

**JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMS BETWEEN THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE
UNIVERSITY DICKINSON SCHOOL OF LAW (J.D.) AND THE
SCHOOL OF FOREST RESOURCES (M.F.R., M.S., M.Agr., Ph.D.)**

- 1 **Joint Degree Program.** The Pennsylvania State University Dickinson School of Law (DSL) and the School of Forest Resources (SFR) will offer coordinated programs of studies leading to the degrees of Juris Doctor (JD) and a Master of Forest Resources (MFR), a Master of Science (MS), a Master of Agriculture (MAgr) or a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Forest Resources or Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. The SFR programs are interdisciplinary. In the SFR programs, students may concentrate in Forest Resources, Wildlife and Fisheries Science, or Wood Products.

- 2 **Admissions.** In order to be admitted to the program, students may a) first be admitted and enrolled in either SFR or DSL, and be subsequently admitted to the other program, or b) be admitted to the joint degree program prior to commencing studies at Pennsylvania State University. Credits earned in the SFR program before admission to DSL cannot, however, be credited to the JD degree. Each program will make a separate admission decision. Students admitted to both programs will be admitted as joint degree candidates. Applications for transfer into the joint degree program from another law school or forestry/natural resources program at another University will be considered on a case by case basis.

- 3 **Admissions Requirements:**
 - a **DSL.** A bachelor's or equivalent degree from an accredited college is a prerequisite for admission. However, there is no standard prescribed undergraduate curriculum. An applicant should have acquired significant oral and written communications skills before entering law school. The following are required of applicants: a completed application form for DSL; taking of the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT); completion of an LSDAS report; a one-page personal statement; employment record since high school; and two recommendations.

 - b **School of Forest Resources:** A Bachelor's or equivalent degree from an accredited college is a prerequisite for admission to a master's degree program, with a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 and junior-senior average of 3.0, based on a maximum 4.0 system. The following are also required of applicants to the joint degree program: taking of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the LSAT; an official undergraduate transcript or transcripts; a personal statement; employment record since high school; and three recommendations. There is no prescribed undergraduate curriculum, and, because of the diversity of programs in the School, professional preparation may vary considerably. As a guide, SFR suggests having 8 credit hours in chemistry and/or physics, 12 in calculus, statistics, and/or computer science, 8 in biology, botany, and/or zoology, 12 in writing and speaking, 12 in economics, social sciences, and/or humanities,

and 18 in forest science, wildlife and fisheries science, and/or wood products. Completed applications showing that a candidate is qualified for admission will be forwarded to potential faculty advisors in SFR, and admission of otherwise qualified candidates will depend upon the willingness of a faculty member to act as an advisor. Applicants are advised to contact potential advisors before applying and should contact the SFR liaison (the Goddard Chair), as well as the SFR Assistant Director of Graduate Studies, to identify potential advisors.

Admission to the Ph.D. program requires evidence of research ability, *e.g.*, a master's degree thesis, paper, or equivalent publication and a grade point average of 3.3 or higher in graduate studies work, exclusive of thesis and special problem courses. Baccalaureate degree students graduating from an honors program with a required thesis, or who have authored a refereed publication, may be considered for admittance without a master's degree.

