



School of Education and Social Policy

**Master of Science in
Learning & Organizational Change**

2009-2010 Student Handbook



**NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY**

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Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook is designed to inform the Master of Science in Learning & Organizational Change Program (MSLOC) student community of important policies and guidelines that apply to every person who accepts the offer of admission. Through this handbook, students will be referred to as "you" and "we" refers to MSLOC Program administration. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the MSLOC Program adheres to all the policies and guidelines outlined in The Graduate School Policy Guide: www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/

As the MSLOC program continues to evolve and improve, policies and practices by necessity must change. Consider this handbook a "living document" in that, as changes are instituted, they will be described in detail in subsequent editions. In addition, we will make every attempt to communicate these changes to you as they occur. The most recent edition will always be posted in the *Student Resource Center*, located on the MSLOC website. However, the MSLOC Director and SESP Dean reserve the right to institute changes to published policies and practices when needed and as new initiatives dictate.

Introduction to the Master of Science in Learning & Organizational Change (MSLOC) Program

The Masters Program in Learning & Organizational Change (MSLOC), located within the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University, is a learning community composed of scholars, practitioners and students. We develop leaders to have the knowledge and skills they require to successfully transform organizations through the integrated study and practice of strategic organizational change, knowledge management, and performance-driven learning. We attract those who understand the importance and value of realizing workforce potential in order to drive deep change and sustain success in organizations.

Introduction to the School of Education and Social Policy (SESP)

The School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) has its roots in Northwestern's 19th Century department of pedagogy. So not surprisingly, a primary mission of the school is training elementary and secondary teachers. However, the school's focus has broadened to include educational needs and policy issues across the human lifespan and throughout society.

SESP draws on the expertise of a diverse faculty of well-respected scholars in the learning sciences, computer science, human development and social policy, and counseling psychology. The shared sense of inquiry existing among faculty, staff, and students contributes to a strong sense of community at the school. This community is committed to examining the varied settings in which learning takes place and engages in spirited dialogue concerning complex and enduring questions related to teaching and learning.

SESP has ranked in the top 10 schools of education for seven of the nine past years, according to the annual ranking of graduate schools by *U.S. News & World Report*. The *U.S. News* ranking is based on indicators including GRE scores, selectivity, funded research, student/faculty ratio and assessments by educators. The most weight is given to a peer-based quality assessment by education school deans, graduate school deans and high school superintendents.

www.sesp.northwestern.edu/

MSLOC Program Requirements

Students are accepted into the program with the status of "degree" or "certificate," based on the application they completed. In terms of student experience, no distinction is made between certificate and degree students. The difference lies in the choice of classes: certificate students may take up to five MSLOC core classes, including the MSLOC 410-1 & 2 "Foundations" class, and they are not allowed to take any electives or participate in a Practicum or Capstone. Most certificate students elect to apply for admission into the degree program as their interests and goals dictate. All classes that certificate students successfully complete are applied toward the full degree requirements.

Units Required to Obtain Degree

The MSLOC degree program requires fifteen credits (1 class usually equals 1 unit of credit) for completion. Eleven of these credits come from a combination of core courses: MSLOC 410-1 & 2 "Foundations," designed to create a common understanding of key LOC related concepts, six classes in the content areas of Learning & Performance, Knowledge Management and Strategic Change, one practicum experience, and three credits applied toward the culminating Capstone project. The remaining four credits are electives that you choose from the many options available at Northwestern University, including Kellogg School of Management and the Learning Sciences Doctoral Program in the School of Education and Social Policy. You may be allowed to receive up to three elective credits for previous relevant graduate coursework, subject to approval from the MSLOC Director.

