

LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION, MS

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirements>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policies>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail

Minimum Credit Requirement	30 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	30 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	15 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.50 GPA required.

Other Grade Requirements Students must earn a B or above in all coursework. Any courses with a grade lower than a B will be factored into the GPA, but they will not be considered as meeting any degree requirements.

Assessments and Examinations The research/thesis track requires a formal thesis and oral defense; the professional track requires a comprehensive report or course narrative, and presentation at the culmination of coursework.

Language Requirements No language requirements.

REQUIRED COURSES

The MS offers two pathways students can follow: a thesis-pathway master's degree and a professional-pathway master's degree¹.

Thesis-Based Pathway¹

The thesis-based master's degree requires 30 credits and a thesis based on original research. At least 4 credits must be Life Sciences Communication (LSC (<https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/lsc/>)) courses. Students may apply up to 6 credits of research (LSC 990) towards degree requirements.

Professional Pathway¹

The professional pathway is a course-based master's degree that requires 30 credits and culminates in a course narrative report and presentation. Students in the professional pathway will usually not pursue a PhD program in the future. In fact, many doctoral programs (including LSC) do not accept a non-thesis master's as a criterion for admission to their PhD program. Students choose their pathway during the program application process.

Code	Title	Credits
Colloquium		
LSC 700	Colloquium in Life Sciences Communication	1
Science Communication Theory		
LSC 720	Introduction to Communication Theory and Research	3
or LSC 902	Public Opinion of Life Science Issues	
Research Methods		
Students must complete at least 3 credits of research methods. Courses are to be selected in consultation with advisor. Examples of courses that may fulfill this requirement include the following:		3-4
COM ARTS 762	Communication Research Methods	
ED PSYCH/ COUN PSY/ CURRIC/ ED POL/ELPA/ RP & SE 719	Introduction to Qualitative Research	
JOURN 658	Communication Research Methods	
JOURN/LSC 811	Conceptualization and Design of Mass Communication Research	
JOURN 812	Qualitative Communication Research Methods	
SOC/ C&E SOC 750	Research Methods in Sociology	
SOC 751	Survey Methods for Social Research	

SOC 752	Measurement and Questionnaires for Survey Research	
Graduate Level Statistics		
Students must complete at least 3 credits of graduate level statistics. Course is to be selected in consultation with advisor. Examples of courses that may fulfill this requirement include the following:		3-4
ED PSYCH 760	Statistical Methods Applied to Education I	
ED PSYCH 761	Statistical Methods Applied to Education II	
LSC 660	Data Analysis in Communications Research	
SOC/ C&E SOC 360	Statistics for Sociologists I	
SOC/ C&E SOC 361	Statistics for Sociologists II	
Electives Based on Academic & Career Goals		
Students must complete 20 credits of electives. Courses selected in consultation with your advisor to create a cohesive program of study. Thesis-pathway students may count up to 6 credits of LSC 990 Research toward their electives to reach the 30 credits required for the program. Students may count up to two colloquia (including LSC 700) toward the 30 credit requirement for the program		20
Total Credits		30

¹ These pathways are internal to the program and represent different curricular paths a student can follow to earn this degree. Pathway names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

Credits outside of the required coursework can include classes in science communication and other areas based on a student's academic and career goals. For example, a student wishing to become an environmental reporter might take courses in environmental studies. A student interested in health communication might take a nutrition or preventive medicine course. However, the complete program must have coherence and focus, and students should discuss all courses with their advisor prior to enrollment.