Application Instructions: Master of Science in Journalism Program

Deadlines

Our application deadlines vary depending on which specialization you wish to pursue. All admitted students will be considered for merit-based scholarships regardless of when they submit their admissions application.

**MSJ Summer-Start Applicants**  
*(Health, Environment and Science, Media Innovation and Content Strategy, Politics, Policy and Foreign Affairs, Social Justice and Investigative Reporting)*  
The admissions application to start in summer quarter will remain open until **April 17, 2020**. For applications submitted and completed prior to January 31, expect an admissions decision by March 6. For admissions applications submitted and completed after January 31, expect an admissions decision 45 days after we receive a completed application. Completed applications must include all transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation and required essays. Incomplete applications are not reviewed for an admissions decision.

**MSJ Fall-Start Applicants**  
*(Magazine, Social Justice and Investigative Reporting, Sports Media, Video and Broadcast)*  
The admissions application to start in fall quarter will remain open until **July 1, 2020**. For applications submitted and completed prior to January 31, expect an admissions decision by March 6. For admissions applications submitted and completed after January 31, expect an admissions decision 45 days after we receive a completed application. Completed applications must include all transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation and required essays. Incomplete applications are not reviewed for an admissions decision.

Application Requirements

1. **Bachelor’s Degree**  
   You must have a bachelor’s degree or expect to earn one before enrollment.

2. **Academic Transcripts**  
   When you apply, you must submit academic transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended, excluding institutions where you took non-credit coursework, such as a certificate program.  
   If you have transfer credit or study abroad credit, you must submit a transcript from the original grade-granting institution even if the transfer credit appears on your final degree transcript. Applicants can submit either official or unofficial transcripts; you can upload unofficial transcripts into your online application in the Academic Experience section. Please make sure that uploaded unofficial transcripts are complete and legible; if they are not, the processing of your application could be delayed. If the size of your transcript file is too large to upload directly into the system, please email your transcript to MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu.
**Applicants with international transcripts** must provide an English translation if the transcripts were not originally issued in English. To expedite the application review process, we strongly suggest that applicants with international transcripts submit an independent course-by-course credential evaluation and degree verification from a NACES provider (see [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org) for a list) at the time they submit their applications. This will allow the admissions committee to have an accurate assessment of your academic history.

**If you are admitted**, you will be required to submit official copies of all of your transcripts 30 days prior to enrollment, including your final undergraduate transcript with proof of your degree and the date it was conferred. Medill reserves the right to withdraw an admission offer if we do not receive these official transcripts by this deadline. It is your responsibility to request an official, sealed transcript from the registrar of each institution and to ensure transcripts are sent to Medill. The registrar should send transcripts to the Medill Office of Graduate Admissions at 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60208-2101 or electronically to MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu.

**Admitted students with an international transcript** (except Fulbright candidates) must submit an independent course-by-course credential evaluation and degree verification from a NACES provider (see [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org) for a list) and an official English translation of the transcripts (if they were not originally issued in English). If you did not already provide these with your application, the credential evaluation and degree evaluation form is due 30 days prior to enrollment.

### 3. Admissions Interview

Interviews are strongly encouraged for MSJ applicants. You can schedule an interview at any time during the application process. We encourage you to schedule your interview prior to submitting your application. Interviews are held in person at Medill or off campus in locations that our admissions officers visit. For applicants unable to meet in person, interviews may be held via Skype or similar service. If none of the listed interview times are convenient for you or if no interview slots are currently posted, contact Jacob Winston-Galant at jacob.winston-galant@northwestern.edu to schedule one.

### 4. GRE or GMAT Test Scores

Medill requires GRE or GMAT scores. The test must have been taken within five years of your application submission date.

Medill allows you the option to self-report your test scores on your application. Once you submit your application, we will review these unofficial scores along with the rest of your file. If we decide to offer you admission based on these unofficial scores, it will be on the condition that you send us your official scores at least 30 days prior to enrollment.

The official copy of the test scores should be sent directly to Medill from ETS or GMAC. Our GRE code is 1699. Our GMAT code is 6WZ-XH-66. Allow four weeks for our office to receive your scores.

You may request a waiver of the GRE and GMAT requirement if:

- You are a current degree-seeking Northwestern University student or degree-holding Northwestern University alumnus/a;
- You have earned a master's or doctorate degree;
• You have 5 or more years of full-time professional work experience in journalism or a closely related field;

• Your final cumulative undergraduate GPA was 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale or you are a senior with a current GPA of 3.5 or above.

If you are requesting a waiver based on any of the above criteria, you should check the GRE/GMAT waiver box in the Test Information section of the application. If you request a waiver based on work experience, you are required to submit a written waiver request with your current resume and transcript to MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu for approval.

Please note, if you request a waiver, we may still require that you take the GRE or GMAT if we think it will allow us to give better consideration to your application.

If you would like verification of your waiver prior to submitting your application, you may email MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu. Please attach relevant documents to your email request (e.g. resume, undergraduate and/or graduate transcripts).

If we approve your request, you can view the waiver approval by logging into your online application portal.

Please email MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu if you have questions about your eligibility for a waiver.

5. TOEFL or IELTS Test Scores (For International Applicants)

If you are an international student who earned an undergraduate degree at a college or university where the primary language of instruction was not English, submit TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores. The TOEFL or IELTS must have been taken within two years of your application submission date. Send TOEFL scores to Medill using code 1699-18. The IELTS test must be the Academic version. Students who are submitting IELTS scores can provide their TRF number on the application instead of sending an official report.

If you earned your entire bachelor's degree from a non-U.S. institution where the language of instruction was English, you do not need to submit TOEFL or IELTS scores. Instead, please provide official documentation from your college or university that the language of instruction was English.

