

# JD/MSW Program

The **Juris Doctor/Master of Social Work (JD/MSW)** dual degree offers students the opportunity to gain an exceptional knowledge base and skill set that will prepare them to assume positions of leadership in law and social policy, to advocate effectively for clients, to understand systems and institutions, and to actively pursue social justice. Students enrolled in Washington University's JD/MSW program frequently seek careers in the areas of traditional social work, public interest law, government administration, nonprofit management, social entrepreneurship, and public policy, among others.

The JD/MSW program generally takes four years to complete, which is one less than it would take if the two degrees were completed separately. Students may start their first year in either the School of Law or the Brown School. They will generally move to their counterpart school for the second year and then pursue mixed course work during the final two years. Students who start in only one program are welcome to apply to the other and begin the dual degree during their second year. More details about the program may be found on the School of Law website.

In addition to the required 8 credits of social work practicum fieldwork, many JD/MSW students also participate in one or more of the law school's clinical programs, including the Children's Rights Clinic or the Criminal Justice Clinic. Students find meaningful and applicable course offerings in both schools, including in areas such as family law, labor and employment law, practice with children and youth, critical jurisprudence, social policy, health policy, intergroup dialogue, and practice with immigrant populations.

The Law & Social Work Society, a student group shared between the two schools, exists to facilitate the process of obtaining both degrees and to serve as a platform for interdisciplinary communication between the two schools. The society sponsors activities throughout the year, including community service projects, academic assistance meetings, alumni networking events, and social functions.

## Additional Information

### The Brown School

Washington University  
 CB 1196  
 One Brookings Drive  
 St. Louis, MO 63130-4899  
 Phone: 314-935-6676

Website: <https://law.wustl.edu/academics/jd-degree-program-overview/joint-jd-msw-degree/>

## Degree Requirements

### JD/MSW

#### Credit Requirements

Dual-degree JD/MSW students are required to complete 125 credits between both schools. The majority of the credits (77) must be law credits; the remaining credits (48) must be taken in social work. Overall, dual-degree students save themselves from having to complete 15 additional credits by completing this program. An even greater benefit is that students are able to transfer credits from one school to fulfill the degree requirements of the other school. For example, 9 social work credits count toward the JD; 12 law credits count toward the MSW. Please visit the School of Law website for the JD requirements.

**Total required for the JD/MSW degree:** 125 credits

Program	Credit hours required
Law	77
Transferred from Social Work	9
<b>Total JD Degree</b>	<b>86</b>
Social Work	48
Transferred from Law	12
<b>Total MSW Degree</b>	<b>60</b>

#### Program Structure

Since students can start in either school, there is no set structure to the dual-degree program. The following chart provides an example of how a typical dual-degree JD/MSW student's program will be structured. Most of this sample structure can be modified, especially the layout of the summers.

It should be noted that one of the most time-consuming requirements is completing the social work practicum hours. The Brown School requires students to complete 8 credit hours of practica (960 hours). Thus, many students find the need to spend the bulk of two of their three graduate school summers doing practica, in addition to completing some practicum hours during the year. Most students will also take some summer courses during at least one summer of the program.

Year of Program	Starting in Law	Starting in Social Work
1st Year	1L year - all 1L law courses	All social work (mostly core) courses
1st Summer	Legal Internship	Social Work Practicum
2nd Year	Mostly (or all) social work courses	1L year - all 1L law courses
2nd Summer	Social work practicum; 1 or 2 summer courses	Legal internship and/or social work practicum
3rd Year	Assorted courses (mostly law)	Assorted courses (mostly law)

3rd Summer	Social work practicum	Social work practicum; 1 or 2 summer courses
4th Year	Assorted courses (mostly law)	Assorted courses (mostly law)

Every student's plan of study is slightly different, depending on the student's individual preferences. Some students prefer to load up their courses during the year so that they can do an additional summer legal internship. Others might participate in several time-intensive activities (e.g., trial or moot court teams, the D.C. clinic, a journal, a legal clinic), which may prevent them from taking heavy course loads and thereby causing them to rely more heavily on their summers as a time to earn credit.

Students entering the program with a bachelor's degree in social work will have slightly different program requirements. Email Brown School admissions at [brownadmissions@wustl.edu](mailto:brownadmissions@wustl.edu) and the Law and Social Work Society at [washulawandsocialwork@gmail.com](mailto:washulawandsocialwork@gmail.com) for more information.

## Additional Program Requirements

- JD Degree Requirement Information