



The Combined BA/MA Programs in WRD Information Sheet for Interested Students

Application Deadlines

To begin in Autumn Quarter, for Spring Graduation: March 15

To begin in Winter Quarter, for Autumn Graduation: October 15

To begin in Spring Quarter, for Winter Graduation: January 5

Overview

Undergraduate majors in WRD, pending admission requirements, are able to combine the major in WRD with one of the department's two graduate programs, the MA in WRD or the MA in New Media Studies. Students who meet GPA and other application requirements in their junior year will be allowed to take up to three graduate courses as seniors, allowing for the completion of the MA in nine subsequent graduate courses rather than 12. Combined BA/MA students will receive their BA at the completion of their BA requirements (which will include the three graduate courses as undergraduate electives). The three graduate courses taken while one is an undergraduate will process at the rate of undergraduate tuition. DePaul's substantial [Double Demon Scholarship](#), which reduces graduate tuition by a full 25%, can be applied to the cost of the final nine graduate courses.

Program Description: The BA/MA in Writing, Rhetoric, & Discourse

Both the BA and the MA in Writing, Rhetoric, and Discourse are grounded in the theory and practice of symbolic expression. Both programs understand the discipline of *rhetoric* to function as a productive and analytic art—a system for creating and interpreting the social and cultural knowledge that sustains, shapes, and alters the way people interact personally, professionally, and publically. In both programs, writing is taught to be a particular mode and instance of rhetorical production, or language-in-use—a concrete manifestation of social and cultural orientation. Both programs combine theoretical and historical understanding of writing and rhetoric with opportunities to write in varied contexts.

As the requirements for both the BA and MA in WRD demonstrate, the structure and content of both maximize the potential for integration. The core courses in the major, of which BA/MA applicants will have taken at least two, create an excellent foundation for WRD 500, Proseminar. Foundational preparation in the BA core and electives allow WRD majors to excel immediately in either or both of the program's concentrations, Professional and Technical Writing and Teaching Writing and Language. BA/MA students are able to pursue the [Teaching Apprenticeship Program](#) (TAP) and earn the [TESOL Certificate](#) concurrently with the MA degree.

Program Description: The BA/MA in New Media Studies

Situated as it is in WRD, the MA in New Media Studies (NMS) is grounded in the theory and practice of symbolic expression. NMS understands *rhetoric* to function as a productive and analytic art—a system for creating and interpreting the social and cultural knowledge that sustains, shapes, and alters the way people interact personally, professionally, and publically. WRD faculty who teach in the MA in WRD also teach in the MA in NMS, and the two programs share some courses, particularly in the media-rich area of professional and technical writing. The MA in NMS differs from the MA in WRD in two distinctive ways: 1) opportunities to produce digital content, building on undergraduate experiences in, for example, Digital Culture, Visual Rhetoric, and Digital Writing, are greater in the MA in NMS; and 2) NMS is richly interdisciplinary—students may take their seven elective courses in almost any of DePaul's colleges.

NMS students may choose to augment the five-course NMS core with concentrated experience in, for example, advanced coding or digital cinema (CDM), marketing (Kellstadt), public relations and advertising (Communication) or some creative combination. Further, NMS students may complete DePaul's graduate certificate in [Digital Humanities](#) as an elective sequence. You will choose your electives in consultation with the NMS Program Director.

What constitutes eligibility, and how do I apply?

Applicants for either combined degree program must be declared WRD majors in the junior year (between 88 and 132 hours). You may enter either BA/MA program regardless of the quarter in which you intend to graduate; however, you may take no more than one graduate course per term. See the deadline schedule at the top of this document relative to your anticipated graduation date

Applicants for either program must have a minimum GPA of 3.50 in the major and 3.20 overall at time of application, and they should have completed two of the undergraduate Core courses and at least one other 300-level course counting toward the major. Applicants will forward to the Combined Degree Coordinator by the deadline

- the *department's* application form (available from the [BA/MA program page](#) at wrd.depaul.edu)
- the Graduate Admissions application form (available from the [BA/MA program page](#) at wrd.depaul.edu)
- a graded paper/project for a WRD course (201, or 203 and above) with the instructor's comments attached
- a personal statement indicating the value of the Combined BA/MA in WRD to their academic and professional goals
- an official DePaul transcript, available through Campus Connect, current at the time of application. For ordering information, see [here](#)

Applicants are advised to consult with the CDC (Professor Vandenberg) before submitting the application.

The CDC will present applications to the Graduate Committee for consideration. The Graduate Committee will advise the appropriate program director on selection; the Director's decision shall be considered final. Successful applicants will be notified prior to open registration for the quarter in which they intend to begin, and they will be advised to consult immediately with the CDC about arranging their class schedules.

What happens once I am accepted?

Enrollment in a Combined BA/MA program is a bit more complicated than enrollment as a conventional undergraduate. Once your application is approved, you will move into BA/MA status at the *undergraduate* level. When you have completed your undergraduate requirements, you'll be entered into the MA program to which you have applied. These cumbersome steps are necessary to ensure that you pay only undergraduate tuition prior to completing your undergraduate degree. You will complete these steps in close collaboration with Professor Vandenberg, so you needn't worry.

What graduate courses are available to me as a senior?

During the senior year, students accepted to either program may take only one graduate course in each quarter. BA/MA students must enroll in their graduate program's Proseminar at the earliest opportunity, currently in the Autumn Quarter only. Other BA/MAWRD-eligible courses will be determined by the Graduate Committee and announced on a quarterly basis prior to registration. A BA/MAWRD student's three graduate courses taken during the senior year will count toward the undergraduate degree as major electives and toward the graduate degree category satisfied by the course. (For example, a BA/MA student taking WRD 503, Ancient Rhetorics, would receive credit for the course in the Rhetoric and

Discourse domain in the graduate program.) BA/MA in NMS students may take only NMS Core courses, not including NMS 505, as undergraduates.

Are there any financial incentives available to BA/MA students?

Yes! As undergraduates, BA/MA students are able to take up to three graduate courses at the rate of undergraduate tuition. As undergraduates, tuition waivers and graduate assistantships are unavailable. However, upon completion of the undergraduate degree, BA/MA students who meet requirements are eligible to apply for financial assistance offered by the department, such as fellowships and assistantships. Further, as DePaul grads, all BA/MA students are eligible upon completion of the BA for DePaul's [Double Demon scholarship](#), which will allow you to take your final nine graduate courses at a 25% discount, significantly reducing the cost of the graduate portion of the BA/MA.

I'm interested. What are my first steps?

The first step is to carefully review this document, the department's application form, and requirements of the MA program that interests you. If you are pre-junior status, feel free to contact Professor Vandenberg to let him know of your interest. Stay connected during each advising period to be sure that your undergraduate course choices are optimal for entry into a BA/MA program.

If you are already a junior (88-132 hours), schedule an appointment with Professor Vandenberg as soon as possible to discuss your academic and career goals—an MA program is a specialized degree, and you want to make sure it will lead in the direction you intend to go. When you are ready to meet, or if you have questions prior to meeting, please contact

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