

Fire Protection Studies

School of Law Enforcement & Justice Administration, College of Education & Human Services



Program of Study: Fire Protection Studies

There are few careers that are as demanding and require expertise in as many disciplines as firefighting. The job of the firefighter remains one of the most rewarding in the field of public service. The Fire Service has many unique requirements. It requires a distinct team spirit as well as a wide range of technical skills and the ability to deal with the public in both minor and major crisis situations. A career in the Fire Service offers an individual a multitude of opportunities and challenges, and as a field of study, it can prove to be one of the most interesting and rewarding choices one can make. In the 21st century, firefighters are on the front line of community protection. Hazardous materials require knowledge of chemistry. Terrorism, both homegrown and domestic, requires cross-training with law enforcement. Natural threats, such as floods, storms, and earthquakes, require knowledge of emergency management.

In addition to firefighting, career opportunities are available in a number of diverse fields, including the following:

- Fire Inspection and Code Enforcement
- Arson Investigation
- Industrial Safety
- Fire Prevention Specialist

The WIU Fire Protection Studies program features a comprehensive major with two separate and unique study options. The Fire Administration Option is delivered online and is designed for working firefighters seeking promotion to senior leadership positions. The Fire Science Option, with classes delivered on-campus in a traditional setting, is ideally suited for students preparing for a career in the Fire Service. A minor program is associated with each of these two options.

Our curriculum was written by firefighters for firefighters. It is based on national standards and addresses the real challenges faced by the Fire Service each day. Ours is a rigorous program which not only confers a degree, but also delivers the education necessary for success in the Fire Service.

Western Illinois University has a history of fire service education spanning more than 30 years. Many leaders in the Fire Service are alumni of our program and are quick to attribute their career success to their degree at WIU. The faculty and staff within the Fire Protection Studies program are committed to supporting the educational and career pursuits of our current firefighters and the preparation of the next generation of firefighters for success in this public safety career.

Program Requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Fire Protection Services is a comprehensive major requiring 120 semester hours (SH) of study, including 43 SH of General Education coursework. Of those 120 SH, 60 SH must be from a four-year college or university, and at least 42 SH must be earned in upper-division courses. A minimum of 30 SH must be taken from WIU. The Fire Science Option requires 50 SH in the discipline, while the Fire Administration Option requires 48 SH in the discipline. As a *comprehensive* major, the Fire Protection Studies program does not require a declared minor.

Program Overview

Fire Administration Option

This program has been developed specifically for firefighters seeking career advancement. In order to best meet the needs of working firefighters, the program is delivered entirely online. The Fire Administration Option focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to successfully manage and lead a modern fire department. Foundational courses focus on introductions to the Fire Service, firefighter safety, fire tactics, fire prevention, ethics, and fire service law. Specialty courses focus on fire service management, financial practices, leadership, disaster planning, research techniques, human behavior, collective bargaining, code enforcement, and suppression systems (see the *Undergraduate Catalog* for complete course listings).

Fire Science Option

Fire Science Option classes are delivered on-campus in a traditional setting. This option is ideally suited for students who wish to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a fire service career. Foundational courses focus on introductions to the Fire Service, firefighter safety, fire tactics, fire prevention, ethics, and fire service law. Specialty courses focus on fire dynamics, arson investigation, code enforcement, and emergency medical services (see the *Undergraduate Catalog* for complete course listings). The program also utilizes a significant internship program with a career fire department.



Faculty

Our “fire” faculty are retired or current firefighters strongly committed to the success of their students. All are former chief officers who have successfully blended education with real-world experience. You will learn from teachers who have “been there and done that” and have the teaching skills to relate material to students in a meaningful way.

Centennial Honors College Admission Requirements

To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15% of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. A comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 SH or more. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors.

Student Activities

In the fall of 2015, students initiated the formation of Omega Gamma Phi. Their mission is to extend to its members practical and academic experiences enhancing their fire service education.

For More Information

Visit us on the Web at wiu.edu/fire, or you can contact the School of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration by phone at (309) 298-1038 or by e-mail at fire-program@wiu.edu.

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