

Northwestern

PRITZKER SCHOOL OF LAW

Master of Science in Law

MSL PROGRAM RULES AND REGULATIONS **Fall, 2019**

These rules apply to students who enter the MSL program in the fall of 2019. Candidates who entered the program in previous semesters are subject to the Rules and Regulations in place at the time of their entry into the program, unless otherwise noted in this version of the rules.

Degree Requirements

Candidates for the degree of Master of Science in Law who enter the program in the fall of 2019 must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Earn 28 or more credits, including satisfactory completion of all requirements.
2. Earn a cumulative GPA of 2.25 or higher (rounding off to the nearest hundredth).
3. Complete the required curriculum, which includes one course in each of the following topics:
 - Business Formation and Structure
 - Business Torts
 - Contract Law and Design
 - Ethics
 - Intellectual Property Fundamentals
 - Legal and Regulatory Process
 - Research in Law, Business, and Technology
 - A course designated as satisfying the writing requirement at the time the student enrolls in the course.

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.

4. Students enrolled in the online format of the MSL program must attend at least one on-campus Power Week session designated specifically for online students (usually held at the end of May), and they must enroll in a minimum of two classes during that Power Week.

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.¹
2. Full-time students must normally complete the MSL degree requirements in one academic year. A full-time student who cannot complete the degree requirements in one academic year 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 one academic year 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 7 credits per semester without obtaining the prior approval of the MSL Program Director. This rule applies to all students enrolled in the MSL program in the 2019-20 academic year. (Please note that there are different minimums for the purposes of federal financial aid; please check with the Financial Aid Office to verify enrollment minimums for federal financial aid.)²
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 MSL Program Director.
5. Students must take all of their required courses (those listed in #3 under Degree Requirements, above) in the program format in which they are enrolled at the time they take the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances that in the judgment of the MSL Program Director justify an exception.
6. Before completing more than 50% of credits required for the degree, a student may request to switch degree formats – either from the online format to the residential format, or from the residential format to the online format. A student who wishes to change program formats should submit a written application to the MSL Program Director. A student will not be permitted to switch program formats more than once during the program, nor will a student be allowed to switch formats after having completed more than 50% of the credits required for the degree, unless there are extenuating circumstances that in the judgment of the MSL Program Director justify an exception. If a format switch is allowed, the MSL Program Director will create a program completion plan that sets forth the requirements and details of the student's remaining time in the program.

¹ Throughout these rules, references to the MSL Program Director include the Program Director's designate.

² Throughout these rules, the terms "full-time" and "part-time" refer to the definitions contained within these rules, and not to the definitions used for federal financial aid or any other definitions.

- Unless other deadlines associated with a particular class are announced in advance, students will be allowed to withdraw from courses into which they are enrolled according to the following schedule:

REGULAR TERM COURSES

When Course Dropped	Withdrawal Permitted	Permission Required	Class Remains on Transcript	Refund (part-time students only)
By announced drop deadline	Yes	No	No	Yes
By the end of the 6th week of classes	Yes	Yes	Yes, with a "W"	No
In the 7th or 8th week of classes	No	N/A	Yes, with grade assigned by professor	No

POWER WEEK & OTHER COMPRESSED COURSES

When Course Dropped	Withdrawal Permitted	Permission Required	Class Remains on Transcript	Refund (part-time students only)
By announced drop deadline	Yes	No	No	Yes
After drop deadline, but before the class begins	Yes	Yes	Yes, with a "W"	No
After the class has begun	No	N/A	Yes, with grade assigned by professor	No

Courses and Credits

- 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 MSL Program Director is that the student has successfully completed a substantially similar graded course in a comparable US JD or LLM program.
- Class attendance is required in all MSL residential courses, and all synchronous sessions in the online program. Students who have a compelling reason to be absent from a class or a synchronous session must receive permission from their instructor in advance (whenever possible), and abide by the conditions imposed by the instructor to make up the missed work.

Under no circumstances will permission be granted for a student to miss any part of a Power Week or compressed format class. A student who does not attend the full schedule of a Power Week or compressed class will not receive credit for that class.

