

JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS, M.A.

The M.A. is a traditional academic program involving a minimum of 24 semester hours of course work plus a 6-hour thesis, for a minimum of 30 graduate hours. The thesis, an extensive and well-documented research paper, is designed to demonstrate that the student is capable of independent research on a meaningful topic under the supervision of a faculty committee. A minimum of 21 hours must be earned in graduate-level journalism and mass communications courses, including the basic M.A. core listed below. With the approval of the faculty advisor, the M.A. student may take 9 semester hours of course work outside the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. The M.A. degree is especially appropriate for those students with extensive professional experience in journalism and mass communications who are interested in teaching and/or research careers in mass communication and those who may want to pursue a doctorate.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate a familiarity with research designs, data collection methods and sampling techniques and should be able to organize and conduct basic market research and audience measurement studies. The students also should become familiar with and understand current journalism and mass communications research studies in scholarly journals.
2. Students will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of mass communications theory. Students will become familiar with contemporary scholarship involving major mass communications theories.
3. Students will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of mass media law. Students will demonstrate a familiarity with current trends in and interpretations of mass media law, including such areas as libel, privacy, access to public information, regulation of commercial speech, copyright and related matters, as well as an understanding of the philosophical considerations involved in free speech issues.
4. Students will demonstrate effective writing and critical thinking skills and the application of those skills in journalism and mass communications scholarship.
5. Students will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of mass communications history and will demonstrate an understanding of the mass media as social institutions. Students should be able to relate mass communications processes and effects to politics, culture and society in general.

Admissions Requirements

An applicant for admission to the M.A. degree program will be evaluated on a combination of factors: undergraduate grades; English proficiency scores (TOEFL or IELTS if international applicant); resume; recommendations and the written statement of objectives, in which the applicant outlines reasons for seeking a graduate degree in mass communications.

Successful applicants usually present an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0. The typical graduate student in the program exceeds these standards. However, applicants who are unusually promising in other ways—e.g., they have compiled solid professional experience or have overcome formidable obstacles along the way—have been accepted and have done well. International applicants, in addition

to the above, must present a score of at least 90 on the TOEFL exam or 6.5 on IELTS. Those with a degree from an English-speaking institution are eligible for an exemption from this requirement. More information is available in the Academic Programs section of the College of Information and Communications Website.

Degree Requirements (30 Hours)

To earn the M.A. degree, a student must successfully complete the following:

Core Courses (Minimum of 21 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
JOUR 701	Research Methods in Mass Communication	3
JOUR 702	Communication Theory	3
JOUR 706	Media Law	3
JOUR 720	History of Mass Media	3
JOUR 749	Literature of Mass Communication	3
JOUR 799	Thesis Preparation	6-9
Total Credit Hours		21-24

Electives (Minimum of 9 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
Select nine additional hours of approved elective credits		9
Total Credit Hours		9

Comprehensive Examination

A five-hour written examination based on the M.A. core courses.

Master's Thesis Defense

A master's thesis defended before the student's thesis committee.