



Public Affairs Reporting

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

To: Beth Ribarsky, School of Communication and Media director

From: Jason Piscia, Public Affairs Reporting program director

Re: Public Affairs Reporting "Tested Experience" Qualifications for potential faculty

Date: July 17, 2025

The Public Affairs Reporting program in the School of Communication and Media is supplying documentation for qualified "tested experience" for potential faculty members, instructors, and adjunct faculty. Within the field of Public Affairs Reporting, the terminal clinical degree is considered the master's degree. Additionally, PAR has a focused objective of training journalists to cover government and politics. The program meets this objective by immersing its students in a news reporting internship at the Illinois State Capitol. To prepare PAR students for the internship, they are required to take PAR-exclusive courses in the fall semester that provide practical-experience coursework in Advanced Public Affairs Reporting (PAR 501) and Developing Public Policy in Illinois (PAR 510). Given the narrow focus of those courses, PAR students are best served by faculty, instructors and adjuncts who possess practical and professional work experience in political science, public policy and/or journalism. Students benefit from current or recent professionals as their course instructors as it creates a depth in direct experience and the instructors are abreast of current topics and trends in the field. Having mentors currently in the field is highly beneficial for our students as they prepare to enter the Illinois Statehouse as news reporting interns and eventually other halls of government as part of their post-PAR journalism career.

PAR proposes potential faculty members, instructors and adjunct instructors who teach required and exclusive courses in the PAR curriculum have the following appropriate "tested experience."

- Minimum of a master's degree in disciplines equivalent or adjacent to journalism, communication, political science, public policy or public administration.
- Minimum of three years of professional, paid work or experience post-master's degree in a career related to journalism, communication, political science, public policy or public administration.

Approved:

Dr. Miriam Wallace, CPAE Interim Dean

7/28/25

Date

Dr. Brandon E. Schwab, VCAA/Provost

8/6/25

Date

July 28, 2025

Subject: PAR Tested Experience Vote

Dear Interim Dean Wallace,

During the week of 7/21-7/25, the School of Communication and Media participated in an anonymous vote using Google Forms regarding the proposed Public Affairs and Reporting tested experience policy. This policy is meant to verify an individual's qualifications to teach classes as an instructor, professor, or adjunct beyond degree requirements, such as professional experience. SCM voted a unanimous 8-0 in favor of this document (see below).

Sincerely,



Dr. Beth Ribarsky

Director of School of Communication and Media

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