

# MEDIA STUDIES

<b>Graduate Program Head</b>	Ford Risley
<b>Program Code</b>	MEDIA
<b>Campus(es)</b>	University Park (M.A.)
<b>Degrees Conferred</b>	Master of Arts (M.A.) Integrated B.A./M.A. in Media Studies Joint J.D./M.A. with Penn State Law View ( <a href="https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/index.cfm?searchType=fac&amp;prog=MEDIA">https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/index.cfm?searchType=fac&amp;prog=MEDIA</a> )
<b>The Graduate Faculty</b>	

The master's degree in Media Studies is an academic program that involves students in the systematic study of media. The objective of the course of study is to enable students to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the systems, networks, cultures, and information associated with media. The program prepares students for doctoral study in communications and for professional positions in business and government requiring a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and political implications of the media. This program helps prepare students to organize research projects, critically evaluate research reports, and directly influence media practices by the application of research findings.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply>). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies>).

Scores from the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) are required for admission. Students with a 3.00 junior/senior grade-point average are eligible for admission. Three letters of recommendation are required. Applicants must also submit an autobiographical statement of about 1,000 words indicating the nature of the applicant's interest in Media Studies, reasons for wanting to do graduate work, and future aspirations relating to the field of mass communications. Experience shows that most applicants hold a bachelor's degree in a field of the liberal arts or the social and behavioral sciences, including journalism and mass communications. However, this does not preclude applicants with other backgrounds, abilities, and interests such as those whose undergraduate training may have been in a scientific or technical field. In every case, the applicant should explain in the autobiographical statement how his or her undergraduate education relates to the decision to seek admission to graduate study in mass communications.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students>) for more information.

Applicants to the Media Studies program must have a score of 24 or higher on the speaking section of the TOEFL Internet-based test.

## Degree Requirements

### Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Requirements. (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies>)

The M.A. program seeks to integrate two areas of inquiry and analysis. The "Critical Studies" area centers on the expressive, creative, and linguistic dimensions of media as cultural processes. The "Political Studies" area focuses primarily on the political and economic dimensions of national and international communications systems and processes. The student is encouraged to combine courses from these and possibly other areas into a coherent package of course work culminating in either a thesis or a master's paper.

### Degree Requirements

A minimum of 36 credits is required for the completion of the M.A. degree. Students in the thesis track must complete at least 18 credits at the 500 or 600 level, and the remaining credits may be at the 400 or 800 level. Students in the non-thesis track must complete 18 credits at the 500 level, and the remaining credits may be at the 400 or 800 level. There are 7 credits required in the following core courses:

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b>		
COMM 506	Research Methods in Communications	3
or COMM 511	Mass Communications Research Methods II	
COMM 515	MA Proseminar in Mass Communications	3
COMM 590	Colloquium	1
<b>Electives</b>		
Additional courses that will count as electives towards this degree can be chosen from a list of approved elective courses maintained by the graduate program office. Course work offered by departments outside the College of Communications may be scheduled as part of the student's program with prior approval of the student's academic committee.		
<b>Culminating Experience</b>		
Students choose to complete a thesis or a master's paper.		
COMM 600	Thesis Research	
or COMM 610	Thesis Research Off Campus	
COMM 596	Individual Studies (Master's Paper)	

If the student chooses to write a thesis, at least 6 credits in thesis research (COMM 600 or COMM 610) must be taken. Students in the non-thesis track must write a satisfactory master's paper, while enrolled in COMM 596. In some cases, students may be required to take additional credits in order to make up deficiencies in undergraduate course work.

Students are required to schedule three separate, formal meetings with their advisers and the academic committees for (1) discussion and approval of the general program plan, (2) the thesis or master's paper proposal, and (3) the defense of the thesis or paper. In most cases, satisfactory completion of course work and thesis requires two years. A thesis must be accepted by the advisers and/or committee members, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the student must pass a thesis defense. A master's paper must be accepted by the advisers, committee members and the graduate programs chair, and the students must pass a master's paper defense.

## Integrated Undergrad-Grad Programs

### Integrated B.A./M.A. in Media Studies

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-210 Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate (IUG) Degree Programs (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-210-integrated-undergraduate-graduate-degree-programs>).

The Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications offers academically qualified students enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts program in the College of Communications the opportunity to earn both the B.A. and the M.A. upon completion of five years of study. The Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Program in Media Studies facilitates the advanced study of communications research and thesis development through a carefully organized selection of undergraduate courses, graduate seminars and directed research projects. The program accelerates and enhances undergraduate students' appreciation for graduate level scholarship by involving them in the seminars, research activities, and the scholarly discourse of the college's community of master's- and doctoral-level scholars.

The Integrated B.A./M.A. degree in Media Studies is an academic program that involves students in the systematic study of media. The objective of the course of study is to enable students to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the systems, networks, cultures, and information associated with media. The program prepares students for doctoral study in communications and for professional positions in business and government requiring a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and political implications of the media, and research methods for studying the media. This program helps prepare students to organize research projects, critically evaluate research reports, and directly influence media practices by the application of research findings. The program is specifically not intended for advanced professional education.

### Admission Requirements

Students must apply to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (<http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply>), and must meet all the admission requirements of the Graduate School and the Media Studies graduate program for the Master of Arts degree.

Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 in order to be admitted; 3 credits from COMM's General Education courses (COMM 100, COMM 150N, COMM 180, COMM 320, or COMM 370); and 3 credits from the COMM 200 level and above. Admission to the program is based on the evaluation of the student's transcript, examples of completed writing and research projects, a narrative statement of objectives, and two letters of support from faculty with whom they have worked. One faculty member must be from the College of Communications. Students shall be admitted to an IUG program no earlier than the beginning of the third semester of undergraduate study at Penn State (regardless of transfer or AP credits accumulated prior to enrollment) and no later than the end of the second week of the semester proceeding the semester of expected conferral of the undergraduate degree. Applicants are expected to present records of outstanding scholarly achievement to qualify.