7 MSLOC Core	4 Electives	4 LOC Applied
1 MSLOC Foundations 2 Learning & Performance 2 Knowledge Management 2 Strategic Change	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSLOC electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transformational Consulting ○ Cognitive Design ○ Applying Social Network Analysis in LOC ○ Coaching for Learning & Performance (new for Fall 2010) • Learning Sciences--SESP • Kellogg School of Business • Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)--Medill • Masters in Engineering Management (MEM)--McCormick • Others (e.g. offerings in The Graduate School) 	1 Practicum 3 Capstone credits

Certificate Option

Students who have been admitted in certificate status may take up to five classes (5 units of credit) in the MSLOC program. Choices for the five classes can include MSLOC electives but can NOT include Foundations I & II, the Practicum or the Capstone course offerings. As with all MSLOC courses that are taken as part of a certificate, these can be applied toward full degree requirements.

Part-time/Full-time

Students in both degree and certificate status may attend either part-time or full-time. Part-time attendance means one or two courses are taken each quarter (1 quarter = 1 term); full-time attendance is three (or, on rare occasions, four) courses per quarter. (Note: Federal loan

programs count two classes as "full-time," and students enrolled in two classes as eligible for receiving funds.)

Program Duration

Program duration depends upon how many courses you take per quarter. Students who attend part-time and take two credits per quarter (including summer) should be able to complete the program in 2 years. A full-time student taking courses per quarter can complete the degree in 5 terms (18 months). You are required to complete the program within five years from the date you matriculate. You are allowed one quarter off per academic year (not counting summer). If you wish to leave the program for more than one quarter, you will need to withdraw and re-apply to the program when you are ready to return.

Applying for Degree Status from Certificate Status

The option to apply and enter the MSLOC Program as a student with certificate status is offered to those applicants with a strong undergraduate academic record and significant work and management experience and who may already possess another graduate degree. Applicants who choose to apply as a certificate student have two paths from which to choose: 1) they may be motivated to earn a "Certificate in Learning and Organizational Change" by completing five MSLOC courses, or 2) they may be considering applying for full degree status at a later point when they are more certain that pursuing the full degree makes sense for them.

Because there is no difference in the courses, tuition and fees, or grading considerations for degree vs. certificate students, all credits earned while in certificate status automatically count toward fulfilling requirements for the full degree, once the student is offered admission into the degree program.

At any point *prior to enrolling in their fifth course*, certificate students must notify the MSLOC program advisor of their intent to apply for the full degree or to finish the certificate program. Certificate students should use the MSLOC on-line application tool to apply for degree status (see the MSLOC Website: www.northwestern.edu/msloc).

The materials are required for completing the certificate to degree application include:

- An updated Statement of Purpose
- Essays that are responses to questions listed in the MSLOC Application for Admission
- An updated resume
- One letter of recommendation from a professional reviewer (MSLOC becomes the other recommender)
- A \$100 application processing fee
- An updated MSLOC program plan, reflecting the student's proposed progression through the program to complete all course requirements

Once all the materials are assembled, the MSLOC admissions committee will review the application and provide the student with an offer of admission or, in the case where the student is denied admission, withdrawn from the program. If the student has completed five courses, he/she will be awarded a Certificate in Learning & Organizational Change.

Applying for Degree Status from Certificate Status (cont'd.)

Important elements for consideration regarding admission into the degree program will be the student's grade record as well as his/her contribution to and participation in the MSLOC community. Applicants are expected to have a cumulative GPA higher than 3.2 for coursework taken while a certificate student. In addition, input could be solicited from MSLOC staff and faculty in whose classes the student was enrolled regarding the quality of the applicant's participation in the classroom as well as his/her contribution to the community. *Applicants should not assume that an offer of admission into the certificate program guarantees an offer of admission into the degree program.*

Once the student is offered admission into the degree program, he/she will meet with the program advisor to review his/her proposed program plan.

Taking Courses

Dates and Deadlines

For the 2009-10 Academic Calendar that lists important dates regarding term start and ending, registration and academic deadlines, and observed holidays, see www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/. For dates and deadlines specific to the MSLOC Program, see Blackboard: "MS in Learning and Organizational Change> MSLOC Calendar."