3. MSL students may count up to 8 credits total from courses that are offered on a Credit/No Credit basis (CR/NCR) toward the MSL degree requirements.
4. A student in the residential format who wishes to receive credit for an elective course in the online format, and a student in the online format who wishes to receive credit for an elective course in the residential format must request permission from the MSL Program Director, who will review course prerequisites, enrollment issues, instructor preference and other relevant factors in deciding whether to grant permission. Normally, permission will not be granted in a student's first term of enrollment in the MSL program.
 - a. With permission of the MSL Program Director, MSL students in the online format may take elective courses in the residential format (in addition to credits taken in the required on-campus Power Week for online students). No more than 6 credits will be allowed, unless there are extenuating circumstances that in the judgment of the MSL Program Director justify an exception.
 - b. With permission of the MSL Program Director, MSL students in the part-time residential format may take elective courses in the online format. No more than 6 credits will be allowed, unless there are extenuating circumstances that in the judgment of the MSL Program Director justify an exception.
 - c. With permission of the MSL Program Director, MSL students in the full-time residential format may take elective courses in the online format. No more than 3 credits will be allowed, unless there are extenuating circumstances that in the judgment of the MSL Program Director justify an exception.
5. MSL students in the residential format 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 residential 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. Enrollment in such classes must comply with the Law School's and University's cross registration policies, available here: <https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/registration-graduation/registration/cross-school-registration.html>. 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.

Examinations and Grading Policies

1. Where English is not the student's first language, the MSL Program Director may allow extended time on a timed exam in the student's first semester of enrollment. An MSL student who wishes to request extra time on an exam should complete a request form by the stated deadline. 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. Arrangements regarding extra time are handled between the student and the MSL Program Director; under no circumstances should a student request extra time or discuss extra time arrangements directly with a faculty member.
2. When a student has received a documented exam accommodation from the University Office for students with disabilities (AccessibleNU), the MSL Program Director shall ensure that the accommodations are effectuated. Arrangements regarding disability accommodations on exams are handled between the student, Accessible NU, the Dean of Students, and the MSL Program Director; under no circumstances should a student request accommodations or discuss exam accommodations directly with a faculty member.
3. MSL courses will be offered either on a letter grade basis or on a 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 over a 7-week or 8-week session will be letter graded, while courses offered in Power Weeks or compressed formats will be graded CR/NCR.
4. 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.
5. 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
 - C+ 2.33
 - C 2.00
 - D 1.00
 - F 0.00

6. MSL courses are not required to be graded on a curve, and there is no required mean GPA; the program will provide grading guidelines, which all faculty are encouraged to follow.
7. 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.
8. Class rank will not be computed.
9. 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 choose to 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 used to compute GPA.
10. Classes graded on a CR/NCR basis will be GPA neutral. The grade of "NCR" means no credit has been earned towards graduation requirements.
11. Incompletes and in-progress grades will be administered according to the Law School's general rules.
12. 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.
13. "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 3.65 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 GPA 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 GPA of below 2.25, shall be advised by the MSL Program Director that his/her record is unsatisfactory and shall meet with the MSL Program Director to develop a plan for academic improvement. (GPAs 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, or anytime thereafter, has a cumulative GPA 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 GPA of below 2.25, shall be advised by the MSL Program Director that his/her record is unsatisfactory, that his/her case will be reviewed by the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), 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 FAC.

3. A student who, in the circumstances described in #2 above, 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 FAC.
4. The FAC shall consider, fully and individually, each case pleaded to it.
 - a. If the FAC 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 FAC 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 FAC may deem appropriate.
 - c. If the FAC 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 session.
 - d. The FAC 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. Additionally, a student who does not enroll in classes for 12 months will be considered a withdrawal, regardless of whether the student has submitted a withdrawal form. 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 MSL Program Director. A student who has withdrawn from the program while in good standing who wishes to return after a 12-month period must apply for re-admission to the program through the Admissions Committee. A student who has withdrawn from the program while not in good standing must apply for re-admission through the Admissions Committee. A student who is on medical leave must follow the medical reinstatement process.

Other Matters

Any matters not contemplated by these rules will be decided in the discretion of the MSL Program Director.

University Rules and Honor Code

MSL students are bound by the following Northwestern University Policies:

Northwestern University School of Law Honor Code:

<http://www.law.northwestern.edu/law-school-life/student-services/policies/honorcode/>

Northwestern University Policies on Discrimination and Harassment:

<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/>

University Sexual Harassment Policies

<http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment/university-policies/index.html>