MSL PROGRAM RULES AND REGULATIONS 2017-18

Degree Requirements
Candidates for the degree of Master of Science in Law who enter the program in the fall of 2017 must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Earn 28 or more credits, including satisfactory completion of all requirements, during a period of residence of not less than two semesters.

2. Earn a cumulative GPA of 2.25 or higher (rounding off to the nearest hundredth).

3. Complete the required curriculum, which includes a writing requirement and courses in the following subjects:
   - Business Formation and Structure
   - Business Torts
   - Contract Law and Design
   - Ethics
   - Intellectual Property Fundamentals
   - Legal and Regulatory Process
   - Research in Law, Business, and Technology

4. To satisfy the writing requirement, students must successfully complete a course designated as fulfilling the requirement.

Candidates who entered the program in the years before 2017 are subject to the degree requirements in place at the time of their entry into the program. From time to time, the program may substitute a required class for one that was originally required when the student entered the program. When this occurs, students will fulfill the original requirement with the newly-substituted class.

Registration and Enrollment

1. Full-time students may not enroll in fewer than 11 credits nor more than 17 credits in each semester without obtaining the prior approval of the MSL Program Director.

2. Full-time students must normally complete the MSL degree requirements in two semesters. A full-time student who cannot complete the degree requirements within two semesters shall provide an explanation and create a written plan for degree completion, which allows the student to finish the degree requirements within a reasonable time period. The completion plan should be submitted as soon as it becomes apparent that the student will not complete the degree in two semesters and not later than 3 weeks after the end of the student’s second semester of enrollment. The MSL Program Director will approve a written plan for completion.
that contains an adequate explanation and demonstrates a reasonable chance of degree completion within an appropriate time period.

3. Part-time students may not enroll in fewer than 3 credits per semester nor more than 8 credits per semester without obtaining the prior approval of the MSL Program Director.

4. Part-time students must complete all degree requirements within 4 academic years of their initial enrollment in the program. Additional time beyond the 4-year period of enrollment will be allowed only in rare cases of a documented serious and unforeseen personal emergency; a student should submit a request for additional time in writing to the Dean of Students.

Courses, Credits, and Examinations

1. Class attendance (being present in class) is required in all MSL courses. Students who have a compelling reason to be absent from a class must receive permission from their instructor ahead of time (where possible), and abide by the conditions imposed by the instructor to make up the missed work.

2. Failure to abide by this attendance policy may result in the student being excluded from the course, a Fail (F) grade in the course, or other appropriate sanctions in the discretion of the instructor or the Dean.

3. Credit toward MSL degree requirements will not be accepted for work completed prior to enrollment in the MSL program, except in a case where the judgment of the program director is that the student has completed a substantially similar course in a US JD or LLM program.

4. Students may count up to 8 credits total from Power Week courses and Saturday Sessions toward the MSL degree requirements.

5. Students who wish to receive credit for work outside of MSL classes must obtain prior permission from the MSL Program Director. Permission may be granted for a variety of activities, including independent study, internships, and coursework in other departments of the University. No more than 6 credits total of activities in this category may be counted toward the MSL degree requirements.

   a. Each activity approved in this category must be adequately supervised by a Northwestern faculty member and contain academic content appropriate to MSL study.

   b. MSL students may take graduate-level courses in other schools, departments, or programs of the University for MSL credit with the prior approval of the MSL Program Director upon a finding that the course will contribute to the student’s MSL education; that the course is offered for credit; and that the other school, department, or program has approved the MSL student’s enrollment in the class. The grading policy in such a course shall also apply to MSL students. Courses taken in this category are subject to the overall limit of 6 credits that includes all outside-the-MSL-classroom activities. Undergraduate-level courses are not allowed to count for MSL credit.
c. Grades earned in graduate courses taken for credit in subsection (b) above may be recorded on the student’s MSL transcript, but will not be counted in the MSL student’s GPA calculation.

6. The Dean or the Dean’s designate may allow a student additional time in which to complete an examination under the following circumstances:

   a. Where English is not the first language of the student. In the fall semester, an MSL student who wishes to request extra time on an exam should complete a request form by the stated deadline. The Dean or Dean’s designate shall adopt criteria by which to determine if a student shall be offered additional examination time. Extra time is not usually granted for a student who has studied at an institution where English is the language of instruction or for a student who has spent significant time in an English-speaking country.

   b. Where the student has received a documented accommodation from the University Office for students with disabilities (AccessibleNU) under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

7. A student who withdraws from a regular term (7 week term) course or a compressed week course before the announced drop deadline will have the class dropped from his/her transcript. If a student withdraws from a regular term course after the announced drop deadline, but before the end of the third week of classes, the course will remain on the student’s transcript and a “W” (withdrawal) grade will be recorded. A student who wishes to withdraw from a regular term course after the end of the third week of classes must obtain permission of the Program Director. If permission is granted, the course will remain on the student’s transcript and a “W” grade will be recorded. When a student withdraws from a compressed week course after the announced drop deadline, the course will remain on the transcript, with a “W” grade recorded. Only in the case of a documented serious and unforeseen personal emergency may the Dean of Students permit a student to withdraw from a course after the drop deadline without receiving a “W” grade.