Program Plans

Every student is required to create, keep updated, and file with the MSLOC office an academic program plan that maps out his/her past and planned progress through the MSLOC Program. Program plans indicate which courses you plan to take and in which term you plan to take them. At the aggregate level, program plans aid MSLOC staff in forecasting demand. At the individual level, they help you and your program advisor to validate the order in which you want to take your courses and to determine the course load you will need to carry in order to graduate when you desire. Also, a program plan that is approved and filed with the MSLOC office guarantees that you have space in the classes you want. That is why it is important for you to update your program plan with the MSLOC office whenever your plan of study changes. You are encouraged to meet with your MSLOC academic advisor regularly throughout your academic career to discuss your options and get your questions answered.

For guidelines on creating a program plan, find the *Student Resource Center* webpage on the MSLOC website (www.northwestern.edu/msloc); and refer to the "Program Plan Guidelines" document. This webpage also contains scenarios for part-time and full-time study and a blank template for you to use in designing your plan.

At the beginning of each quarter, the MSLOC office reconciles the classes each student is enrolled in with the classes on his/her approved plan. If a student's program plan is inaccurate, the MSLOC office may impose a registration hold until the plan a revised plan is submitted and approved.

Due dates for submitting your plan and any updates each quarter are posted on the MSLOC Calendar; see Blackboard: "MS in Learning and Organizational Change> MSLOC Calendar." They will also be communicated via e-mail in a pre-quarterly notification sent by the MSLOC Program Assistant.

Registration for MSLOC Courses

MSLOC students register for MSLOC courses using CAESAR. An important prerequisite for enrolling in MSLOC courses is to have an accurate MSLOC program plan on file with the MSLOC office. Several weeks before the start of each term, shortly before University open registration starts, you will receive an e-mail reminder to update your program plan (if needed). The e-mail will also include information concerning the MSLOC core classes and electives offered for that

term. Using CAESAR, you can then register for the MSLOC classes that are reflected on your program plan.

You typically have 3-6 weeks (depending on the term) to register using CAESAR during the Open Registration period, which closes one week before the start of classes each term. Refer to the University calendar at www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendar/ for specific dates. Registration dates are also listed on "Plan-it Purple" (aquavite.northwestern.edu/cal/pp/) and on the MSLOC calendar provided on the MSLOC Blackboard.

If you miss the Open Registration deadline, you will have until the end of the first week of the term to register late (as long as the courses you wish to enroll in have not already closed due to enrollment caps).

If you do not register by the end of Late Registration (i.e., the end of the first week of the term), you will be assessed a late fee of \$100.00. This fee will appear on your tuition statement. Failure to pay this late fee will result in your student account being placed on hold, which will halt your ability to register for future classes.

It is important to keep your program plan up to date with your registration actions. You should not enroll in or attend any NU courses until you have an updated and approved program plan, and until any holds on your account have been removed (including holds due to unpaid late fees). If your program plan is not kept up to date with your actual course registration, your registration/account for the following quarter will be put on hold until your new program plan is submitted and approved by the MSLOC Department. If your program plan is not submitted in time for approval and for you to register for courses during Late Registration, you will be assessed the late fee of \$100.

To confirm the classes you have been registered in, to check your tuition account, and track your tuition payments, use CAESAR to access this information. Tuition bills are no longer automatically mailed in hardcopy form to students, although you can elect this option within CAESAR.

Registration for Non-MSLOC Electives

Different procedures are necessary for enrolling in non-MSLOC courses. Students interested in enrolling in courses at the Kellogg Graduate School of Management must fill out a Kellogg "Course Request Form." See the MSLOC program advisor for a copy of this form and a listing of available Kellogg classes. Note that Kellogg course availability is sometimes limited, so enrollment in a class you have chosen is never guaranteed. When you are ready to take an elective, be prepared to select several classes from both the Kellogg list as well as to consider other elective options. Note that the Kellogg part-time (Chicago) program limits non-Kellogg students to two classes total during their course career; no limit exists for the full-time (Evanston) program. For more information on Kellogg electives, see "Online Orientation for MSLOC Students>Registration and Billing" in the *Student Resource Center* on the MSLOC webpage.

