Sport Management can lead to a variety of professional career opportunities across the landscape of the sports industry. As one of the oldest and most established Sport Management programs in the country, WIU has a rich network of alumni throughout the sports industry, who take pride in providing internship and job opportunities for our graduates.

Examples of where WIU Sport Management graduates have been employed include:

Professional Sport
- Chicago White Sox - Senior Vice President of Communications
- Columbus Blue Jackets - Manager of Education and Community Partnerships
- Minnesota Vikings - Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer
- NASCAR - Media Coordinator
- Oakland Raiders - Account Executive
- Phoenix Suns - Senior Activation Manager

Collegiate Sport
- Baylor University - Associate Director of Athletic Communications
- Louisiana Tech University - Assistant Athletic Director Ticket Sales
- Northwestern University - Director of Athletic Communication
- Old Dominion University - Director of Student-Athlete Development
- St. Edwards University - Assistant Director Annual and Individual Giving
- University of Michigan - Assistant Ticketing Manager
- Wake Forest University - Assistant Director, Athletic Communications
- Washington State University - Development Associate
- Western Illinois University - Assistant Athletics Director for Compliance

Facilities/Event Management
- LPGA State Farm Classic - Tournament Operations Coordinator
- USA Swimming - National Events Coordinator
- Octagon Sports - Operations Coordinator, Events
- 2017 Solheim Cup - Tournament Operations Manager
- Rice University - Facilities and Event Management Coordinator
- University of Massachusetts - Assistant Manager for Building Operations

Contact Information
Questions about the program:
Department of Kinesiology
(309) 298-1981
wiu.edu/kinesiology

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

- University of Nebraska–Lincoln - Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs/Director of Campus Recreation
- CBS Sports - Senior Director, Business Development/Sales

Graduate Assistantships

The WIU Department of Kinesiology annually awards multiple graduate assistantships and graduate teaching assistantships to qualified graduate students majoring in Kinesiology or Sport Management.

In addition, Sport Management students often receive graduate assistantships through other offices on campus. Students interested in applying for one of these other types of assistantships should contact the appropriate office for more information.

Networking

The professional development within the Sport Management arena begins the first day students walk onto Western's campus. WIU’s Sport Management program, and the University, provide numerous opportunities for students to get involved in activities that will strengthen their professional network. The Sport Management Association is a catalyst for student networking development through organized events and social activities. In addition, association members are provided with opportunities for leadership roles and community engagement by organizing trips to meet with professionals in the sports industry, hosting sport management professionals for on-campus lectures and engaging in fundraising activities.

What Our Graduates Say

“Choosing the Western Illinois Sport Management graduate program was a paramount step to achieving an exciting career in the sport industry. Through this experience, I have enjoyed positions at both top-tier NCAA Division I institutions, and at the professional level. Traveling the world as a media relations coordinator for the LPGA, and now handling public and media relations for the University of Texas women’s basketball team, have been made possible because of the education and hands-on experiences I received at Western.”

– Ashley Cushman, MS, 2006
Assistant Media Relations Director, University of Texas

Admission Requirements

Application materials for students selecting the MS degree in Sport Management include:

- Completed graduate application
- Official transcripts from completed degree institution and, if applicable, from all other institutions attended
- Statement of intent
  - Indicate why you want to attend graduate school, why you chose to apply to WIU, and what contribution you can make to the program.
  - Discuss your proposed area of academic emphasis, career aspirations, short and long term academic and professional goals, previous academic and work experiences and interest in physical activity and sport.
- A current résumé
- Three letters of recommendation – A minimum of two must be written from an advisor and/or professor addressing applicant’s academic performance and/or potential for graduate school.
- International students whose native language is not English must have an overall TOEFL score of at least 90 (Internet-based).

GPA Requirement

Criteria for Full Admission Status

- Minimum of 3.0 overall undergraduate GPA (four years) or a 3.2 overall GPA for the last two years of undergraduate study

Criteria for Probationary Admission Status

- Probationary students petition for full admission status after completion of 9 s.h. of Western graduate credit with a minimum GPA of 3.0

For more detailed program and admissions requirement information, go to wiu.edu/coehs/kinesiology/graduate_programs.

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– Ashley Cushman, MS, 2006
Assistant Media Relations Director, University of Texas

“Weekly meetings were held in which professionals from various areas of the sports industry were invited to speak. This gave us the opportunity to meet different leaders in the field and gain insight into potential career paths.”

– Naomi Hillsman, MS, May 2012
Assistant Media Relations Director, University of Texas

“The Sport Management Club provided me with great opportunities to network with sports professionals and alumni. Interacting with these people has given me insight into my possible career options. The club trips link academic work and the working world of sports.”

– Naomi Hillsman, MS, May 2012