

The Journalist

March 2005
Issue 5

Journalism Department Newsletter for Majors

Tidwell steps in just in time for re-accreditation

By Holly Mohr

James Tidwell, professor of journalism, stepped into his position as acting chair of the Journalism Department in Jan. 2005.

Tidwell began teaching journalism at EIU in 1987. He was granted tenure in 1990.

"I've always enjoyed teaching and dealing with students," Tidwell said. "I like the freedom and flexibility you have as a teacher."

Tidwell's favorite part of his new position is getting a much broader view of the department. Though the acting chair does not have as much flexibility in his schedule as other professors do, he does get to deal with students more. Tidwell's new responsibilities include helping students who have problems with faculty members, need waivers signed and require extra advising.

Aside from working more with students, Tidwell will be working closely with the faculty for the upcoming re-accreditation. EIU is one of the few schools accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education for Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Every six years the department is evaluated for accreditation. This will be Tidwell's fourth time working towards being re-accredited.

Lola McElwee, instructor at EIU said, "It's important to keep the department accredited. I can't think of a better person to lead us."

The department must meet nine standards to be re-accredited.

The ACEJMC recently changed the standards and EIU is among the first to be evaluated using the new system in the fall. A self-study will be produced for this year's accreditation. Tidwell said he and the faculty will be writing 200-300 pages



James Tidwell discusses ongoing scheduling plans with Mary Pierce, department secretary. Tidwell and the rest of the journalism staff are preparing for the upcoming re-accreditation.

Photo By Angie Faller

about the department's program for ACEJMC.

"We're creating an elaborate assessment plan. They want evidence we're doing what we say we're going to do," Tidwell explained.

One of Tidwell's goals as acting chair is to keep the faculty aware of what is going on.

"I'm in favor of faculty governance," Tidwell said.

He explained he wanted the faculty to be engaged in the decision making of the department.

McElwee said, "He's very good about keeping the faculty informed."

The transition from professor to acting chair was made easier by the help of Mary Pierce, the journalism department secretary. Tidwell said his job would be 10,000 times harder if it weren't for Pierce.

"I'd have been clueless without Mary," Tidwell said.

Ashley Corbett, freshman journalism and theater arts major, works with Tidwell in the journalism office. She described him as very professional

and personal.

"He has his moments where he's serious and then he'll start cracking jokes," Corbett said.

Tidwell began his career in journalism in junior high. He had a reputation for knowing a lot about sports. When his English teacher decided to start a student newspaper, Tidwell was selected as sports editor for his knowledge of sports.

"I was hooked from that day on," Tidwell said.

Standards of Accreditation:

1. Mission, Governance and Administration
2. Curriculum and Instruction
3. Diversity and Inclusiveness
4. Full-time and Part-time Faculty
5. Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity
6. Student Services
7. Resources, Facilities and Equipment
8. Professional and Public Service
9. Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Evan Bernier: WEIU-FM's 'Jack of All Trades'

By Mindy Brown

Evan Bernier, junior journalism major, came to EIU because he liked the campus after he visited. It was just far enough away from home that his parents wouldn't randomly stop by, he said.

When he graduates, Bernier will leave this University with the education and experience he needs for a future career in the field of radio broadcast.

Bernier declared his major sophomore year, after having worked at WEIU-FM for his freshman year. He joined the radio station because he wanted a job that had no relation to food services, he said.

"I'm lucky that I stumbled into [the radio station]," he said.

"He's kind of the jack of all trades. Bernier will help with anything."

— Jeff Owens, WEIU-FM station manager

Bernier has been the production manager for WEIU-FM for the past year.

WEIU-FM Station Manager Jeff Owens thinks that Bernier does a good job as production manager.

"He's kind of the jack of all trades," Owens said. "[Bernier] will help with anything because he's the go-to guy."

As production manager, Bernier produces the commercials for The Edge, The Odyssey and 88.9 FM, as well as doing all the log editing.

"I handle day-to-day stuff for Owens," Bernier said.

After graduation, Bernier plans to find a job in the field of radio broadcast. Bernier thinks his experiences here have given him a firm grasp of the business. He wants to continue to meet interesting people, just as he has at WEIU-FM.

"Meeting new and interesting people is the best part of the job," he said.



Evan Bernier, junior journalism major, announces the EIU softball game on 88.9 FM. Bernier is production manager at WEIU-FM.

Photo by Angie Faller

If Bernier could give any sort of advice to college students it would be to start as soon as possible in whatever interests them.

"[They] only have four years and that isn't that long," he said. "Don't be afraid to go in the first week of freshman year."

JSAC to plan awards banquet and revamp reading room

By Sara Wagoner

With the end of the semester approaching fast, the journalism banquet is just one more affair to add to the ever-growing list of events for journalism students. This year, the annual banquet will be held on Saturday, April 30. Planning an event like the banquet takes a lot of effort and help from the students. Representatives on the Journalism Student Advisory Council do just that.

The JSAC is made up of nine students who help provide the faculty with student perspectives on departmental issues and concerns. They are also responsible for helping plan a night that honors outstanding achievements by journalism students.

They assist the faculty with the planning and preparation of the event, as well as acting as hosts during the event itself.

Jessica Youngs, senior journalism major, said that being part of the JSAC has provided her with an experience she knows will make a difference. "It has given me the opportunity to make a change in the department and to see how my opinions can help other journalism students," Youngs said.

Along with preparation for the annual banquet, there are other decisions to make in the journalism department. This semester the council is working on a revamp of the reading room that is currently part of the journalism department. The reading room is located in the journalism office, Buzzard

Hall room 2602.