Because each University department has its own process for granting permission to take its classes, taking a non-MSLOC elective in programs such as Medill IMC, the Master's in Engineering Management Program in McCormick, or the School of Continuing Studies requires that you contact your program advisor to determine your elective options and receive help with registration. You can search for classes that might interest you, however, by using the "Search for Classes" tool in CAESAR.

An exception to this is The Graduate School (TGS); you can enroll in TGS classes using CAESAR. You must always check for any pre-requisites and notify the instructor of your intent to take the course (be sure to include an introduction of yourself) and to request the syllabus, first-class assignment, etc.

Course Cancellation: Deadlines and Refunds

Discuss all changes in your academic plans with your MSLOC program advisor, including a decision to add or drop a class. The MSLOC Program adheres to The Graduate School regarding reimbursement guidelines for cancellation of a class. Your ability to secure a refund for a cancelled class lessens dramatically over time. It is important, then, that you take action immediately once you determine you wish to cancel a class.

As a general rule of thumb, the latest that courses may be dropped with no financial penalty is by the end of the FIRST week of the term. For changes of registration after the final day of the drop/add period, contact your program advisor immediately to discuss these circumstances and to ensure the class gets dropped with the least penalty to you. In addition, it is important to consult with the Financial Aid office about loans or any other financial implications of dropping a class.

No full refund is given for a change of registration received at the Registrar's office after the fifth day of classes of any given quarter. After the fifth day, the following policy applies:

- After 10 percent and up to 25 percent of the quarter has elapsed, 75 percent of the tuition is refunded.
- After 25 percent and up to 50 percent of the quarter has elapsed, 50 percent of the tuition is refunded.
- After 50 percent of the quarter has elapsed, no refunds are given.

The time period for each quarter is defined as the first day of classes through the last day of classes. You can find these deadlines listed in the academic calendar corresponding to the appropriate year and term: www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/calendar/.

If you are taking two or more classes, you may add or drop a class you are enrolled in using CAESAR. (An exception is to drop Kellogg classes—contact your MSLOC program advisor for help.) If you are only enrolled in one class, dropping that class will mean a withdrawal from the University for only that term, and you must file a withdrawal form with the NU Registrar's office. Note that this type of University withdrawal is only temporary and is NOT a withdrawal from the MSLOC Program. This form is available at the Registrar's office and from your MSLOC program advisor. The completed form must be approved and signed by your MSLOC program advisor before being filed at the Registrar's office. The Office of Student Accounts considers the date the completed form is received at the Registrar's office to be the official date governing financial adjustments.

Once you have dropped your class, be sure to update your program plan to reflect the change and submit the updated version to your program advisor.

To re-enter the University system, you will be required to complete an "Application for Former Student to Re-enter" and submit it to the Registrar. The application is available at the Registrar's office and on-line, and must be filed six weeks before the first day of registration of the term of return. It is your responsibility to ensure the application is turned in to the Registrar by the deadline.

Holds

There are circumstances that will result in a registration or transcript "hold" on a student's account. These holds are most commonly placed by the Office of Student Accounts (847.491.5224) or Health Services (847.491.8100). If you have a hold, you will need to contact the appropriate office to arrange for removal of the hold before you will be able to register or to receive or send a transcript.

If you have not enrolled in any classes for one or more terms during the regular academic year, in order to be re-entered into the University system and obtain NU system access, you will need to complete the form "Application for Former Student to Re-enter." This form may be obtained

from the Registrar's office and on-line. Contact the MSLOC program advisor several weeks in advance of the term you plan to return to ensure a smooth re-entry.

For more information regarding holds in CAESAR, see "Student Resources>Registration and Billing" in the *Student Resource Center* on the MSLOC Website (www.northwestern.edu/msloc).

