

LIFE SCIENCES COMMUNICATION, M.S.

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

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. Details can be found in the Graduate School's Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) policy (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 to count it toward the 30-credit total.

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 M.S. has two pathways students can follow: a thesis-pathway master's degree and a professional-pathway master's degree¹. The thesis-based master's degree requires 30 credits (six of which can be LSC 990 (<https://guide.wisc.edu/search/?P=LSC%20990>) Research credits) and a thesis based on original research. 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 Ph.D. 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 Ph.D. program. Students choose their pathway during the program application process.

Coursework includes a required colloquium in LSC, a science communication theory course, a research methods course, and a graduate-level statistics course. The remaining credits 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.

Code	Title	Credits
LSC 700	Colloquium in Life Sciences Communication	1
	Science Communication Theory	3
LSC 720	Introduction to Communication Theory and Research	
or LSC 902	Public Opinion of Life Science Issues	
	Research Methods ²	3-4
	Graduate Level Statistics ³	3-4
	Electives Based on Academic & Career Goals ⁴	20
Total Credits		30-32

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.

2

Course to be selected in consultation with your advisor. Examples of courses that may fulfill this requirement include: COM ARTS 762, ED PSYCH/COUN PSY/CURRIC/ED POL/ELPA/RP & SE 719, JOURN 658, JOURN/LSC 811, JOURN 812, SOC/C&E SOC 750, SOC 751, or SOC 752.

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3

Course to be selected in consultation with your advisor. Examples of courses that may fulfill this requirement include: ED PSYCH 760, ED PSYCH 761, LSC 660, SOC/C&E SOC 360, or SOC/C&E SOC 361.

4

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.