- 4 **Residency:** For master's programs, 5 semesters residence is required at the Law School and 3 semesters residence at the SFR at University Park, although additional time may be required to complete the M.S. thesis requirements. For Ph.D. programs, the same minimum number of semesters will be required, as well as the additional time as required to complete additional course work and a dissertation. In addition, Ph.D. candidates must arrange the sequence of semesters such that they are in residence at University Park as a full time student for at least two semesters in a single 12 month period. Although a student will normally take all courses at the campus where the student is in residence, a student may take up to one course (three credit hours) per semester at the campus where the student is not in residence. A Ph.D. joint degree student in residence at DSL will be considered to be "registered" at University Park for the purpose of satisfying any requirement of continuous registration and/or benchmarking in the Ph.D. program.
- 5 **Liaisons:** The respective liaisons for DSL and SFR shall be as follows: The Department and Faculty liaison for DSL shall be the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student advisor will be the Director of the Agricultural Law Center or such other faculty member(s) as may be designated by the Dean. The liaison for SFR for the Joint Degree Program and the student contact for inquiries regarding the Joint Degree Program shall be the then current holder of the Maurice K. Goddard Chair in Forestry and Environmental Resources Conservation, or the Director of SFR when there is no current appointee to the Goddard Chair.
- 6 **Interprogram Transfer of Credits.**
 - a **JD.** A maximum of 12 credits for SFR course work may be transferred for credit toward the JD degree at DSL. Students must obtain a grade satisfactory to DSL for the course work to be credited toward the JD degree. What courses may qualify for credit shall be determined by the DSL liaison. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of many SFR

degrees, courses from other Departments and Colleges are credited towards an SFR degree with the approval of the SFR committee (*e.g.* courses in Economics, Agricultural Economics, Agricultural and Extension, Agronomy, Entomology, Geosciences, Landscape Architecture, Leisure Studies, Meteorology, Plant Pathology, Soil Science, EPC) and credits of these courses will be treated as SFR courses (*i.e.* may be credited to the DSL program with DSL approval, subject to the 12 credit limit).

- b SFR Degrees:** The SFR programs are interdisciplinary programs and typically credits from other Departments and Colleges may be credited. What courses may be credited will be determined by the student's SFR committee. Normally, a maximum of 12 credits of DSL course work will be counted for credit toward the minimum requirements for an SFR Master's degree, subject to approval by the student's SFR committee.

7 Sequence. The sequence of courses will be determined by the students and their advisors. Generally, however, students will complete the first year of the DSL program before beginning the SFR program. Thereafter, students may concurrently enroll in courses in the DSL and SFR programs, provided that they abide by the requirements of each program. The ordinary expectation will be that students will spend entire semesters at one location or the other.

8 Recommended Program of Study and Advising. All students in the program will have two advisors, one from DSL and one from SFR (the committee chair). Periodic interaction between the two advisors will be encouraged. A program of study will be developed for each student, taking into account the fact that some courses at both locations are offered on a rotating or intermittent basis. Many courses are offered every year, but some are offered every two or three years. Advisors will have available a list of projected relevant offerings in order to work with the student on an individualized program of study. The standard committee structure will apply to the SFR programs.

9 Tuition. Students will be charged the applicable DSL tuition to cover the JD program and the applicable SFR tuition to cover the SFR degree program. The DSL tuition will be paid for the semesters that the student is in residence at DSL and the SFR tuition will be paid for the semesters that the student is in residence at University Park. A student may take up to one course (3 credit hours) per semester at the campus where the student is not residence without any change in tuition, but must pay additional tuition to the non-residential campus if he or she wishes to take additional course work at that campus during that semester. *

10 Financial Aid and Assistantships. Decisions on financial aid and assistantships will be made by each school according to that school's procedures. Generally, SFR

* After taking comprehensive examinations, a Ph.D. student must pay tuition for all courses taken at any campus where the Ph.D. student is not registered.

assistantships and financial aid will not apply to time spent at DSL.

- 11 **Fulfillment of Degree Requirements and Graduation.** A student in the program may complete the requirements for one of the degrees and be awarded that degree prior to completing all the requirements for the other degree, provided, however, that the student shall have successfully completed at least two semesters of work towards the other degree. All courses in one program that will count toward meeting the requirements of the other program must be completed before award of either degree. Students will be required to fulfill all requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the interprogram transfer of credits. With respect to SFR's requirement for a thesis or paper, work done while at DSL under the supervision of a DSL faculty member may be appropriate for incorporation into the thesis or paper with the approval of the SFR committee (in such cases, the committee should consider whether credits afforded such work will be subject to the 12 credit maximum for interprogram transfers described in paragraph 6(b)) and the DSL faculty member should be a member of the committee).