Attendance

Our program guideline is that students can miss one or two class sessions per course. If you know you are going to miss more than two classes, you should wait for another time to enroll. You are responsible for meeting the course requirements, regardless of absence. The instructor for the course has discretion regarding how your overall grade for the class will be impacted due to absences. Contact your instructor prior to class start-up to alert him/her to classes you anticipate missing and to agree upon arrangements for making up missed assignments and course content (if applicable).

Course Evaluations

At the completion of each of your courses, you will receive an e-mail from the NU Registrar's Office asking you to complete an on-line CTEC form (Course and Teacher Evaluation Council), a generalized evaluation form for classes across the University. This information is then compiled and made accessible to students. In addition to the CTECs, you are also encouraged to provide feedback about your courses and classroom experiences to the MSLOC program advisor and to your instructor. The MSLOC Program Office and MSLOC faculty members use the CTECs and other feedback to improve future course offerings.

Occasionally MSLOC will request that you complete an evaluation survey designed to collect feedback that supplements or is a substitution for the University CTECs.

Blackboard (Course Management System)

Northwestern's course management system, called Blackboard, provides students and faculty with a web-based environment they can use to communicate and collaborate. In addition to sharing information on assignments, grades, announcements and class readings, Blackboard can facilitate e-discussions, store documents for shared access, and provide links to other web sites. Blackboard is also used by instructors to facilitate discussion, collect assignments, compile course documents, or provide additional resources. For more information about Blackboard and to log in to the system, use this weblink: <https://courses.northwestern.edu/webapps/login>.

Texts and Course Packs

Texts are typically available for purchase from the Norris Bookstore one week prior to the start of the term. However, students may purchase their texts from any vendor. Instructors usually reference articles from multiple sources to create a coursepack. Coursepacks for MSLOC courses are available for purchase at the beginning of each term from "University Readers," an on-line service. Syllabi, listing the texts and coursepack readings for current and past classes are posted on Blackboard. Look for communications from MSLOC staff to provide you with details regarding coursepack and textbook availability. More details regarding course materials can be found in the *Student Resource Center* on the MSLOC website.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credits from another graduate program taken before entry to the MSLOC program can apply for up to three (3) electives. Courses taken as stand-alone or in pursuit of another degree are candidates for transfer. Courses taken as part of another degree that was completed cannot be transferred. Courses taken at another institution after a student matriculates into the MSLOC program cannot be transferred. Students must petition for review to the program advisor and complete a Transfer Credit form. The program advisor will determine the applicability of the

course to the MSLOC program and to the students' educational goals and award credit accordingly.

Students Auditing Courses

The instructor gives permission for students to audit a course and what this participation would look like. Credit is not granted for auditing and participation in the course does not appear on the student's transcript.

Pass/No Pass

All eleven required MSLOC courses as well as all MSLOC electives must be taken for a grade. There is not a pass/no pass (P/N) option for these courses. However, the non-MSLOC electives you select may be taken P/N if the department in which the class is offered and instructor allow this option. P/Ning a class means that you will receive a "P" on your transcript for any grade C or higher. You will receive a "NP" for a failing grade, and you will not receive credit for the course. In both cases, your GPA is not affected. Note that your instructor will not know that you have elected this option. He/She will submit a grade for you and the switch to P/N will be made by the registrar's office. Some programs, Medill's IMC program for example, do not allow students to P/N any of their classes. Correspondingly, some individual classes within a given department do not allow this option. Selected Kellogg classes allow classes to be taken as P/N.

It is your responsibility to investigate and appropriately P/N a class; a variety of options and conditions under which P/N can be selected exist. Some helpful hints: To choose the P/N option for electives other than Kellogg, you must first be enrolled in the class. Once enrolled, you can select the P/N option through use of NU's registration system CAESAR. For Kellogg classes, once you can confirm that you are enrolled, request the P/N option from your MSLOC program advisor. You can then confirm on CAESAR that this has occurred.

The deadline for selecting the P/N option for all classes is at the end of the first five days of classes and cannot be changed thereafter.

