**STAFF WRITER/COLUMNIST**

**Fall 2021**

*Staff writers are typically hired to write for one specific section of the* Wire*,* *though it’s possible to write for more than one section*. *We are currently hiring for all of them: News, Opinion, Campus Life, Feature, and Humor. Writers are expected to contribute a minimum of one article a week, and they must be able to effectively communicate with their editor in order to maintain article deadlines. They are expected to propose and research their own story ideas. All writers are required to attend a weekly Sunday staff meeting at 5 p.m.*

***Prior journalism experience is by no means required!*** *Ideal candidates will have strong writing, researching and editing skills. They must have the ability to work accurately and independently under a deadline. Flexibility and creativity are a requirement, and applicants must be reliable and self-motivated.*

*Here’s a breakdown of the sections you can write for:*

NEWS

News reporters will cover both campus and local news, establishing and building relationships with members of both the Whitman and Walla Walla communities. Writers also have the opportunity to write more in-depth investigative pieces. News reporters can generally expect to write one article per week.

CAMPUS LIFE

Are you engaged with events in the Walla Walla and Whitman community? Constantly attending shows, WEB events, and sports games? Reporters should be curious and excited to develop connections throughout the community. Reporters typically write one article per week.

FEATURE

Have you ever wanted to work for a magazine? Feature is the section in the *Wire* where deep investigative reporting happens on a number of different topics ranging from community events to campus culture. Writers will work to generate content that lends itself to eye-catching graphic concepts. Writers typically work on a bi-weekly schedule, allowing more time for interviews and background research.

OPINION

Writing for the opinion section will give you the opportunity to explore intellectual topics of your choosing with a deeply critical voice.  Built around diverse, well-informed, and at times unconventional commentary, columnists should be able to synthesize outside sources into pieces that are at once based in facts and evidence, while weaving in personal commentary and anecdotes. Opinion columnists typically write for the paper every other week.

BACKPAGE

This is the humor section. Funny/satirical articles about Whitman, Walla Walla, or anything timely are welcomed and encouraged.

***In addition to completing the following application form, applicants must provide a writing sample.***

Pleaseemail a word document with your responses and a writing sample to [wire@whitman.edu](mailto:wire@whitman.edu). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but the **final deadline is** **midnight on September 1st, 2021.**

Please keep in mind that staff training will be on **September 5th** and is mandatory. We are in the process of determining how training will be conducted.

***Returning writers/columnists:*** *You do not need to include a writing sample. Please only fill out the contact/payroll information and answer questions 1 and 5, as well as what’s below:*

*Why do you want to continue working for the Wire and what is a goal you have for the coming semester? Please list two article ideas for the section you’re applying for and provide links to your two best articles that have been published in the Wire.*

Name:

Graduating year:

Phone number (cell preferred):

Email address:

(These questions are for payroll purposes only and will not affect your application.)

Whitman ID:

In-state: yes no

Work-study yes no

1. Please list all sections for which you are applying, in preferential order. If you would like to work for multiple sections at the same time, please say so.
2. Why would you like to write for the *Wire*? Why are you interested in writing for the particular section(s) you have indicated?
3. Please describe previous journalism and/or writing experience.
4. Please describe your ability to meet deadlines and work under pressure.
5. What other activities will you be involved in this semester, and how much of a weekly time commitment are these activities? How heavy is your academic course load for this semester? How much time are you willing to devote weekly to the *Wire?*
6. **Reporters only (news, feature, campus life):**

a. Please provide short descriptions for two article ideas you would propose and write for the aforementioned section(s). In these descriptions, you should try to justify the existence and importance of the topic you have chosen to cover, as well as listing potential interviewees. Please describe any photography, video or multimedia experience that you would like to include with the piece.

**Columnists only:**

a. You’re innocently chatting with your friends, telling them how you feel about the latest news story that everyone seems to care about. For example, maybe the United States decides to create a new law forbidding the sale of high fat or high cholesterol foods. You’re totally for it (or against it, up to you). But just as you’re exclaiming how much you love it, someone who overheard your conversation walks up to you and totally disagrees with you, telling you all the reasons you are, in fact, \*wrong\*. How do you react and why?

b. Please list three topical hot takes that you would be interested in writing about this semester.

**Humor writers only:**

a. Come up with 5-10 “headlines” (i.e. The Onion) that you think are both funny and relevant. For example: “Whitman postpones in-person plans after bed bug infestation.” Follow up on one of these headlines and write a 300-500 word humor article.

b. Come up with three funny ideas the humor section could pursue next semester.

*For all applicants* ***except humor writers****: Please attach a sample of journalistic writing to this application, no longer than two pages double-spaced. If you are applying to be a columnist, attach a sample column (in journalistic style). If you do not have previous journalism experience, an academic or creative writing sample will suffice.*