

My name is Aly Rinehart, and I am a journalism major with a creative writing minor at Missouri Western State University. I began my studies in English because I wanted to become an editor for a publishing firm, and later started my concentration in journalism because I was interested in working for local newspapers like the *Kansas City Star* or *St. Joseph News-Press*. I added the creative writing minor because I have always loved to write short stories and poetry. I think that my skills in both creative writing and journalistic writing create a unique style, and I really hope to be able to use it in magazine publishing. Magazines allow writers to impart facts while also letting their personal voice be heard. I also enjoy the layout and design aspect of magazine publication, and now I hope to be a designer for a periodical such as *National Geographic* so that I have the opportunity to travel, photograph beautiful places and creatures, interview interesting people, and participate in cultural traditions and events. I've developed many skills and abilities that would help me in this industry, both at Missouri Western and outside of school.

One of the first things I was taught at Missouri Western is how a journalist writes successful and compelling stories. I learned how to research and conduct interviews to gather information I would use for my stories. I was assigned news-worthy events to cover on campus and then spoke with people involved and sometimes took photographs to accompany the story.

I polished these skills while enrolled in several journalism classes and also while I worked with Missouri Western's weekly student paper, the *Griffon News*. I also practiced copy editing here, and learned a lot about the style, grammar, and language used in news stories and feature articles. Some of my news stories can be found in my portfolio [here](#), and I also included a feature article [here](#). I also took classes that focused on technical writing and on composition. The technical writing furthered my understanding of proper and precise style, and composition

courses helped me to refine my research and argumentative writing skills. An example of a research and persuasive essay can be found [here](#).

Later I was enrolled in a publishing class where I learned about the design and layout process used in newspaper and magazine publication. I was taught how to use programs like Adobe Photoshop and InDesign to create posters, ads, and covers and spreads. My portfolio also features a mock cover and spread [here](#). This class was most enjoyable because I got to use my writing skills but also engage my creativity as a designer. It is the reason I want to work in the design and publishing industry today, where I can further hone my abilities and work with a medium I enjoy and understand. I had the chance to practice these abilities while I was on the staff of Missouri Western's annual literary journal, the *Mochila Review*. While on staff here, I reviewed pieces of writing and art that would be included and also strengthened my experience in typesetting. The volume that I typeset while on staff can be seen [here](#).

Another very important part of my education as a journalist included a media law and ethics course. This class focused on the laws that surround media today and cases that involved journalists and their rights as writers and as American citizens, among others. After covering certain laws or certain events, we then wrote simple case briefs using a real, related case to show our understanding of the case and the law used to determine the outcome. Several of them can be found [here](#). This class was one of the most important because it is essential that journalists understand what is and is not appropriate in their profession. Certain things can be done safely and others could cause the writer and publication large amounts of trouble. This class taught me the difference.

To be successful in this line of work I realize that these skills are not all a person needs. There are several personal traits that I would bring to the industry as well. I value honesty and

integrity very highly. I do not lie or cheat or steal, I always take responsibility for things I have done whether good or bad, and when I promise to do something I work my hardest to get it done quickly and correctly. I do prefer to work alone on projects and assignments though. That isn't to say that I don't value the input and advice of others, I just feel that I work better when I am in charge of the task at hand and can focus on it fully by myself. I have a vivid imagination that I also think could aid me in this profession. During communication and public relation classes I loved the chance to think of clever ways to impart information, especially when dealing with topics I was familiar with and/or passionate about. I pride myself on a work ethic I think most young people do not have these days. I show up on time and ready to do whatever needs to be done. I will always follow directions and do things exactly as the customer or employer or client wants them, but I also enjoy work that allows my creativity and personality to shine through. I feel that my greatest weakness would be that I don't think I am a strong enough leader. I can manage myself very well, but I feel that I lack the experience and confidence to tell others what to do and how to do it. However I love to learn new things, and I'm sure that with training and guidance I could become a guide for others as well.

For the last four years I have wanted and enjoyed nothing more than my experiences and education here at Missouri Western. But now my time as a student has come to an end and I have never been more excited than I am about starting my journey in the world of a journalism and publication career. I think I have skills and traits that could make me a strong asset in several areas of work, and I look forward to a future in them.