Leaves of Absence/ Inactive Status

Once admitted to the MSLOC Program, students are expected to make steady progress toward completion of their degrees or certificates. All students must complete their Master's degrees within five years from the date they started the program, and certificates must be completed within three years of the start date.

You may skip enrolling in any classes during only one term (not counting summer) each academic year. If you do not wish to enroll in an MSLOC approved class in a given term, you need to contact the MSLOC program advisor to indicate your intent to continue in the program by completing a petition to request a leave of absence and to hold your status as "inactive" for that term. The University considers not being enrolled during a given term as a withdrawal (summers are an exception). Note that this type of University withdrawal is only temporary and is NOT a withdrawal from the MSLOC Program.

When you are ready to return, in order to re-enter the University system and to get your account reactivated, you will be required to complete an "Application for Former Student to Re-enter" and submit it to the Registrar. The application is available at the Registrar's office (and on-line) and must be filed six weeks before the first day of registration of the term of return.

If you should fail to register for two consecutive terms, you will be withdrawn from the MSLOC Program and will receive a letter stating your official withdrawal from the program. Any "K" or "Y" grades you are carrying at the time of your withdrawal will be changed to a permanent "Y" on your record. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the MSLOC Director.

Withdrawals/ Re-Admission

If you need to withdraw from the MSLOC Program (i.e. skip more than two consecutive terms [not counting summer]), contact your MSLOC program advisor to determine the options available to you. Be aware that any incomplete grades you have on your transcript at the time you withdraw become a permanent "Y" grade on your record. (See "Incomplete Grades" above.)

If you wish to re-join the program after being withdrawn, you must re-apply to the program and submit a \$100 application fee. Submitting an application does not guarantee that you will be re-admitted. The decision whether you are offered re-admission will be at the Director's discretion and based on your previous academic performance and level of contribution to the MSLOC community. You must retake any courses that have "Y" grades on your transcript.

If you do re-apply, and when you are offered admission, the MSLOC program advisor will alert you to any changes in the current curriculum or overall requirements that may affect how the classes for which you received a letter grade will be counted. If credits you earned when you were previously enrolled in the MSLOC program are for classes that are no longer offered and/ or are no longer part of the requirements listing, it may be those credits will be counted as electives and not core requirements.

Graduation

Petition to Graduate

Two to three months prior to your last academic term, you will complete a petition to graduate. This form details the courses you have taken, and plan to take, and is reviewed by your advisor to ensure that you have fulfilled the program requirements. You will receive additional information about graduation via e-mail from the MSLOC and SESP offices throughout the year.

Transcript Requests

Unofficial Transcripts

Students can obtain unofficial transcripts by logging into CAESAR on the Northwestern University website at <http://www.northwestern.edu/caesar/>.

Official Transcripts

An official transcript bears the University Seal and a signature certifying its authenticity. To request an official transcript, visit <http://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/transcripts/transcript.html> to get instructions. An on-line form is available for you to download, fill out and fax into the Registrar's office.

Right to Privacy

The MSLOC Program follows the Northwestern University guidelines for access to student records, which are based on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. For additional information, see www.registrar.northwestern.edu/ferpa/.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Northwestern University is committed to providing equal access to all programming. Students with disabilities seeking accommodations are encouraged to contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 467-5530 or ssd@northwestern.edu. SSD is located in the basement of Scott Hall. The SSD weblink is: <http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/>.

Performance Expectations and Grades

Criteria for and evaluation of performance are at the discretion of the instructor. Expectations and how they are being met will be communicated to students via the course syllabus and feedback throughout the term. If you need clarity regarding expectations for class participation, team work or course deliverables, please discuss them with your respective instructor.

