

MEDIA STUDIES

Joint Degrees

Joint J.D./M.A. with Penn State Law

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-211 Joint Degree Programs (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-211-joint-degree-programs/>).

Admission Requirements

Students applying to the joint degree program must be admitted separately into both PSL and COMM. Admissions requirements and applications for admission to Penn State Law are listed in the J.D. Admissions section (<https://pennstatelaw.psu.edu/admissions/jd-admissions/application-requirements>) of the Penn State Law website. The admission requirements for the Media Studies graduate program are listed on the Admission Requirements tab. Students must first be admitted to the law school and must complete the required first-year curriculum in the J.D. program before commencing the Media Studies M.A. component. Application to the M.A. program must take place through the Graduate School Application. Formal admission to the M.A. program would normally take place during the student's first year of law, but COMM may extend admission to the M.A. program at the time an applicant applies to PSL particularly where an applicant's law school choice depends upon admission to the J.D./M.A. joint degree program. At the student's request, the LSAT may replace the GRE for joint degree admission purposes.

Residency: A typical J.D./M.A. joint degree student will be in residence at PSL for six semesters and at COMM for two semesters.

Liaisons: The department and faculty liaisons for PSL shall be the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student adviser shall be the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or such other faculty member(s) as may be designated by the Dean. The liaison for COMM shall be the Joint Degree J.D./M.A. Program Faculty Adviser.

Inter-Program Transfer of Credits

Students must fulfill all requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the double-counting of credits as outlined below. Degree requirements for the J.D. program are listed on the Penn State Law website. Degree requirements for the M.A. degree are listed on the Degree Requirements tab.

Penn State Law: A maximum of twelve (12) 500-level credits for Media Studies M.A. course work may be transferred for credit toward the J.D. degree at PSL. Students must obtain a grade satisfactory to PSL for the course work to be credited toward the J.D. degree. The following COMM courses may qualify for credit toward the PSL J.D.:

Code	Title	Credits
Courses Eligible to Double Count for Both Degrees		
COMM 504	Seminar in the History of Mass Communication	3
COMM 505	International Communication Problems	3
COMM 506	Research Methods in Communications	3
COMM 511	Qualitative Research Methods in Mass Communications	3
COMM 513	Constitutional Problems of the News Media	3
COMM 516	Introduction to Data Analysis in Communications	3
COMM 517	Psychological Aspects of Communication Technology	3

COMM 518	Media Effects	3
COMM 580	Seminar in Telecommunications	3
COMM 582	Ethics and Emerging Communications Technology	3
COMM 585	Media & Telecommunications Industries	3
COMM 587	Internet Law and Policy	3

Donald P. Bellisario College of Communication: A maximum of twelve (12) credits of PSL course work will be counted for credit for the minimum requirements for a master's degree. These courses must be approved by the student's advisory committee and Joint Degree Program Faculty Adviser in COMM, normally during the Program Proposal Meeting.

The J.D. seminar requirement and the Media Studies thesis requirement must be fulfilled separately, using unique research topics.

Course Sequencing: The sequence of courses will be determined by the student and their adviser(s). However, students must successfully complete the first-year curriculum with PSL before beginning the M.A. Media Studies program. In compliance with ABA Standards and Rules law students may not enroll for more than 17 credits per semester at Penn State as a law student; the maximum credit load for graduate students is 15 credits per semester. It is expected that most joint degree students will complete the first two semesters of the M.A. consecutively in either the first or second year after completion of the first-year curriculum with the Law School.

Recommended Program of Study and Advising

All students in the program will have two advisers, one from PSL and one from COMM; the adviser from COMM may be any member of the Graduate Faculty in the College. Periodic interaction between the two advisers is encouraged. A program of study is developed for each student, taking into account the fact that some courses at both locations are offered on a rotating or intermittent basis. Many courses are offered every year but some are offered every two or three years. Advisers will have available a list of projected relevant courses or educational experiences in order to work with the student on an individualized program of study. The standard committee structure will apply to the COMM M.A. program.

Tuition

Students will be charged the applicable PSL tuition to cover the J.D. program and the applicable graduate tuition to cover the M.A. degree program. PSL tuition will be paid for the semesters in which the student is registered for PSL courses, and graduate tuition will be paid for the semesters in which the student is registered for graduate courses in the M.A. program. A student may take up to one course (3 credit hours) per semester in the program where the student is not primarily registered without any change in tuition, but must pay additional tuition to the program that the student is not primarily registered if he or she wishes to take additional course work pursuant to that program during the semester.

Financial Aid and Assistantships

Decisions on financial aid and assistantships will be made by each school according to that school's procedures. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits set by The Graduate School.

Fulfillment of Degree Requirements and Graduation

A student in the program may complete the requirements for one of the degrees and be awarded that degree prior to completing all the requirements for the other degree; provided, however, that the student shall have successfully completed at least two semesters of work

towards the other degree. All courses in one program that will count towards meeting the requirements of the other must be completed before the awarding of either degree. Students will be required to fulfill all requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the inter-program transfer of credits. If students accepted into the joint degree program are unable to complete the J.D. degree, they are still eligible to receive the M.A. degree if all M.A. degree requirements have been satisfied.

Important Note: If the joint degree student is using law (900-level) credits toward the graduate degree during their last semester of enrollment, they should be prepared to extend their graduate degree graduation to a subsequent semester (the following semester at a minimum). This is due to the graduate degree approval deadline falling before the law (900-level) course grading processes are complete.