### Applicants to the Integrated Program

1. Must be enrolled in a B.A. program in the College of Communications.
2. Must apply no earlier than the beginning of the third semester of undergraduate study at Penn State (regardless of transfer or AP credits accumulated prior to enrollment) and no later than the end

of the second week of the semester proceeding the semester of expected conferral of the undergraduate degree.

3. Must provide a narrative statement of objectives and two letters of endorsement from faculty with whom they have worked. One faculty member must be from the College of Communications.
4. In consultation with an adviser, students must prepare a plan of study appropriate to this integrated program. Students must present their plan of study in person to the head of the graduate program or the appropriate committee overseeing the integrated program prior to being admitted to the program. The plan should cover the entire time period of the integrated program, and it should be reviewed periodically with an adviser as the student advances through the program.

### Degree Requirements

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 B.A. in Media Studies are listed in the Undergraduate Bulletin (<http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate>). Degree requirements for the M.A. degree are listed on the Degree Requirements tab. Up to 12 credits may be double-counted towards the degree requirements for both the graduate and undergraduate degrees; a minimum of 50% of the double-counted courses must be at the 500 or 800 level. Credits associated with the culminating experience for the graduate degree cannot be double-counted. Students must sequence their courses so all undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled before taking courses to count towards the graduate degree.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Courses Eligible to Double Count for Both Degrees</b>		
<i>Graduate Credits</i>		
COMM 504	Seminar in the History of Mass Communication	3
COMM 506	Research Methods in Communications	3
COMM 507	News Media and Public Opinion	3
COMM 510	Comparative Theories of Press Systems	3
COMM 511	Mass Communications Research Methods II	3
COMM 512	Government and Mass Communications	3
COMM 513	Constitutional Problems of the News Media	3
COMM 514	Political Economy of Communications	3
COMM 515	MA Proseminar in Mass Communications	3
COMM 516	Introduction to Data Analysis in Communications	3
COMM 517	Psychological Aspects of Communication Technology	3
COMM 518	Media Effects	3
COMM 520	Seminar in Advertising Problems	3
COMM 521	Advertising Perspectives	3
COMM 522	Social and Cultural Aspects of Advertising	3
COMM 550	Film Theory and Criticism	3
COMM 553	Special Problems in Film and TV	1-3
COMM 556	Reading Film	3
COMM 580	Seminar in Telecommunications	3
COMM 582	Ethics and Emerging Communications Technology	3
COMM 584	International Telecommunications and Trade Policy	3
COMM 585	Media & Telecommunications Industries	3
COMM 594	Research Topics	1-15
COMM 595	Internship	1-18

COMM 596	Individual Studies	1-9
COMM 597	Special Topics	1-9
<i>Undergraduate Credits</i>		
<i>Advertising</i>		
COMM 410	International Mass Communications	3
COMM 411	Cultural Aspects of the Mass Media	3
COMM 417	Ethics and Regulation in Advertising and Public Relations	3
COMM 420	Research Methods in Advertising and Public Relations	3
COMM 421W	Advertising Creative Strategies	3
COMM 424	Advertising Campaigns	3
<i>Journalism</i>		
COMM 403	Law of Mass Communications	3
COMM 405	Political Economy of Communications	3
COMM 409	News Media Ethics	3
COMM 410	International Mass Communications	3
COMM 411	Cultural Aspects of the Mass Media	3
<i>Film Video</i>		
COMM 411	Cultural Aspects of the Mass Media	3
COMM 438	Advanced Narrative Production	3
COMM 440	Advanced Cinematography and Lighting Techniques	3
COMM 451	Topics in American Film	3
COMM 452	Topics in International Cinema	3
<i>Media Studies</i>		
COMM 405	Political Economy of Communications	3
COMM 411	Cultural Aspects of the Mass Media	3
COMM 413W	The Mass Media and the Public	3
COMM 418	Media Effects: Theory and Research	3
<i>Public Relations</i>		
COMM 403	Law of Mass Communications	3
COMM 409	News Media Ethics	3
COMM 417	Ethics and Regulation in Advertising and Public Relations	3
COMM 420	Research Methods in Advertising and Public Relations	3
COMM 471	Public Relations Media and Methods	3
<i>Telecommunications</i>		
COMM 403	Law of Mass Communications	3
COMM 405	Political Economy of Communications	3
COMM 410	International Mass Communications	3
COMM 484	Emerging Telecommunications Technologies	3
COMM 486	Telecommunications Ethics	3
COMM 487	Advanced Telecommunications Management and Leadership	3

If students accepted into the IUG program are unable to complete the M.A. degree, they are still eligible to receive their undergraduate degree if all the undergraduate degree requirements have been satisfied.

## 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 (<http://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 for Penn State Law are listed in the J.D. Admissions section 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
<b>Courses Eligible to Double Count for Both Degrees</b>		
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	Mass Communications Research Methods II	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 policy listed in the Bulletin.

### 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. 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.

## Student Aid

Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding>) section of The Graduate School's website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants>) set by The Graduate School.

## Courses

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Communications (COMM) Course List (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/comm>)

## Contact

<b>Campus</b>	University Park
<b>Graduate Program Head</b>	James Ford Risley
<b>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)</b>	Matthew Paul Mcallister
<b>Program Contact</b>	Matthew Paul Mcallister 201 Carnegie Bldg. University Park PA 16802 mpm15@psu.edu (814) 863-3322
<b>Program Website</b>	View ( <a href="http://comm.psu.edu/graduate">http://comm.psu.edu/graduate</a> )