General Grading Guidelines

- A: Students demonstrate a deep understanding of multiple concepts, frameworks and ideas introduced in class. Opportunities for this demonstration will occur through project documentation, papers, verbal and Blackboard participation (if applicable) that contribute insight and facilitate the learning of peers and instructors. We will be looking for application in analysis and design of cases and real world examples, supported by data. These are the students who demonstrate their interest in trying new ways of seeing, defining and thinking through problems, as well as thinking through the possible consequences of their intended solutions and how to work with those consequences. These are also the students who create and contribute new knowledge for the good of the community of learners in the class.
- B: Students demonstrate understanding of multiple concepts, frameworks and ideas introduced in class. Opportunities for this demonstration will occur through project documentation, papers, verbal and other forms of participation that contribute perspective that facilitates learning of peers and instructors. We will be looking for application in analysis and design of cases and real world examples, supported by data. Often what results in a "B" grade instead of an "A" are projects and papers that are thorough (in terms of concept and framework used) but are more superficial and procedural than "A" work. "A" work would also address the "why" underneath procedures and offer new insights, discoveries and applications that would benefit the whole community of learners, as well as themselves. "B" students are those who demonstrate the ability to add to their own current schemas and to think about the concepts, frameworks and ideas from class but who do not demonstrate any synthesis that would lead to transformational learning for themselves and others.
- C: Students demonstrate some level of understanding of a limited numbers of concepts, frameworks and ideas introduced in the class on a more superficial level. These students show up and technically play by the rules of the class but do not stretch their own minds for their own good or for the good of the community of learners in the class.
- D: These grades are rare in graduate programs. Students demonstrate limited understanding of class concepts. While students may show up and participate at a minimum level, they have failed to submit required work or the work submitted for review was of insufficient quality.
- F: These grades are very rare in graduate programs. They are given to students who do not show up, participate or contribute. Students receiving these grades should reconsider their readiness and motivation for graduate work. "F" grades cannot be counted as credit toward completing degree or certificate requirements.
- Y: A grade of "Y" is given when a student does not submit all assigned work in a course by the date that grades are due. It is typically awarded when a student's practicum or independent study work needs to extend a minimal period beyond the official ending of the term. All "Y" grades are incompletes and students who receive a "Y" grade must complete course requirements and earn an acceptable letter grade within ONE CALENDAR YEAR of the date the grade is incurred. After one calendar year, at the discretion of the MSLOC Director, the "Y" becomes a permanent grade on the record. "Y" grades count zero points toward the student's cumulative GPA (i.e., they have the same effect as an "F."). "Y" grades cannot be counted as credit toward completing degree or certificate requirements.

In the case of a permanent "Y" grade on a student's record, that student will be required to enroll again in the class in order to fulfill the requirements for the degree or certificate.

General Grading Guidelines (cont'd.)

K: A "K" grade signifies "work in progress." It is typically awarded at the conclusion of the second capstone class (MSLOC 461-2), but also may be assigned if more time is needed to complete the course requirements for the first capstone class and/or the third capstone class. Once the student has successfully met the requirements for the class, the grade will be changed to a permanent letter grade. If more than ONE CALENDAR YEAR passes after the date the "K" grade is incurred, the "K" grade will be changed to a permanent grade of "Y." "Y" grades count zero points toward the student's cumulative GPA (i.e., they have the same effect as an "F."). Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the MSLOC Director.

P/N: Some courses, including non-MSLOC classes chosen as electives, can be taken on a pass/no-credit basis rather than for a letter grade. Receipt of a "P" or "N" has no effect on the student's overall GPA. However, if the student receives an "N," the course will not count towards fulfilling degree requirements. MSLOC electives cannot be taken P/N.

Instructors can choose to award +/- grades.

Incomplete Grades

You are expected to complete all work in all courses by the appropriate deadline, as outlined by the instructor and University policies. You will not be granted permission to make up a final examination or complete other assigned course work after the end of a term, except in circumstances clearly beyond your control and with the permission of the instructor. If you expect to miss or have missed a final examination, you must negotiate an alternate arrangement with the instructor.

