

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LAW

Contacts

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Program Overview

The MSL curriculum centers on the intersection of law, business, and technology, with specific focus areas in business law and entrepreneurship, intellectual property and patent design, and regulatory analysis and strategy. Courses are designed specifically for MSL students, and students have the flexibility to design course plans that fit their particular interests and professional goals.

Enrollment Options

The MSL degree is offered in two formats:

| Degree | Duration |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Residential - Full-time | 9 Months |
| Online - Part-time | 2-4 years |

Program of Study

The MSL curriculum includes a set of required, foundational classes and a rich collection of electives. Electives fall into three subject areas: intellectual property and patent design; business law and entrepreneurship; and regulatory analysis and strategy. Many students select classes across the three areas of study, while some focus on one particular area.

Students must complete at least 28 credits for the MSL degree. Required courses provide students with a foundational understanding of the legal system, the basic structure of business, and the regulatory process. These courses impart a theoretical framework on which students can build with the elective part of the curriculum.

Degree Requirements:

| Course | Title |
|---|--|
| Required Core Courses: | |
| BUSCOM 901-0 | Business Formation & Structure |
| BUSCOM 992-0 | Business Torts |
| BUSCOM 906-0 | Contract Law |
| LAWSTUDY 912-0 | Ethics |
| or LAWSTUDY 910-0 | Ethics and Law in STEM-Related Fields |
| INTPROP 901-0 | Intellectual Property Fundamentals |
| REGLAW 901-0 | Legal & Regulatory Process |
| LAWSTUDY 950-0 | Research in Law, Business & Technology |
| LAWSTUDY 956-0 | Effective Professional Communication |
| Elective Courses: choose from courses designated for the MSL program | |
| Total Required Credits: 28 | |

Elective Course Categories

IP and Patent Design (INTPROP)

In these courses, students learn about patenting inventions, managing a patent portfolio, assessing patent eligibility, preparing and prosecuting patent, serving as an expert witness on patent/IP subjects, and addressing global intellectual property issues.

Business Law and Entrepreneurship (BUSCOM and LAWSTUDY)

In these courses, students learn about the legal aspects of business formations and transactions and are exposed to subjects including mergers and acquisitions, employment law, business strategy, venture capital, and antitrust. Courses also focus on business and entrepreneurship skills, including negotiations, communications, decision-making, leadership, and quantitative skills. Various aspects of the commercialization process – the issues and opportunities involved in bringing an idea from conception to market – are also addressed.

Regulatory Analysis and Strategy (REGLAW)

Classes in this area examine the process and structure of regulation, both in the U.S. and globally. Students learn to think strategically about regulatory processes and compliance and how to navigate the regulatory environment. Classes focus on a variety of specific regulatory topics: data security, food, environment, health, privacy, telecommunications, and universities.

MSL Residential Format

The MSL full-time residential format can be completed in nine months at Northwestern Law's downtown Chicago campus.

The MSL program operates on the semester system, with each semester divided into two seven-week sessions and two one-week sessions, known as "Power Weeks." The seven-week sessions include foundational and in-depth classes, while the Power Weeks tend to include more focused, specialized, and workshop-type classes.

This unique structure of four separate seven-week sessions coupled with four Power Weeks allows MSL students to experience a wide variety of classes, topics, formats, and pedagogical techniques.

Classes in the MSL residential program are scheduled Monday through Friday, in both daytime and evening timeslots, with occasional weekend classes.

MSL residential students are in class an average of 12 to 15 hours per week. Students should expect a substantial amount of out-of-class work, approximately 4 to 8 hours per course per week.

MSL Online Format

The MSL online format is designed for STEM professionals around the world who wish to advance their careers by deepening their understanding of law and business. The online MSL is part-time; it can be completed in two to four years. Online students may begin in either the Fall or the Spring and will be required to complete a 2-week online orientation program before the start of their first term.

Students in the online format receive the exact same degree as students in the residential format. The requirements and structure of the curriculum are the same, with a rich and varied selection of online electives.

Like the residential format, the online format operates on the semester system, with each semester divided into two seven-week sessions and two one-week sessions, known as “Power Weeks.” In addition, students are required to complete at least two credits in residential elective courses. This unique structure allows students to experience a wide variety of classes, topics, formats, and pedagogical techniques.

Our online courses incorporate a combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities, including regular engagement with instructors and peers. MSL courses are academically rigorous and will require approximately 8-10 hours of work each week, per class (approximately 16-20 hours for those taking two classes at a time).

Students must complete 28 credits to graduate. This equates to approximately 20 courses, of which eight are required.

MSL Courses

The following courses are only open to students in the Master of Science in Law program. Please note while every effort is made to ensure these lists are accurate, change is inevitable. Not all courses are offered each year and may not be offered in both residential and online formats. For specific program information, including a list of required courses, please refer to the Master of Science in Law degree requirements section.