If you completed your bachelor's degree at an institution (U.S. or non-U.S.) where the language of instruction was English, but you did not study at this institution for all four years of your degree, you will need to submit TOEFL or IELTS scores to complete your application.

Medill allows you the option to self-report your test scores in your application. Once you submit your application, we will review these unofficial scores along with the rest of your file. If we decide to offer you admission based on these unofficial scores, it will be on the condition that you send us your official scores at least 30 days prior to enrollment.

6. Resume

Submit your current resume, which should highlight your professional and academic experiences.
7. Essays
Please upload a professional statement and a writing sample, as described in the MSJ Essays section of the application.

Professional statement: Please describe your interest in Medill's Journalism program in 750 words or less. Be sure to address the following questions:

- What is it about Medill's MSJ program that particularly attracts you, and how will the program help you to achieve your future goals?
- Why are you applying to the particular specialization you selected?
- Describe a time when you received critical feedback (for example, in a class, job or internship). What did you learn from the experience?

Writing sample: Please provide a writing sample that showcases your best work, demonstrating research and reporting skills. You may submit a published clip or a sample of work from a college or graduate-level class. Do not submit a broadcast script. Please limit your writing sample to three pages or less. Or, you may write an essay of 750 words or less that answers any or all of the following questions: How would you define the role of journalism in your society? What are current news organizations doing right, and what would you like to improve? What is an example of a text piece of journalism that covers an area of your interest; what do you think the piece does well and what are areas of improvement? Where would you like journalism to be five years from now?

Diversity Statement (optional): If you wish, you can provide a statement of 300 words or less describing how your background and identity would contribute to the diversity of our class.

Additional Information (optional): If there is anything in your application that you would like to address (e.g., GRE or GMAT scores, GPA, lack of journalism or other work experience) or any additional information you would like to include, please do so here in 300 words or less.

If you would like to be considered for the Comer scholarship, please complete the required essay in the MSJ Essays section of the application.

8. Work Samples (Optional)
(Optional) You may upload or provide links to up to three published clips, scripts or other writing samples, or video or interactive samples. If you don’t have any published samples, you are encouraged to submit an excerpt of your best work from a college class.

All samples should be in English. If your sample is not in English, please provide a translation. If your sample was a group project, please describe your contribution to it. (If your group project is a link, you can upload this description using one of the upload buttons.)

Please do not submit large collections of work. Written samples should not exceed three pages and video samples should not be longer than five minutes. Additional clips or extremely long writing samples (e.g., a thesis) will not be reviewed.

9. Recommendations
Medill requires two letters of recommendation from persons who can assess your academic and professional abilities (e.g., employers, supervisors, current or former professors). You may submit a
third recommendation if you wish. Recommendations from family members or from friends who do not have direct experience with your professional or academic work will not be accepted. Enter your recommenders’ contact information in the online application. The system will then email your recommenders instructions on how to submit their letters online. You are responsible for reminding recommenders to submit their letters through the online system by the deadline.

10. Application Fee

There is a $75 non-refundable application fee. You may pay this online by credit card or indicate that you will be paying by check. If paying by check, please include the payment voucher that you can print from your online application and mail your payment to the Medill Office of Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid, Northwestern University, 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60208-2101.

Medill will automatically waive the application fee for current Northwestern University undergraduates.

Current or former members of the U.S. Armed Forces, AmeriCorps, Teach for America or the Peace Corps may request a fee waiver by sending an email to MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu prior to submitting your application.

Medill also offers a limited number of application fee waivers based on financial need. Application fee waivers based on financial need must be requested in writing prior to submitting your application. Requests should be sent to MedillGraduateAdmissions@northwestern.edu.

Application by Current Northwestern Undergraduates

If you are a current Northwestern undergraduate who is not a Medill student, you do not need to pay the application fee and may request a waiver of the GRE/GMAT test requirement.

If you are a current Medill undergraduate:

- You do not need to pay the application fee and may request a waiver of the GRE/GMAT test requirement;
- One of your letters of recommendation must be from a Medill instructor;
- You should submit a published clip or something written for a Medill journalism class for your writing sample.
- If you are interested in applying to the Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP), before submitting your application you must schedule a counseling session with your academic advisor in the Medill Office of Student Life to confirm your eligibility to apply as an AMP student.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

All admitted students, including international students, are considered for merit-based scholarships. There is no separate application for applicants to be considered for scholarships; merit-based scholarships are awarded based on the content of your admissions application. If you are a U.S. citizen
or permanent resident and would like to apply for federal financial aid, you may do so after you are admitted. Instructions for how to apply for federal financial aid will be included in your admit packet.

Mailing Application Materials

Send materials that cannot be uploaded or entered into your online application account to:
Office of Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid
Medill, Northwestern University
1845 Sheridan Road, Suite 104
Evanston, IL 60208-2101

Please note that application materials become property of Northwestern University and will not be returned. Remember to retain a personal copy of your application.

Medill reserves the right to revoke admission if new information is obtained that would warrant such action.

In exceptional circumstances, Medill reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive any documentation normally required for admission. Medill also reserves the right to admit or deny admission whenever it believes that it has sufficient evidence to do so.

Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this application or instructions concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula and courses.

Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship or veteran status in matters of admission, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates.

Harassment, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. This includes harassing conduct affecting tangible job benefits, interfering unreasonably with an individual's academic or work performance, or creating what a reasonable person would sense is an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

While Northwestern University is committed to the principles of free inquiry and free expression, discrimination and harassment identified in this policy are neither legally protected expression nor the proper exercise of academic freedom.

For advice or assistance regarding this policy, see www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/civility-and-campus-safety/index.html.

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