

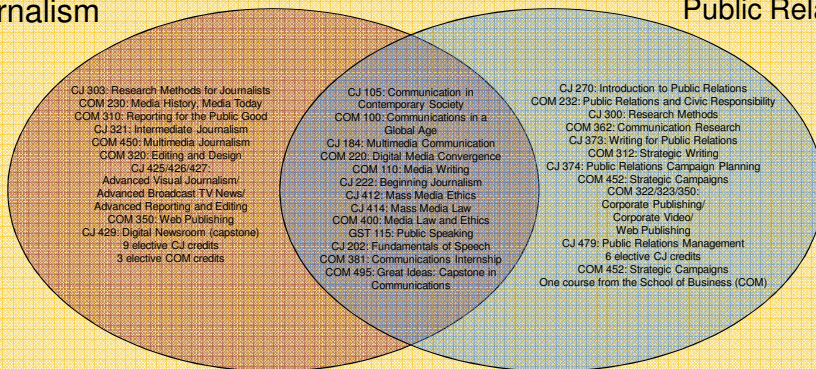
# Making an Informed Decision between Journalism and Public Relations

Olivia Jeske, Bugold Fellow, and Mike Dorsher, Ph.D., faculty mentor

## Journalism

## Curriculum

## Public Relations



"CJ" courses indicate UW-Eau Claire classes, while "COM" or "GST" refer to Elon University in North Carolina courses

## Useful skills

**Journalism:** knowledge of all kinds of media (including audio, video and photography); computer skills; an outgoing attitude; having initiative and the ability to be resourceful in every situation; the ability to handle stress and pressure



"There is one (skill), and you can learn everything else. You can improve your writing, you can learn video, you can learn audio, you can get better at social media, but you need to be curious. You need to always be asking why. You can't teach that. And I think that's what really separates journalists from everyone else." -Breann Schossow, journalism major, UW-Eau Claire

**Public Relations:** strong communication skills; a creative mind; good judgment, decision-making and problem-solving capabilities; an outgoing, confident, and persuasive personality; the ability to perform well within a team; a strong sense of personal ethics



"A lot of times in public relations ... you have a lot of meetings and things that you go to, and if you work for an advertising agency or a marketing agency or a PR agency, you're going to have to meet with clients, and if you can't present yourself professionally, your clients will be very receptive to that." -Nick Hogan, public relations major, UW-Eau Claire

## Pros and Cons

(as determined by six Eau Claire professors, professionals and students)

### Journalism:

**Pros:** focused on facts; serves the public interest, democracy; opportunities to do new things and meet prominent people

**Cons:** diminishing number of jobs; struggling industry; deadline pressures; fewer options for promotion; difficult work-life balance: long hours, often night and weekend work

### Public Relations:

**Pros:** growing field with many opportunities; better pay and work hours than journalists; less stringent deadlines

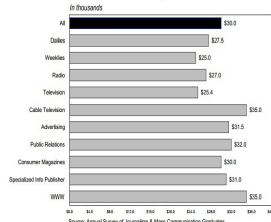
**Cons:** conflict between clients' desires and public needs; corporate views may not match personal views; corporations focused on profits over truth; difficult to measure effectiveness

"The biggest difference between public relations and journalism is the kind of questions you would ask on a day-to-day basis. And for journalism the question you would ask on a day-to-day basis in terms of this curiosity factor is, "Well, why are you doing that?" Why? You're always going to ask why. So even though it says here you're going to collect "who, what, when, where, why," the why is the most important. For public relations, it's much more about how you're doing this: Explain the process to me. What is it the company's doing? Because you have to be able to communicate about it." -Dr. Maureen Schriner, PR professor at UW-Eau Claire



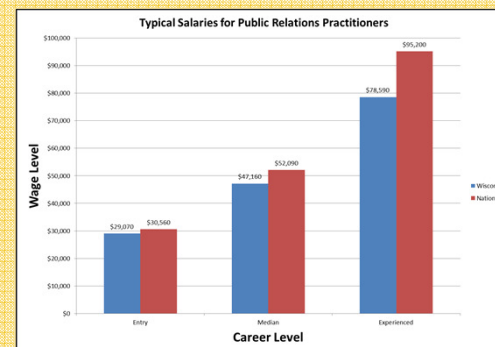
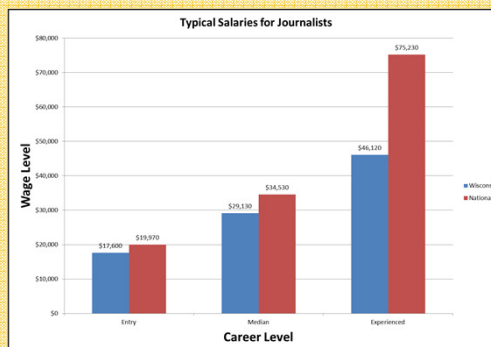
## Salaries compared

Median yearly salaries for 2010 Bachelor's degree recipients with full-time jobs



According to the Nov. 11 issue of AEJMC News

## Salary



According to 2009 salary statistics from WisCareers.com