Northwestern Pritzker School of Law is proud to offer the Master of Science in Law (MSL), a first-of-its-kind degree, specifically designed for engineers, scientists, technologists, medical professionals, and others with STEM backgrounds. As law and regulation become increasingly important in today’s technologically-focused world, professionals and entrepreneurs with technical expertise frequently find themselves interacting with a myriad of legal and regulatory structures and a complex intellectual property scheme.

Students in the MSL program will study the interface of law, business, and technology and thus will be uniquely positioned to play an active role in advancing innovation, commercializing ideas and technology, and leading industry.

**Curriculum**


A total of 28 credits is required for the MSL degree; 10 credits are in required, foundational courses and the remaining credits are in specialized elective courses. Students are also required to take a writing-intensive course. The required courses are focused on introducing students to fundamentals of law, business, and regulation, and to the skills necessary for upper-level curricular work in these areas. The elective courses allow students to develop their knowledge and practical skills by pursuing study in more focused, sophisticated, and applied subjects.

The MSL can be completed in one academic year (two semesters) of full-time study or up to four academic years of part-time study. Part-time students can choose between day and late afternoon/evening weekday classes. Most part-time students are able to maintain full- or part-time work schedules while completing the MSL degree.

- Following completion of the required, foundational core, students may mix and match courses from all areas of the curriculum or they may concentrate their studies in one particular area.
- MSL classes are taught by a combination of Northwestern’s renowned residential faculty and an impressive group of industry experts, who bring their practical experiences from law, business, and government to the MSL classroom.
- Teaching methods in the MSL program are varied and innovative. Subjects are taught “in context,” using team-based work, blended & flipped classrooms, interactive web content, guest lectures, company-based case studies, special projects, labs, and other active-learning techniques.

• Four times throughout the academic year, the MSL program has a week of intensive courses that will cover workshops, hot topics, and other material best taught in a more compressed format. Courses in this category have included Negotiation Skills and Strategies, Corporate Criminal Law, Monetizing Patents: Fundamentals of Patent Assertion, and the Integration of Science and Clinical Care.

**Northwestern Innovation**

Northwestern Law is a leader in business-legal training and regulatory analysis. In addition to its world-class research and practice centers—including the Searle Center on Law, Regulation, and Economic Growth; the Center on Negotiation and Mediation; and the Donald Pritzker Entrepreneurship Law Center—Northwestern Pritzker School of Law is known for launching several innovative programs, including the very first three-year JD-MBA. Northwestern Pritzker School of Law’s expertise as an innovator in program development and design ensures that MSL students have an unparalleled academic experience; the Law School’s reputation as a leader in legal education will serve MSL graduates throughout their careers.

**Career Growth**

The MSL program develops innovative leaders who possess the ability to think, communicate, and interact across disciplines. Students acquire skills necessary to recognize obstacles and risks and to visualize opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Graduates are better equipped for a variety of positions, including:

- technical specialists
- entrepreneurs
- inventors
- compliance officers
- regulatory engineers
- business developers
- company intrapreneurs
- scientific advisors
- expert witnesses
- government regulators
- technology transfer officers
- patent coordinators
- patent agents
- consultants
- regulatory analysts and specialists
- IP/patent portfolio managers
- business managers
- policy analysts
Special Features of the MSL

- Entire degree can be completed in one academic year
- Classes specifically designed for the MSL population
- Classes have a practical, real-world focus
- Creative teaching methods and assessments bring material to life
- Students customize their study based on their own educational goals and professional interests
- MSL students study alongside other STEM-focused individuals and develop valuable professional networks
- Great diversity in MSL student body
- Unique course scheduling, including half-semesters and compressed weeks, allows students to choose from a wide array of subject matters, instructors, and teaching formats
- Productive and frequent interaction with Northwestern Pritzker School of Law JD and LLM students and also with Northwestern University STEM departments, faculty, and students

Networking Opportunities

As members of the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law community, MSL students have abundant opportunities to network with industry experts, thought leaders, and Northwestern alumni. One way that students gain this exposure is through the MSL Speaker Series, which brings in entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, innovators, legal professionals, corporate leaders, and others who are working at the intersection of law, business, and technology.

MSL students are encouraged to partake in networking opportunities in the Chicagoland area, and there are many to choose from. Students have attended BioTech Day, Chicago Ideas Week, HealthTECH Summit; Techstars Demo Day; Techweek Chicago; and numerous events at local incubators, including 1871 (tech), Catalyze (manufacturing), and MATTER (biotech).

Student Involvement Opportunities

MSL students are very involved in the life of the Law School, and there are myriad opportunities for interaction and networking with students in different programs. MSL students have been involved as members and in leadership capacities in many student groups, including:

- Advanced Degree Consulting Alliance
- Black Law Student Association
- Entrepreneurship Law Center Student Group
- Health Law Society
- High Tech Law Society
- Intellectual Property Law Society
- Journal of Technology and Intellectual Property
- Student Bar Association
- Women’s Leadership Coalition

MSL students have also participated in the transactional moot court competition, the Law School Global Village, the Public Interest Auction, and many other events and activities that involve the entire student body of the Law School.

Internships & Professional Development

MSL students may opt to participate in an internship while in the program or just after. Internships are usually offered in the spring and summer. Prior placements have been at technology transfer offices at Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Office of Sponsored Research at Northwestern, Ohm Coroporation, Orbitz, and Cook County.

The MSL program has a dedicated staff member who counsels MSL students and provides career search guidance. In addition to meeting with students one-on-one to develop a targeted, individualized career search strategy, the career advisor also leads workshops focused on helping students prepare for job searches, develop strong resumes and cover letters, and refine networking and interviewing skills.

Living and Studying in Chicago

An established center of commerce and government, with a thriving entrepreneurship ecosystem, Chicago provides an ideal setting for MSL study. Chicago is home to many of the world’s leading pharmaceutical and technology companies, many of the nation’s largest corporations and law firms, and many successful startup companies, including Groupon, Braintree, Grubhub, and SpotHero. The innovation community in Chicago boasts numerous resources for entrepreneurs, including shared work spaces such as the nationally-recognized 1871 tech hub and MATTER, a space for biotech and healthtech startups, and also top-ranked accelerator programs including Techstars Chicago (for tech companies) and Impact Engine (for social impact companies).

The Law School campus is located on the shores of Lake Michigan in Chicago’s Streeterville, one of the city’s most beautiful and exciting neighborhoods. The Law School is adjacent to Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management, the Feinberg School of Medicine, and Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

The Law School building is within walking distance of two beautiful beaches and is just a few blocks from the famed Magnificent Mile, a stretch of Michigan Avenue that boasts a wide variety of cultural landmarks, restaurants, and shopping. Northwestern Law is just a mile from the Loop, one of the most architecturally interesting business districts in the world and home to the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Stock Exchange, the Chicago Board of Trade, Millennium and Grant Parks, City Hall, and many other exciting attractions.

Admissions

MSL applicants must submit an online application, which includes a statement of interest, a resume or CV, a letter of recommendation, and official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended. International students must submit a TOEFL or IELTS score or request a waiver from the Program Director. No other standardized test score is required, although applicants may submit a score if they so choose. A limited number of merit-based scholarships is available; students may also be eligible for loans.

Applications are accepted during 3 application periods: the deadlines are January 15; April 15 (final deadline for international students); and June 1 (domestic students only).