

JD/MCRP JOINT DEGREE PROGRAM UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA–LINCOLN

I. Introduction

The increasing complexity of issues relating to physical, economic, and social well being in the world today and in the future calls for broader knowledge and greater depth of understanding by decision makers who are attempting to resolve those issues and thereby improve the quality of life. Professionals in the fields of law and planning are commonly called upon to assist in the definition and resolution of these complex issues. Persons educated both in the law and in planning generally are better equipped to understand these difficult problems and are better prepared to identify the appropriate legal and institutional resources to address such problems.

The intent of the Juris Doctor/Master of Community and Regional Planning Joint Degree Program is to prepare students for a variety of professional roles in which the knowledge, skills, and background of both the planner and lawyer are important. These roles include, but are not limited to, professional work in the following areas:

- **land use planning and growth management**
- **city planning and management**
- **land development**
- **human services planning**
- **advocacy planning**
- **environmental planning and management**
- **mediation and conflict resolution**

Persons completing this joint degree program will have the opportunity to attain professional status in either or both of the planning and legal professions. Planner/lawyers find challenging professional positions in a wide variety of private sector and non-profit organizations, in all levels of government, as well as in international settings.

II. Application Procedures

A. New Students

Applicants to the JD/MCRP Joint Degree Program must complete the application requirements for both the JD and MCRP degree programs as though they were applying separately to each, and must be admitted to both degree programs in order to be admitted to the joint program.

B. College of Law or MCRP Students

A first-year student in either the JD or MCRP degree program may declare interest in the joint degree program and submit an application to the other degree program, but no later than the first year of enrollment in either of the separate degree programs. No student may enter the joint degree program after having completed more than two full semesters in either the JD or the MCRP degree program.

At least one full academic year (consecutive fall and spring semesters) in the joint degree program must be devoted exclusively to the standard first-year curriculum in the JD degree program, and this year of course work must precede any other law courses. No credit toward the requirements for the JD degree will be recognized for any law courses taken prior to admission to the College of Law.

III. Course Requirements – College of Law

A student must complete 93 credit hours at the College of Law to obtain the JD degree. A student must complete 81 hours at the College of Law, and may use 12 hours of Community and Regional Planning course work to satisfy the 93 credit hour requirement.

The 81 credit hours required at the College of Law include the standard first year curriculum (33 hours) and 48 hours of upper-level courses. The 48 hours of upper-level courses must include the following required courses:

- A. Constitutional Law I (3 hours), which must be taken during the first semester of the **academic year immediately following the student's first year at the College of Law.**
- B. **Legal Profession (3 hours), which may be taken any time after the student's first year at the College of Law.**
- C. **A seminar offered at the College of Law that satisfies the College of Law's substantial writing requirement. This course may be taken at any time after the student's first year at the College of Law.**
- D. An upper-level professional skills course (3 hours). This course may be taken any **time after the student's first year at the College of Law. The following courses meet this requirement:** Advanced Legal Research, Advanced Trial Advocacy, Appellate Advocacy, Business Planning, Client Interviewing and Counseling, Civil Clinic, Criminal Clinic, Construction Practice, Family Law Practice, Mediation, Negotiations, Pretrial Litigation, Trial Advocacy, and Externship (if approved by the Dean).

Participants in the JD/MCRP Joint Degree Program may not enroll for credit in Law 669/G (Research in a Selected Field) or Law 670/G (Research in a Selected Field).

IV. Course Requirements – Community and Regional Planning Program

A student must complete 48 credit hours at the Department of Community and Regional Planning to obtain the MCRP degree. A student must complete 33 hours in Community and Regional Planning course work and may use 15 hours of courses taken at the College of Law as elective hours for the MCRP degree, providing that the admissions committee of

the Community and Regional Planning Program has stipulated that no other graduate-level credit hours are required to fulfill deficiencies.

The courses required in Community and Regional Planning are:

A. 27 hours of courses:

CRPL 800 Introduction to Planning (3 hours)
CRPL 802 Planning Theory (3 hours)
CRPL 804 Legal Aspects of Planning (3 hours)
CRPL 810 Qualitative Techniques for Planners (3 hours)
CRPL 830 Planning With GIS (3 hours)
CRPL 840 Planning Methods and Analysis (3 hours)
CRPL 900 Professional Planning Practice (3 hours)
CRPL 990 Planning Studio (3 hours)
CRPL Elective (3 hours)

B. 6 hours of Thesis OR Professional Project:

CRPL 899 Master's Thesis (6 hours). The master's thesis shall focus upon a subject of relevance to both planning and law. In addition to the thesis requirements stipulated by the University of Nebraska Graduate College, the examining committee for students pursuing this joint program shall consist of four graduate faculty members, including one co-chair from the Community and Regional Planning Program and one co-chair from the College of Law. At least three of the four examining committee members shall collectively represent the Community and Regional Planning Program and the College of Law.

–OR–

CRPL 898 Professional Project (6 hours). The professional project shall focus on a subject or relevance to both planning and law. The examining committee for students pursuing this joint program shall consist of four graduate faculty members, including one co-chair from the Community and Regional Planning Program and one co-chair from the College of Law. At least three of the four examining committee members shall collectively represent the Community and Regional Planning Program and the College of Law. **A professional project must also include a nonvoting "client."**

V. Program Approval and Progress

A student in the JD/MCRP Joint Degree Program must comply with all requirements for students in the University of Nebraska Graduate College and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Law.

After admission to the joint degree program, the student works with an advisor from each degree program to plan an educational program that specifies appropriate elective courses and a work able course sequence. The program plan is geared toward fulfilling the goals of the student and satisfying all requirements of both degrees.

When the student reaches the halfway point in his or her MCRP studies, the student must file Memorandum of Courses form with the UNL Office of Graduate Studies. Any

subsequent changes in the student's program must be reflected in amendments to the Memorandum of Courses submitted to the UNL Office of Graduate Studies.

VI. Academic Eligibility

A student in the joint degree program must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 5.500 in courses taken at the College of Law and must receive a grade of B or better in CRPL courses that the student seeks to have counted toward the JD degree.

A student who fails to satisfy the academic requirements will be dropped from the joint degree program and cannot apply for readmission to the program. A student who is dropped from the joint degree program may still pursue the MCRP and JD degrees, but must meet the normal requirements for each degree and may not pursue the two degrees simultaneously. No dual credit will be given for any courses.

If, while enrolled in the joint degree program, a student decides to complete only one of the two degrees, all the normal requirements for the selected degree program that the student wishes to complete must be satisfied.

VII. Conferral of Degrees

A student in the JD/MCRP Joint Degree Program will be awarded both the JD and the MCRP degrees simultaneously upon completion of all requirements. The student must file a separate application for each degree. The student must also file with the UNL Office of Graduate Studies a Final Examination Report form for the MCRP degree.

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