

Getting it right for 100 years



Charles N. "Charlie" Wheeler III is a third-generation Chicago and Illinois journalist. His grandfather is in the 1907 photo of the press corps at the Illinois Statehouse.

The current holder of the Wheeler franchise worked as a political reporter in Springfield on staff at the Chicago Sun-Times for 24 years before he arrived at UIS in 1993 to direct the Public Affairs Reporting program. This Wheeler brings an old-time newsman's attitude to the graduate program that includes an internship covering Illinois capital politics under the tutelage of the statehouse press corps including such venerable papers as the Tribune and Sun-Times among others as well as TV broadcasts and NPR radio.

"We don't teach any communication theory," Wheeler says. "We help our students understand what they need to know to inform their communities about issues. I'm talking about property taxes, public budgeting, school finance, the things reporters deal with on a daily basis."

Wheeler doesn't buy the death knells for journalism. "Journalism's presentation is in transformation," Wheeler says. "But whether it's the Internet, text messaging or podcasting, there will always be a need to gather the information in the first place, separate the wheat from the chaff and tell the audience what they need to know. Maybe it won't be delivered on dead trees, but you can't replace veracity, trust or integrity."

Wheeler still writes a column for Illinois Issues magazine with the newsman's straightforward, unadorned style. Every once in a while, though, he'll slip in a 50-cent word—not for its own sake but because it's the only word that will completely carry his meaning.

Last fall, Wheeler was inducted into the Lincoln League of Journalists of the Illinois Associated Press Editors Association. "I was very grateful and accepted humbly," he said. "It's an award for service, and I look at it as a tribute to the UIS Public Affairs Reporting program."

By Mike Lillich



CHICAGO

Chicago a public affairs "laboratory"

A new bachelor's degree program in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at UIC in 2007 will use metropolitan Chicago as a laboratory as part of the Great Cities Commitment. The new degree program in urban and public affairs will apply a multidisciplinary approach to learning, exposing students to the changing dynamics and the social, political and economic challenges of the modern city. Organizers say students in the program will serve as interns throughout Chicago.

SPRINGFIELD

Lincoln, then and now

"Lincoln and America's Faith" was the theme of the 2006 Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series at UIS. Each year the series brings nationally renowned scholars to campus to present lectures on public policy issues that are of contemporary interest and that also engaged Abraham Lincoln and the citizens of his era. Speakers focus on the topic's modern form as well as how Lincoln addressed it. Notre Dame scholar Mark Noll and professor emeritus at San Francisco Theological Seminary Ronald White were the 2006 speakers.



SPRINGFIELD URBANA

Lincoln goes high tech

Abraham Lincoln surely never envisioned a world where news traveled around the globe via satellite or the Internet. But soon Lincoln scholars worldwide will have access to a life's worth of writings by America's 16th president, thanks to the state of Illinois, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the University of Illinois at Springfield and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications in Urbana. The undertaking consists of three series: Lincoln's legal papers, his pre-presidential personal and political correspondence and his presidential papers. Soon readers will be able to view images of the original documents or search the text of the transcripts and annotations using a sophisticated search engine.