

# JD/MA in Environment and Natural Resources Student Handbook

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## Overview of Doctor of Jurisprudence/Master of Arts in Environment & Natural Resources (JD/MA ENR)

Law students accepted into the University of Wyoming (UW) are invited to add a joint Juris Doctor/Master of Arts in Environment and Natural Resources (JD/MA ENR) to their degree program.

Offered by the University of Wyoming College of Law and the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), this concurrent degree program results in two degrees in three or three and a half years. Coursework and thesis research develop experience in interdisciplinary content, analytical tools and problem-solving skills used to address complex natural resource issues.

JD/MA ENR students collaborate across campus to practice critical thinking and collaborative problem solving for natural resource challenges. You'll take on a Plan B thesis project to research an environment and natural resources challenge of your choice. You'll also learn with Haub School graduate students who bring expertise from a range of disciplines. Students who earn a JD/MA ENR have a variety of professional opportunities available to them; in addition to traditional practice in a law firms, graduating students may take positions in academia, policy development, private industry, non-profits, and local, state, and federal government agencies.

### Learning Outcomes

Students in the JD/MA ENR will:

- Be conversant across a range of fields of environmental significance, spanning science and technology, policy and regulation, to human dimensions of natural resources;
- Understand and evaluate the relationship of their disciplines to other relevant ENR fields; and
- Produce discourse, scholarship, and practical solutions that address the complexity of ENR challenges.

## Admissions Process and Requirements

### Application Time Frame

We accept and evaluate applications on a rolling basis. **There is no due date for applications.** However, students are encouraged to submit an application to the JD/MA ENR degree program concurrently with submitting an application to the College of Law. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Haub School JD/MA Program Coordinator, Professor Temple Stoellinger [tstoelli@uwyo.edu](mailto:tstoelli@uwyo.edu) prior to submitting their application to discuss the program.

Students may apply to add the JD/MA ENR at any point before or during their law program, although adding the dual degree later may delay graduation from both programs. Graduation

with the JD/MA ENR degree is simultaneous with the JD degree, i.e., **you will not graduate with the JD until the JD/MA ENR degree is completed.**

### Application Evaluation

Applications are evaluated by a sub-committee of the Haub School's faculty Graduate Education Committee. Haub School faculty evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

- Past academic success;
- Potential to succeed in a rigorous interdisciplinary program; and
- Clarity of purpose and interest in the JD/MA ENR program.

### Application Packet

Applicants to the JD/MA ENR program must submit the following as a digital packet to the Haub School of ENR:

- Statement of Purpose (~ 1500 words) addressing the following:
  - State your goals for the JD/MA ENR program;
  - Outline your career aspirations;
  - Explain how the JD/MA ENR program will help achieve your goals and career aspirations;
  - Describe relevant prior experience and research interests; and
  - Outline potential topics or areas of interest for the Plan B thesis.
- Curriculum vitae
- Copy of your LSAC report
  - Note: Students must make a written request to Lisa Nunley ([lisa.nunley@uwyo.edu](mailto:lisa.nunley@uwyo.edu)) at the College of Law to release this report to the Haub School.
- Three letters of recommendation
  - Two letters may be copies of recommendation letters submitted with College of Law application.
  - One letter must specifically address your qualifications for the JD/MA ENR degree.
  - Letters of recommendation may be sent via email directly from the recommender to Temple Stoellinger ([tstoelli@uwyo.edu](mailto:tstoelli@uwyo.edu)).

Submit your digital application packet via email to of the following Haub School faculty:

Haub School of ENR Graduate Committee  
c/o Temple Stoellinger, Associate Professor  
Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources  
307-766-6450, College of Law Room 118, [tstoelli@uwyo.edu](mailto:tstoelli@uwyo.edu)

## Coursework

Each JD/MA ENR student must satisfactorily complete 30 credit hours in ENR, ENR Law, ENR Internship and Plan B thesis. Most coursework is completed during years 2 and 3. Students must complete a Program of Study Form ([Graduate Student Forms](#)) in consultation with a Haub School advisor and the student's graduate committee. The Program of Study outlines the courses the student will take. The student's graduate thesis committee must approve this plan.

