MASS COMMUNICATIONS, PH.D.

The Ph.D. degree in mass communications is an interdisciplinary program offered jointly by the Department of Life Sciences Communication and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The program offers several internationally recognized areas of research and teaching excellence:

- civic and political communication
- health and environmental communications
- history of media institutions
- information technologies
- social networking and digital media
- processes and effects of mediated communication
- law and ethics of media
- international and inter-cultural communication
- public opinion
- science and risk communication
- social marketing
- journalism studies
- media ecologies
- race and media

Working closely with their major professor and committee, students draw from courses offered in departments across the campus to develop a plan of study in preparation for independent and original research in their areas of interest.

FACILITIES

The Center for Journalism Ethics (https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu) advances the ethical standards and practices of democratic journalism through discussion, research, teaching, professional outreach, and newsroom partnerships. Students, faculty, leading journalists and members of the public participate in conferences, workshops, and publications. The center tracks and analyzes ethical issues for all media platforms on its website. The center contributes to the teaching of ethics in the school's curriculum. Students have the opportunity to write for the center's website, cover conferences, and contribute to research.

The Mass Communication Research Center is an interdisciplinary research facility that conducts research into all phases of communication and provides a common meeting ground for scholars with an interest in communication behavior. It also provides an opportunity for graduate students to participate in research programs and to initiate and conduct their own thesis projects.

The Center for Communication and Democracy is a research and action project at UW–Madison. The goals of the center are to study how citizens can use new communications technologies to advance democratic discussion and civic participation; to explore the relationships between geographic communities and the emerging world of cyberspace; to explore the structural relations among communications and information markets, the civic sector, and government to find relationships necessary to build and sustain a public sphere in communication that is not dominated by the market, while sustaining economic growth and technological innovation; and to ask what government policies are most appropriate for combining the vibrancy of the market with the common needs of citizens in the sphere of communication.

The Mass Communication History Center, a part of the Wisconsin Historical Society, provides scholars access to private collections, papers, and various types of unpublished materials relating to the growth of mass communication in the United States and other parts of the world. The Wisconsin Historical Society also has a large collection of bound and microfilm files of American and foreign newspapers.

The Center for Environmental Communication and Education Studies focuses on teaching and research within the wider sphere of mass media communication of science, environment, and technology. The center maintains a small library of books and articles and provides resources for students who wish to conduct research on various aspects of media coverage of science and technology.

The Physiology and Communication Effects Research Group conducts research examining the physiological correlates of political and social attitudes, media effects and integrates theory and evidence from the sociological environment, political groups and institutions, psychology and physiology. The group is interested in when people think, reason, feel, and behave in ways “against type.” Visit the PACE lab website. (https://uwpacelab.wordpress.com)

ADMISSIONS

Applicants for this program are expected to have demonstrated an interest and background in communication research by having earned a thesis-based M.A. or M.S. degree in communication or other relevant disciplines. The admissions committee, however, may accept other evidence of suitable preparation.

Students must meet the minimum requirements for admission set by the Graduate School. Applicants must submit an online application, GRE scores, a statement of purpose, official transcripts from all previously attended institutions, a CV, and three letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation should come from people who can speak to the scholarly abilities of the applicant. International applicants are required to take and attain a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. Test scores must be furnished to the school before the application is considered complete.

For more information, visit the Mass Communications Joint Ph.D. website (https://masscommphd.wisc.edu).

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further
funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

Prospective students should see the program website (https://masscommphd.wisc.edu/funding) for funding information.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirements), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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Mode of Instruction Definitions

- **Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

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<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
<th>65 credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>32 credits</td>
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</table>

Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement

At least 50% of the required coursework (33 of 65 credits) must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

Overall Requirement

Graduate GPA

Other Grade Requirements

Courses in which the student earns a grade below B do not count toward the 65 credit minimum, but they do count in the cumulative GPA.

Assessments and Examinations

Doctoral students must pass preliminary exams once coursework is completed.

Language Requirements

No language requirements.

Doctoral Breadth

Breadth is provided via interdisciplinary training (minor requirement waived).

**REQUIRED COURSES**

65 credits minimum in theory and methods/statistics courses, selected in consultation with the faculty advisor and approved by the Graduate Committee of the student’s home department. Attendance of both seminars in the joint seminar sequence (JOURN/LSC 901 Colloquium in Mass Communication and LSC 700 Colloquium in Life Sciences Communication) is strongly recommended for new graduate students.


**POLICIES**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES**

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

**MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES**

**GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**


**PRIOR COURSEWORK**

**Graduate Work from Other Institutions**

In consultation with the student’s advisor, and with program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 33 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**UW–Madison Undergraduate**

With program approval, up to 7 credits numbered 600 and above from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree. Coursework earned ten years or
more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**UW–Madison University Special**
In consultation with the student’s advisor and with program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 12 credits of coursework numbered 600 and above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework taken ten years prior to admission to the doctoral program is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**PROBATION**
Doctoral students must do the following to maintain satisfactory progress:

1. Earn a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA by the end of the second semester in residence and maintain that GPA for the duration of the degree program.
2. Remove grades of Incomplete in the semester following their occurrence. A course proposal cannot be approved until all incompletes are removed.
3. Complete preliminary exams within three to six months of completing coursework.
4. Maintain steady progress toward completion of degree, including final oral exam and deposit of dissertation. Fulltime students can expect four to five years; completion will vary for part-time students.

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**
Doctoral committees must include at least two members from outside the Department of Life Sciences Communication and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**
15 credits

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**
A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

**OTHER**
Applicants are considered for funding as part of the admissions process. We offer a range of funding, including graduate assistantships, fellowships and research scholarship awards.

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**LEARNING OUTCOMES**
1. Articulate research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, and practice within the field of study. Demonstrating comprehensive and intensive knowledge of the theories, concepts, frameworks, empirical findings, and controversies in the field.
2. Formulate ideas, concepts, designs, and/or techniques beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within the field of study. Demonstrating a comprehensive and intensive knowledge of appropriate and relevant research methods and analytical techniques.
3. Create research or scholarship that makes a substantive contribution to knowledge.
4. Demonstrate breadth within their learning experiences.
5. Advance contributions of the field of study to society.
6. Communicate complex ideas effectively.
7. Foster ethical and professional conduct.

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**PEOPLE**
**Faculty:** Professors Brossard (LSC Chair), Downey, Friedland, Kim, McLeod, Meiller, Reaves, Robinson, Rojas, Scheufele, D Shah, H Shah (SJMC Chair). Associate Professors: Riddle (SJMC Director of Graduate Studies), Shaw (LSC Director of Graduate Studies), Shepard, Wagner, Wells. Assistant Professors: Cascio, Culver, Graves, McGarr, Palmer, Stenhouse.

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**
Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**
We offer two research colloquia (JOURN/LSC 901 and LSC 700) during the academic year where faculty share their research findings and methods and engage students in lively conversations about how to conduct research. We offer a teaching colloquium (JOURN 902) that explores pedagogical principles and applications that prepares students for teaching careers. Teaching assistantships provide hands-on training.

Within our research groups and centers, graduate students work side by side with faculty and with each other, allowing the senior students to mentor younger students and for faculty to mentor students who are not their advisees. Our graduate students organize and host an annual day-long conference where they present their research in a series of panels, and they present their research at conferences around the world.

We offer a series of professional development workshops for graduate students with faculty and alumni panelists. The topics include: navigating the academic job market, exploring the non-academic job market, turning a paper into a presentation and how to find funding for research.