# Public Affairs Reporting Accelerated Joint Degree

Students who are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in public affairs reporting are encouraged to consider applying for the Public Affairs Reporting Accelerated Joint Degree. This accelerated joint degree option offers students the opportunity to complete a Bachelor's in communication and a Master's in public affairs reporting more efficiently than completing the degrees separately.

## Advising

Students in the Accelerated B.A./M.A. Program will need to enroll in at least twelve (12) hours' worth of 400- 500-level courses since the requirements of the undergraduate tracks and minors do not require 400- 500-level courses. Only 400- 500-level courses can be counted toward the bachelor's degree and waived from the master's degree.

## Grading Policy

To be formally accepted into the Accelerated B.A./M.A. Program, students must have completed or be on track to complete sixty (60) credit hours during the semester of application and have at least a 3.0 GPA.

After Meeting these requirements, students must notify both the School of Communication and Media and the School of Public Affairs Reporting directors of their desire to be considered for the accelerated degree program. If accepted, the student must begin (or continue) pursuing a Communication Bachelor's degree that fulfills the requirements for the Journalism and Media Studies or the Strategic Communication and Public Relations tracks. Alternatively, students pursuing a bachelor's degrees in other disciplines can become Communication minors and begin taking courses for the Journalism and Media Studies Minor or the Strategic Communication and Public Relations Minor.

## Requirements

Upon completing the bachelor's degree with the appropriate major track or minor (and maintaining a 3.0 GPA), students will be admitted to the Accelerated B.A./M.A. Program, where they can have up to twelve (12) credit hours of their undergraduate work in 400- or 500-level courses waived from their master's degree. The Accelerated B.A./M.A. Program already requires students to take twelve (12) credit hours of graduate electives from the Communication or Political Science (or anywhere in the catalog, with a petition), along with 12 hours of required PAR course and sixteen (16) hours of required internship hours. The Accelerated B.A./M.A. Program will allow Public Affairs students to waive the twelve (12) hours of electives (two four-hour electives during the fall semester and one four-hour elective during the Spring semester.

To apply for these credits, students must submit a student petition requesting a waiver of the twelve (12) elective credit hours. This petition must be completed in consultation with an academic advisor and must identify the approved 400- or 500-level courses that will be applied toward both the undergraduate and graduate degrees.

## Master's Closure

Public Affairs Reporting students in the accelerated program who do not complete requirements within the typical 10-month time frame of the Public Affairs Reporting year can continue completing coursework during subsequent semesters. Public Affairs Reporting students are required to complete a program-ending master's project, which is a portfolio of their best work  completed during their news reporting internships. Students whose only remaining requirements is to finish their portfolio are required to enroll in Public Affairs Reporting's continuing enrollment course PAR 506 for zero credit (one billable hour) in all subsequent fall and spring semesters until the portfolio is submitted.