If you receive a grade of "K" (work in progress) or "Y" (incomplete) in a course, you must complete the required work to obtain a grade within *one year* from the term in which you earned the "K" or "Y" grade. For instance, if you receive an incomplete in a course during the fall term, you must complete the work, and your instructor must complete a Change of Grade form by the end of finals week during the following fall term. Keep in mind that it often takes time for your instructor to evaluate your work, sign the form, and submit it to the Registrar; thus, we urge you to make up incompletes as soon as possible. You must ensure that your instructor has adequate time to review your work and submit your new grade.

After one calendar year, the "K" or "Y" becomes a permanent "Y" grade on your record. In order to receive credit for the course, you will have to retake the class. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the MSLOC Program Director. Periods of non-registration (i.e. approved leaves of absence--"inactive status") during the year do not affect this limitation of time.

Grade Changes

A student or instructor may request a grade change only to correct a clerical or computational error. Grade changes requested for the following reasons are not allowed: re-doing or submitting extra work, re-examination, or re-evaluation of a student's work after the grades of others in the class have been submitted to the Registrar's office.

The right and responsibility to assess the quality of your work remains with your instructor. If you are dissatisfied with your grade in a class, we encourage you to communicate with the instructor. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Director of the program. However, the Director does not have the authority to change a grade assigned by an instructor.

Academic Probation

In matters regarding academic standing, the MSLOC Program refers to the policies established by The Graduate School at Northwestern. According to the Graduate School Bulletin 2003-2005, page 22, *"To be in good academic standing in The Graduate School, a student must meet the requirements set by the degree program and The Graduate School. A student whose overall grade average is below B, or who has more than one incomplete grade, or who fails to make progress toward the degree in accordance with the requirements adopted by the Graduate Faculty, is not in good academic standing. Students who are otherwise in good academic standing, but whose records contain an incomplete (Y) grade, have one year from the date of grade award to complete course requirements and earn an acceptable letter grade..."*

Students who do not meet the requirements of good academic standing at the end of a term will be placed on academic probation for the following term and will be notified in writing or by e-mail of their status. If a student has not returned to good academic standing by the end of term following academic probation, he or she will be withdrawn from the program. (See "Withdrawals/ Re-Admission" above.) All "K" or "Y" grades existing on the student's record at the time of withdrawal will be changed to permanent "Y" grades. Should the student petition for re-admission and be accepted, any classes with "Y" grades that exist on the student's transcript will need to be retaken for credit.

The decision to place a student on academic probation or dismiss him or her from the program is at the discretion of the MSLOC Director.

Academic Integrity

As an MSLOC student, you have entered a community of scholarship in which academic integrity is of the highest value. All students enrolled in the MSLOC Program are expected to adhere to the standards for academic integrity. We specially address the policies of academic integrity because of the serious nature of violations: a violation of academic integrity guidelines for MSLOC and Northwestern University can lead to a reduced or failing grade in the course (as determined by the course instructor) to suspension and withdrawal from the MSLOC program. Students who violate these standards will be sanctioned as is deemed appropriate by the MSLOC faculty member, the MSLOC Director, and the Dean of SESP.

It is very important, therefore, that you understand the definitions and examples of academic integrity. The MSLOC program adheres to the policies set forth by the University and specifically the School of Education and Social Policy. For this information, see "University Principles and Safeguards" at <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/uniprin.html> and the "Academic Integrity" webpage on the SESP site: <http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/ugrad/academics/integrity/> . If you have any questions about academic dishonesty, please contact your MSLOC program advisor.

Instructors commonly choose to use the "Safe Assignment" tool provided by the University that allows easy review of students' written work against a large database of published, scholarly work. Students are expected to be conversant with current guidelines for proper citation of others' work. The MSLOC Program adheres to American Psychological Association (APA) style guidelines. To learn more about APA style and the proper citation of referenced works, see: www.writing.northwestern.edu/links.html.

Whom to Contact

If you have questions about any of the information contained in this student handbook, please contact Terri Cramer, MSLOC Program Advisor (tcramer@northwestern.edu; 847-467-1481).