The journalism faculty and committee want more students to utilize the room and are looking for ways students can benefit most from its services. Suggestions have been made that would include placing a television in the room so that students can go there in between classes and catch up on the news, while reading the papers provided for them.

Also being considered is using the room as home to publication staff. Different organizations such as The Agency, The Warbler and other student media would be allowed to use the room for their meetings and work place. No decisions have been made, but the faculty and JSAC are expecting to have a decision next semester.

Stephen Haas wins 12 awards from IPA

By Megan Frejlich

Stephen Haas, sophomore journalism major, sports photo editor for The DEN and online editor, won 12 awards from the Illinois Press Association on Feb. 19.

Haas was given 11 awards for photography and one for online journalism. He was honored that the IPA would consider his photographs as award-winning pieces.

"I had never considered photography before working at The News Gazette in Danville," Haas said. "I started working there before college to make enough money to be able to come here. My original plan was to major in business."

Stephen's greatest inspiration to become involved in the field of photography was Rick Danzl, photographer for The Danville News Gazette. Haas became very close friends with Danzl and realized that he had found his calling. Photography, he decided, was "the best job in the world."

"We share the same birthday," Haas said. "I feel like we are connected in so many of the same ways."

"Danzl would always rip me apart for my photographs because he demanded the best out of me," Haas said. "He always knew I could do better than what I gave him."

After his job with The News Gazette, Haas found himself at EIU working as a photographer for The DEN.

Professor Brian Poulter has worked with Haas for two years at The DEN and has also taught him in the classroom. He aided Haas in choosing the best photos for the IPA competition.

"Stephen is always looking for new and more creative ways to capture his photography," Poulter said. "I saw the winners of the previous years and knew Stephen had what it took to win."

Professor Joe Gisondi, faculty adviser for The DEN, just started working with Stephen this year. "Stephen is an extremely talented, very mature, motivated young man," Gisondi said. "I am not surprised at all that Stephen won.

The fact that he won so many awards reflects his hard work and dedication to something he loves."

Poulter has been an influence on Haas during his years at EIU. He not only works with Haas on a student-teacher level, but on a friendly level as well.

"I had never considered photography before working at The News Gazette in Danville.... My original plan was to major in business."

– Stephen Haas

"I work with Stephen on a day-to-day basis," Poulter said. "He is a great kid. We'll just ask each other, 'what do you think of this photograph?'"

Both Poulter and Gisondi think Haas

has the talent and dedication needed to be successful in the field of photojournalism.

Poulter said, "A good photographer is versatile, meaning they can work on any assignment. I try to make Stephen versatile so he can become very successful one day."

"At this point in his life, I see him becoming very successful and hope for the best with whatever makes him happy in the future," Poulter said.

After graduation, Haas hopes to work for a major Midwest newspaper covering sports photography.

"I don't like small towns," Haas said. "I'd rather work for a major Midwest newspaper or even a suburban paper."

Poulter added, "Stephen wakes up and takes photographs, he goes to class and learns how to take photographs, he eats lunch and thinks about photographs. Basically, he eats, sleeps, and breathes photography."



Stephen Haas prepares to take pictures for an issue of The DEN. Haas earned 12 awards from the Illinois Press Association.

Photo by Angie Faller

EIU news anchor wins top honor

By Katie Hull

A last-minute decision to enter a competition has made a life-long change for Whitney Self, a junior journalism major. Who knew a tape of about a minute and fifteen seconds would allow Self to take home the Top News Anchor Award through the Broadcasters Education Association News Division?

Out of 200 other anchors' entries from universities nationwide, Self's tape came in first place. The tapes were sent to 12 television stations, reviewed and sent on to other stations, until her tape was the last one standing.

"I owe everything to WEIU for my success," Self said. Self will be traveling to Las Vegas for the Broadcaster's Education Association News Division awards banquet on April 21. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity," she said.

The award made a great school year even better for Self who was offered and accepted an internship for the Country Music Television station in Nashville, Tenn., for the summer of 2005.

"I'm nervous because I've never left home before, but this is a great opportunity to start off with."

—Whitney Self, junior journalism major on interning at CMT

"I'm nervous because I've never left home before, but this is a great opportunity to start off with," Self said.

In Nashville, Self will be doing various jobs such as following around music journalists, working in the award shows and helping with writing a weekly newsletter.

Self said she could not have done this without the help of Kelly Runyon, news director at WEIU. "She has helped me



Whitney Self, junior journalism major waits during a commercial break of News Watch. This summer, Self will be interning at CMT.

Photo by Angie Faller

grow as a person," Self said. Runyon has worked with Self for three years now.

When asked how to describe Self as an employee, Runyon said, "Hardworking, persistent and dedicated. The award is such a huge honor for her and the News Watch team. I am very happy for her."

Since Self's first day of her freshman year, she has been a part of WEIU. She is experienced in all aspects of the program, but has found her spot in anchoring. "I have an appreciation for all broadcasting positions; from behind the camera to technical work to anchoring," Self said. "Each job is as important and equal as the other."

Self said she has made some life-long friends because of her experiences working at WEIU.

Someday, Self wants to be a television anchor for a national level, top three market station. As her dreams are becoming realities, Self plans to let her experiences take her in the direction of her future.



Agency Director
Kimberlee Boise
kjboise@hotmail.com

Agency Assistant Director
Sara Wagoner
sportscast84@yahoo.com

Agency Adviser
Terri Johnson
tljohnson1@eiu.edu

The Journalist Editor
Holly Frejlich
hefrejlich@eiu.edu

Visit us on the Web at
<http://www.eiu.edu/~agency>

The Agency is a student-run public relations organization. Anyone is welcome to join. Meetings are every Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. in Buzzard Hall, room 2436, with working sessions Monday, from 6-8 p.m. in Buzzard 2436.