**Grading Policies**

1. MSL courses will be offered either on a letter grade basis or on a credit/no credit (CR/NCR) basis. The grading system for each class will be designated in advance; students will not be able to choose which grading system will apply to them. Generally, courses offered in the 7-week sessions will be letter graded, while courses offered in the compressed weeks will be graded CR/NCR.

2. MSL instructors will announce to students the grading policy that they will follow in each course before the add/drop deadline for the term in which the course is offered.

3. Coursework offered for letter grades will use the following letters and numerical equivalents:
   - A+  4.33
   - A   4.00
   - A-  3.67
   - B+  3.33
   - B   3.00
   - B-  2.67
4. MSL courses will not be graded on a curve.

5. A grade point average (GPA) will be computed by the Office of the Registrar and included on a student’s transcript for each semester and cumulative for all grades.

6. Class rank will not be computed.

7. A student who receives a grade of Fail (F) in a required course must repeat that course. A student who receives a grade of Fail (F) in an elective course may repeat that course. When a course is repeated, both grades received for the course shall appear on the student’s official record and both shall be considered in determining the student’s eligibility to continue in school and to receive a degree. Both grades will be considered in computing grade point average.

8. Classes graded on a CR/NCR basis will be GPA neutral. The grade of “NCR” means no credit has been earned towards graduation requirements.

9. Incompletes and in-progress grades will be administered according to the law school’s general rules.

10. Grades become official when the instructor submits the official grade report form and it has been received by the Office of the Registrar. Thereafter, a grade may be changed only to correct errors of computation or recording.

11. “Master of Science in Law with Honors” will be awarded to students who have satisfied all degree requirements and have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.6 or higher.

**Satisfactory Academic Performance**

1. A full-time student who, at the conclusion of the first term (one half-semester) in the program, has a cumulative grade point average of below 2.25, or a part-time student who has completed at least three graded credits in the program and who has earned a cumulative grade point average of below 2.25, shall be advised by the Dean of Students that his/her record is unsatisfactory and shall meet with the Dean of Students to develop a plan for academic improvement. (Grade point averages are calculated by rounding off to the nearest hundredth of a point.)

2. A full-time student who, at the conclusion of the second term (one full semester) in the program, has a cumulative grade point average of below 2.25, or a part-time student who has completed at least six graded credits in the program and has earned a cumulative grade point average of below 2.25, shall be advised by the Dean of Students that his/her record is unsatisfactory, that his/her case will be reviewed by the Faculty Advisory Committee, and that he or she is on academic probation. The student will be requested to indicate, in writing, by a
specified date, a plan for academic success. The student may request to make a personal appearance before the committee.

3. A student who, in these circumstances, either fails to respond by the date specified or declines to plead his/her case orally or in writing may be excluded from further registration in the school by the Faculty Advisory Committee.

4. The Committee shall consider, fully and individually, each case pleaded to it.
   a. If the Committee determines that the student has a reasonable chance of completing the applicable degree requirements the student may continue in school subject to such terms as the Committee may deem appropriate.
   b. If the Committee determines that the student does not have a reasonable chance of completing the applicable degree requirements, though it is remotely possible, the student shall be informed of that determination, but may continue in school if the student so elects, subject to such terms as the Committee may deem appropriate.
   c. If the Committee determines that there is virtually no possibility that the student can complete the applicable degree requirements, the student shall be excluded from enrollment in the subsequent (Spring 2) session.
   d. The Faculty Advisory Committee has final authority to make determinations permitting a student to continue in school under subsections (a) and (b) above. Appeal of cases under subsection (c) above may be taken to the faculty.
   e. A student whose record is unsatisfactory but who is permitted to continue in school for whatever reason shall be classified as a student on academic probation so long as his/her record remains unsatisfactory.

Withdrawals
An enrolled student may withdraw from the Law School by completing a withdrawal form and following all steps in that process. The reasons for the withdrawal and whether the student has left the program in good standing shall be noted in the student’s file. A student who has withdrawn from the program while in good standing who wishes to return to the MSL program within 12 months may apply for re-enrollment by petitioning the Dean of Students. A student who has withdrawn from the program while in good standing who wishes to return after a 12-month period must apply to the Admissions Committee for re-admission to the program. A student who has withdrawn from the program while not in good standing must apply to the Admissions Committee for re-admission to the program. A student who is on medical leave must follow the medical reinstatement process.

Waivers
A student seeking a waiver of any provision of the MSL Program Rules & Regulations shall petition the Faculty Advisory Committee.

Other Matters
Any matters not contemplated by these rules will be decided in the discretion of the Dean or the Dean’s designate.
**University Rules and Honor Code**
MSL students are bound by the following Northwestern University Policies:

Northwestern University School of Law Honor Code:  

Northwestern University Policies on Discrimination and Harassment:  
[http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/statements/discrimination.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/statements/discrimination.html)

University Rules and Disciplinary Procedures, including the University Student Code of Conduct:  
[http://www.northwestern.edu/student-conduct/](http://www.northwestern.edu/student-conduct/)

University Sexual Harassment Policies  
[http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment/university-policies/index.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment/university-policies/index.html)