While ENR coursework does not usually begin until the second year of law school, mentoring and academic planning for JD/MA ENR students should begin during your first year.

## Program Summary

- ENR Coursework – 15 credits
  - 2 required ENR core courses (6 credits)
  - 3 elective courses selected from 7 ENR categories (9 credits)
- ENR Law Coursework – 12 credits
  - 4 ENR Law courses selected from 14 Law courses
- Plan B Thesis Seminar – 1 credit
  - A seminar course providing instruction on the Plan B Thesis requirements. This course is suggested to be taken during your 2L year.
- Plan B Thesis – 2 credits
  - Student will produce an interdisciplinary, rigorous, and original work that deepens the student's knowledge of the interface of law and ENR issues.

## ENR Coursework

Required ENR coursework includes 5 courses for 15 credits:

### ENR Core Courses – 2 required courses for 6 credits

- Approaches to Environmental Problem Solving (ENR 5000)
- Environmental Assessment (ENR 5900)
  - Options: Domestic, International, Environmental Solutions in Jackson Hole

**ENR Electives** – Choose 3 elective courses for 9 credits. Your electives should inform your thesis.

An updated list of courses that satisfy the JD/MA ENR requirements is maintained by the Haub School, and will be available to students prior to the start of each fall semester. Courses not on the list may qualify for ENR electives, with approval the Haub School advisor and the student's graduate committee.

## ENR Law Coursework

Required ENR Law coursework includes 4 elective courses in environmental or natural resources law for 12 credits. Courses include (but are not limited to):

- Administrative Law (LAW 6510)
- Environmental Law (LAW 6660)
- Oil & Gas Law (LAW 6790)
- Public Lands (LAW 6800)
- Water Law & Policy (LAW 6860)
- Advanced Water Law (LAW 6991)
- Advanced Oil and Gas Law (6992)

- Agricultural Law (6500)
- Indian Law (6700)
- Energy Resource Management (6915)
- Climate Change and Policy (LAW 6915)
- Land Use Law (LAW 6890)
- Utilities Regulations & Dist. Energy: Regulated Industries (6915)

### College of Law Policy on Use of Non-Law Courses

**The following applies to coursework for the JD degree and does not apply to the ENR Coursework portion of the JD/MA ENR.**

For *non*-JD/MA ENR students, the College of Law permits up to 6 credits of graduate courses from non-law departments to apply to the required 90 credit hours for the JD degree. Of the 90 credits, 14 credits may be graded S/U and 76 credits graded by standard letter grades. The 6 non-law credits can only be applied as S/U credits (B or better to earn an “S” grade).

However, JD/MA ENR students may use 9 non-law graduate credits toward their JD degree, thereby reducing their required number of graded credits from 76 to 73, in order to allow them to participate in other S/U offerings at the College of Law.

To receive law school credit for a non-law school course, a student will be required to earn a grade of “B” or better in the non-law school course. The grade will not count, however, toward the student’s law school GPA.

Students who wish to enroll in a non-law school graduate course on this basis must secure the prior approval of the course professor and of the Associate Dean of the College of Law. Approval will be based on the student’s submission of a brief written statement explaining how the proposed coursework relates to and enhances the student’s legal education.

Students should be aware that non-law school graduate courses completed on this basis will not count toward the 76 hours (73 hours for students in JD/MA ENR who used 9 graduate credits toward their JD) that students must complete in graded courses as a requirement for graduation. The non-law school coursework will instead be counted toward the 14 (or 17 for joint degree students) of 90 credits that law students are permitted to take on an S/U basis.

### Plan B Master’s Thesis – Guidelines and Expectations

The Plan B thesis serves as the independent research activity in the JD/MA ENR program. To satisfy the Plan B thesis requirements, a student will produce a substantive, interdisciplinary, intellectually rigorous, and original work that contributes to scholarship and understanding of complex ENR issues. Completing this work will serve to deepen the student’s understanding and simultaneously provide scholarly value to society.

Students are expected to be familiar with the University of [Wyoming Graduate Committee Formation Policy](#).

The graduate committee functions to guide the student in developing and approving a program of study, design of the Plan B thesis, requirements for completion of the degree, and acceptance of final Plan B thesis. Once you have identified a topic or area of interest for the Plan B thesis the following steps are recommended.