| Code | Title |
|----------------|--|
| BUSCOM 901-0 | Business Formation & Structure |
| BUSCOM 902-0 | Contract Law & Design |
| INTPROP 901-0 | Intellectual Property Fundamentals |
| REGLAW 901-0 | Legal & Regulatory Process |
| LAWSTUDY 901-0 | Negotiation Skills & Strategies |
| INTPROP 905-0 | Patent Law |
| INTPROP 910-0 | Patent Preparation & Prosecution Workshop |
| REGLAW 905-0 | Regulatory Strategy & Communication |
| BUSCOM 905-0 | Business Strategy & Frameworks |
| LAWSTUDY 905-0 | Quantitative Reasoning in the Law |
| BUSCOM 915-0 | Entrepreneurial Finance and Venture Capital |
| INTPROP 935-0 | Introduction to IP Licensing |
| INTPROP 940-0 | IP Strategy & Management |
| INTPROP 945-0 | IP Valuation |
| INTPROP 950-0 | International & Comparative IP |
| INTPROP 955-0 | Intellectual Property Investments and Capital Markets: A Global Perspective |
| REGLAW 915-0 | Technology Standards: Strategic & Antitrust Considerations |
| REGLAW 920-0 | Digital Data: Privacy, Policy & Governance |
| BUSCOM 925-0 | Employment Law |
| BUSCOM 935-0 | Entrepreneurship Lab: Part I |
| BUSCOM 940-0 | Entrepreneurship Lab: Part II |
| BUSCOM 945-0 | Business Combinations |
| LAWSTUDY 910-0 | Ethics and Law in STEM-Related Fields |
| LAWSTUDY 920-0 | Communicating Scientific Information: Technical Professionals and Expert Witnesses |
| LAWSTUDY 930-0 | Corporate Criminal Law |
| BUSCOM 950-0 | Digital Evidence & Data Governance in the Litigation Process |
| REGLAW 940-0 | Medical Devices: Regulation & Compliance |
| INTPROP 951-0 | Intellectual Property Internship |
| BUSCOM 951-0 | Business Internship |
| REGLAW 951-0 | Regulatory Internship |

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|----------------|---|
| BUSCOM 965-0 | Entrepreneurship Law |
| BUSCOM 970-0 | Design Thinking |
| BUSCOM 975-0 | Introduction to Accounting and Financial Statements |
| BUSCOM 980-0 | Cases in New Venture Strategies |
| REGLAW 945-0 | Healthcare Finance |
| BUSCOM 985-0 | Integration of Science and Clinical Care |
| REGLAW 960-0 | Data Security Regulation: Data Breaches and Beyond |
| BUSCOM 991-0 | EntrepTeam Project |
| LAWSTUDY 950-0 | Research in Law, Business & Technology |
| BUSCOM 910-0 | Federal Income Taxation |
| BUSCOM 992-0 | Business Torts |
| BUSCOM 984-0 | International Team Project-MSL |
| REGLAW 965-0 | Privacy Law and Regulation |
| REGLAW 970-0 | Health Care Law and Regulation |
| REGLAW 975-0 | Food Policy and Regulation |
| BUSCOM 981-0 | Introduction to Taxation: Business Income |
| REGLAW 980-0 | Regulatory Compliance: Product Approval & Life Cycle Issues |
| BUSCOM 982-0 | Public Persuasion Skills and Strategies |
| REGLAW 990-0 | Dynamics of the Cannabis Industry: Past, Present & Future |
| BUSCOM 952-0 | Strategic Decision Analysis: Gaining Competitive Advantage in an Uncertain World |
| LAWSTUDY 951-0 | Legal Operations |
| LAWSTUDY 953-0 | Forensic Science |
| REGLAW 922-0 | Data Privacy: Law, Regulation & Application |
| REGLAW 972-0 | Healthcare Law & Regulation: State |
| LAWSTUDY 956-0 | Effective Professional Communication |
| BUSCOM 956-0 | Visual Communication for Systemic Change |
| REGLAW 942-0 | Climate Change: Law & Policy |
| REGLAW 974-0 | Healthcare Law & Regulation: Federal |
| INTPROP 912-0 | Patent Preparation & Prosecution Workshop II: Advanced Topics |
| LAWSTUDY 912-0 | Ethics |
| BUSCOM 962-0 | Advanced Contracts: Practical Aspects |
| REGLAW 924-0 | Data in Society |
| BUSCOM 957-0 | Data Science, Business, and Responsibility |
| BUSCOM 912-0 | Assessing AI & Computational Technologies |
| BUSCOM 917-0 | Introduction to Securities Regulation |
| REGLAW 947-0 | Health Informatics: Practical Data Applications |
| BUSCOM 922-0 | Presentation Design & Visual Storytelling |
| INTPROP 922-0 | Patenting Software Inventions |
| BUSCOM 904-0 | Contract Drafting |
| INTPROP 980-0 | Patent Landscape Analysis Using AI |
| REGLAW 995-0 | Regulatory Policy |
| REGLAW 973-0 | Health Law |
| REGLAW 992-0 | RegTech: Transforming the Interaction of Regulators, Regulated Enterprises, and Markets |
| REGLAW 982-0 | Gaming Law & Regulation |
| BUSCOM 903-0 | Project Management for Regulated Industries |
| BUSCOM 911-0 | Applied AI in HealthTech |
| BUSCOM 906-0 | Contract Law |
| REGLAW 902-0 | U.S. Regulation: Design, Implementation, and Enforcement |
| BUSCOM 907-0 | Federal Income Taxation |
| BUSCOM 908-0 | Business & Corporate Strategy in Action |
| REGLAW 904-0 | Global Transactions & Compliance |
| BUSCOM 909-0 | Tax Policy |

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| LAWSTUDY 903-0 | Negotiating with Tactical Empathy |
| BUSCOM 913-0 | Global Product Development |
| REGLAW 923-0 | Managing Privacy & Cybersecurity for Corporate Actors |
| REGLAW 936-0 | Fintech Law & Regulation |
| REGLAW 981-0 | Along the Regulatory Frontier: New Issues and Emerging Technologies |
| REGLAW 906-0 | Biometric Technologies, Law & Policy |