



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

School of Journalism and Strategic Media
Kimpel Hall 116
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

The Master of Arts in Journalism Degree *A Q&A Guide to the Program*

The Journalism Master of Arts degree is an interdisciplinary program that offers you advanced study of journalism combined with a secondary emphasis in another field. For a basic description of the program, see the UA Graduate Catalog:

On the website <http://catalog.uark.edu/graduatecatalog/> click on **Programs of Study**. On the page that appears, go to the left-hand column, scroll down to Journalism and click to select.

Following are most-often-asked questions about the Lemke Journalism MA program:

What are the course requirements?

The Journalism MA (JMA) program requires 30 hours; 24 hours are coursework and 6 hours are thesis. Of the 24 hours of coursework, 18 are to be taken in journalism and 6 in a second field of the student's choice. Two courses in journalism are specifically required of all students: JOUR 5023, Journalism Theory (fall), and JOUR 5043, Research Methods (spring). Otherwise, students select all other courses for their program. To do this each student works with a graduate adviser who helps him/her develop a schedule that supports the student's goals.

How is the program structured?

Students can choose one of three areas to emphasize in their studies:

Documentary Film. The Documentary Film program prepares graduates to work as documentary filmmakers, in independent and academic jobs, with study and practicum in the field of long-form, non-fiction storytelling. The degree is also useful for graduates planning to work in corporate and non-profit video production, by developing skills in writing, cinematography, editing, producing and directing. For the thesis project, students independently produce a 30-minute documentary film.

Strategic Advertising & Public Relations. The Strategic Advertising & Public Relations concentration offers graduate students an opportunity to learn strategic planning skills and techniques to develop campaigns for nonprofit and commercial clients. Students learn to analyze government and industry research and data to develop strategic plans and messages in advertising and public relations. Ad/PR graduates typically acquire the skills for careers in advertising, public relations, government communications or related fields.

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News Narratives. The News Narratives concentration trains students in identifying, researching and writing in-depth news and feature stories. Students have the opportunity to develop investigative pieces by analyzing statistical information developed from database research techniques. They can also experiment with news genres such as literary non-fiction. For their thesis requirement, News Narratives students have the option of choosing to do the traditional research thesis or the thesis project.

What does the thesis requirement involve?

As a student, you are required to produce a final project that demonstrates your achievement in the program. In the JMA program students have the option of researching, writing and producing an academic thesis, a professionally-oriented thesis project or a documentary film. Whichever option you select, you will present your final project in an oral defense in a session with your Master's Thesis Committee. This is a committee of three faculty members who direct you in developing your thesis/thesis project/documentary film.

What is the process for being admitted to the program?

Those who are interested in the JMA program apply first to the UA Graduate School. The application process begins with your going to the Graduate School website at <https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/>. In the tabs, select **Graduate** and in the drop-down menu, click on **Future Students**. On the left-hand side of the screen that opens, you'll see **Apply for Admission** about half-way down the list of options. In the screen that opens, you can follow links to find deadlines and admission requirements. For admission to the UA Graduate School, you must have the following:

- A completed BA degree.
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 on the last 60 credit hours of attempted coursework from a regionally accredited institution.
- A score on the GRE.

Once you're admitted to the Graduate School, your materials are sent to the graduate program of your choice for further review. In journalism, the Graduate Committee reviews applicants and makes admission decisions. Journalism has these additional requirements:

- A total GRE score of 300, with a minimum of 151 on the verbal component, and a score of 4.5 on the writing component.
- A statement of purpose.
- A current resume.
- 3 letters of recommendation.
- A degree in journalism, and/or professional experience in the field. Applicants who lack either of these may be admitted with the requirement that they take 6 to 12 hours of specific undergraduate coursework and earn a grade of at least a B as background for entering the graduate program.

What are the application deadlines?

The application deadlines for the JMA program are June 1 for the fall semester, and November 1 for the spring semester.

Are there graduate assistant positions available?

The Journalism Department has several Graduate Assistant (GA) positions available for students. Journalism GAs have varied assignments, such as assisting Broadcast faculty with teaching labs and producing programming for the UATV student television station; working with the Advertising & Public Relations faculty in their research and grading; assisting in the Center for Ethics in Journalism; and teaching labs for the JOUR 1033, Fundamentals of Journalism course.

GAs work 20 hours a week and receive a stipend plus a tuition waiver. An MA student can serve as a GA for 4 semesters (that is, the fall and spring semesters for 2 years).

The application for a GA position is available on the Graduate School website under Funding Your Degree. The form is to be completed and sent to the JMA program director. The current JMA director is Dale Carpenter who can be reached at dcarpent@uark.edu. The deadline for GA applications is April 1 for the following fall.

Are there journalism scholarships available?

The Journalism Department awards scholarships to both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in its programs. The application deadline for the scholarships is usually in February of each year, and decisions are announced in early April. To apply you must be currently enrolled in the journalism program at the UA. Awards are based on factors such as GPA and in-class performance; financial need can be taken into consideration. Graduate scholarships are typically in amounts ranging from \$1,500 to \$3,000 for one academic year.

International students may find more information at the website for the Graduate School and International Education located at:

<https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/international/>

Where can I find out more information if I have questions?

The UA Graduate School website, which has a wealth of information for students, is <https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu>. You can also call the Graduate School at 479-575-4401 or send an email to gradinfo@uark.edu. The mailing address is 213 Ozark Hall, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

The International Admissions website is <https://international-admissions.uark.edu>; the phone number is 479-575-6246, and email is iao@uark.edu.

The Journalism Department website is journalism.uark.edu; or you can call the department at 479-575-3601. The current JMA program director is Dale Carpenter, and his email is dcarpent@uark.edu. The address for the Journalism Department is Kimpel 116, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.