### Step 1: Select Committee Chair

The primary role of the committee chair (or major professor) is to serve as the supervisor overseeing the design, implementation, and completion of the Plan B thesis. Each graduate student will work in coordination with their committee chair to identify the remaining graduate committee members. Committee chairs are responsible for chairing the committee meetings, including the final defense. The committee chair is the student's primary resource for completion of the Plan B thesis. The ENR Advisor can assist with suggestions for a primary advisor and committee members.

### Step 2: Select Graduate Committee

The primary role of the graduate committee is to approve the program of study, assist the student with study design and review and approve the final Plan B thesis. In addition to the information below, please also be familiar with the University of Wyoming Graduate Committee Formation Policy ([Graduate Student Forms](#)). The graduate committee, constructed by the student and chairperson, consists of at least three members from faculty approved by Academic Affairs to serve on master's committees:

- **Committee Chair** Faculty from Haub School. May not be from College of Law faculty unless a special exception request is submitted and approved by the Haub School Graduate Program Committee.
- **Outside Member** Faculty member of a department **other** than Haub School or College of Law. Must be a tenure or tenure track professor.
- **Third Member** Faculty member of your choice. A College of Law Professor is often a good choice here.
- **Optional External Member** Person serving as an optional, fourth voting member. The external member is a faculty member at a peer institution or an individual holding professional expertise. The external member cannot replace the outside member.

### Step 3: Propose Plan B Thesis Proposal

The student must prepare a proposal that outlines the proposed Plan B thesis. The thesis proposal must be approved by all members of the committee. The proposal should outline the following:

- Completed program of study form signed by the committee and submitted to Registrar;
- Purpose or need for the proposed research;
- Objectives of the thesis;
- Study Design – data collection, analytical methods; and
- Relevant literature.

Failure to complete the thesis proposal by May 15<sup>th</sup> of the student's second year of law school if the student is completing the program in three years, or by December 15<sup>th</sup> of the student's third year of law school if the student is completing the program in three and a half years. Failure to meet the deadline will result in withdrawal from the program.

### Types of Plan B Theses

**All Plan B theses must have a research component that leads to original thought, synthesis, or integration of relevant legal scholarship to issues pertinent to environmental or natural resource management.**

Three broad categories of Plan B theses are permitted (see Appendix 1 for more detail):

- Original Research Study
- Extensive Literature Review
- Law or Policy Review

Students must register for 2 thesis credits while completing their Plan B thesis. For more information on Plan B theses go to [Graduate Student Regulations & Policies](#).

#### **Step 4: Conduct Study & Write Thesis**

Students should discuss what formatting style to use in their Plan B thesis with their committee chair. If publication is sought in a legal journal then Bluebook is the most appropriate formatting style; however, if publication is sought in a science or policy journal then that journal's formatting requirements should be used.

The Plan B thesis is typically a 40- to 60-page paper, depending on the nature of the work and intended audience. Length is not the primary metric of an acceptable thesis. The primary metric is completing the work in a rigorous and scholarly fashion. Ideally the paper is written for publication in an appropriate venue.

#### **Step 5: Draft Progress Report**

The student must prepare a progress report that outlines the Plan B thesis progress to date as well as a plan for thesis completion. The progress report should be presented and discussed with the committee chair and a copy of the progress report must be provided to the other committee members. The progress report is due on or before September 30th of the students third year of law school. The progress report should outline the following:

- Timeline of work to complete the thesis;
- An outline of the thesis; and
- A literature summary least 30 relevant sources.

Failure to complete the draft progress report by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the student's third year of law school if the student is completing the program in three years, or by February 28th of the students third year of law school if the student is completing the program in three and a half years. Failure to meet the deadline will result in withdrawal from the program.

#### **Step 6: Complete Draft Thesis Submitted to Chair**

The student must submit a complete draft of their Plan B thesis to their committee chair by the start of the spring semester of their third year of law school if completing the program in three years, or by the start of their fall semester if completing the program in three and a half years. If the student fails to meet this deadline then they must register for an additional 3 credit law course and will be consulted to consider withdrawing from the ENR program.

#### **Step 7: Schedule Thesis Defense**

One month prior to last day of classes of the students graduating semester, the student must schedule their thesis defense date with their committee. The student must reserve a room for their defense and they must then create and circulate a defense announcement flier at the Haub School and College of Law that includes the thesis title, defense date, time, and location.

#### **Step 8: Submit Final Draft Thesis to Committee for Review**

Once the student has approval from his/her committee chair, he/she should provide the remaining members of the committee with a complete, final draft of their Plan B thesis. All members of the committee must receive the final draft thesis two weeks prior to the student's defense date.

## Step 9: Successfully Defend

### Suggested Format For the Defense Meeting

The committee has the option to meet alone for the first 5-10 minutes, after which the student and public are invited in. The student will give a 20-30 minute presentation. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to determine presentation length, and to review the presentation prior to the public defense.

Following the presentation, the public should be given an opportunity to ask questions. Afterward, the public is dismissed and the committee meets alone with the student to ask questions, clarify points, and make suggestions for revisions.

When the committee is satisfied with the student's response to questions and the discussion is complete, the student is dismissed while the committee discusses the decision. When they have come to a consensus, the student is invited back in and the committee shares the results and expectations for completion. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Committee signs off on thesis and no further revisions required.
- Committee signs off on thesis, but requires additional revisions to be reviewed by the committee chair who withholds his/her signature until revisions are completed (most common).
- Committee withholds signatures until revisions are completed.

Once the committee is satisfied with the student's work, they will sign the Report of Final Examination. The student must then submit the Report of Final Examination form completed with all necessary signatures to the Registrar by the required deadline (usually the last day of spring classes) and then the student must upload their thesis to the UW Mountain Scholars Repository.

## Tuition and Fees

Students will be assessed tuition at differential rates. College of Law coursework will be billed at the College of Law tuition rate. Courses from other UW colleges and the Haub School will be billed at the applicable tuition and fee rate. Note: See Accounts Receivable for an updated schedule of Tuition, Fees, and Expenses (<http://www.uwyo.edu/fsbo/accounts-receivable/index.html>).

JD/MA ENR students may be eligible for merit-based scholarships and grants administered through the Haub School. A current list of opportunities is available at <http://www.uwyo.edu/enr/haub-school/index.html>.

## Faculty Contact

For admissions, ENR course advising, and Plan B Thesis advising contact:  
Temple Stoellinger, Assistant Professor  
Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources  
307-766-6450, College of Law Room 118, [tstoelli@uwyo.edu](mailto:tstoelli@uwyo.edu)

## Appendix 1: JD/MA ENR Plan B Thesis Overview

<b>Type of Project</b> Components or Sections	<b>Chapter 1</b> Introduction Purpose Problem Research Question(s) ~1500-2000 words	<b>Chapter 2</b> Literature Review	<b>Chapter 3</b> Methods Study Design Setting Data collection Analysis tools	<b>Chapter 4</b> Results Results of hypothesis testing or model construction Analysis output	<b>Chapter 5</b> Discussion Conclusions Implications Recommendations
<b>Original Research Study</b> Original data collection & analysis	All of above sections + Review available literature pertaining directly to research question(s).  Clearly, concisely sorted & presented  ~20-40 articles or cases.	Literature review	All of above sections	Data analysis answering the research question(s)  Present in an understandable format- e.g., graphs, tables, visuals	Tie together entire project  Discuss results relative to research question(s) & implications for ENR management, policy or law  Make recommendations for use of results.
<b>Extensive Literature Review</b> Extensive literature review to identify a literature-based answers to question(s)	All of above sections  Explain <u>how</u> literature was reviewed	In-depth review of key points from available literature pertaining directly to question(s).  Clearly, concisely sorted & presented by topic  ~40-60 articles and or cases.	No Methods Chapter	No Results Chapter	Discuss how question(s) are answered by the literature.  Emphasis on synthesis of literature to question(s)  Make recommendations for use of results
<b>Law or Policy Review Article</b>	An interdisciplinary paper prepared as a law review article for submission to the Wyoming Law Review (or other similar law review) on a legal/ENR issue. For example, the Plan B research might become a law review comment article, which deals with both legal and non-legal aspects of a particular ENR issue.				