Master of Science in Project Management

Student Handbook

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MPM Team

Role	Contact	Responsibilities
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The Northwestern University Master of Science in Project Management (MPM) Program is a master's degree within the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science. This document has been created to assist MPM students in understanding degree requirements, policies and procedures, and academic information to ensure the successful completion of the Northwestern MPM degree.

Code of Excellence in Project Management

In concert with Northwestern University's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability, the MPM program publishes the Code of Excellence in Project Management to ensure that you and your colleagues – who we recognize are from differing backgrounds and beliefs – understand the underlying framework of the program. The Code of Excellence describes our common culture and serves as the foundation on which you will construct your project management mindset and skills.

Vision Statement:

The Code of Excellence in Project Management is designed to express characteristics of the culture of project management embodied within the Master of Science in Project Management (MPM) program and to establish the basis on which we will hold ourselves accountable as project managers.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the MPM program is to enable technically qualified professionals to synthesize essential concepts of architectural and engineering design for the built environment sector with the functional concepts of management and behavioral science, thereby accelerating and facilitating their progression into project management roles within the design, construction, building operations, and real estate development and management organizations that drive the built environment.

Core Principles:

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- Be proactive.

- Take responsibility.

- Stretch your capabilities and go beyond minimum requirements.

- Maximize your time and resources to learn, network, and prepare for your future career.

Foundational Skills:

The MPM program will focus on developing the following skills:

- Adaptability
- Communication
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Dependability
- Ethics
- Knowledge management

- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Research competency
- Risk management
- Scheduling and time management
- Teamwork

Integrity, Honor, and Dignity

Integrity, honor, and dignity are fundamental characteristics of the successful project manager. By being honest, straightforward, and impartial while using knowledge, skills, and experience to serve the public, your employers, and your clients, you will continuously increase the excellence and prestige of the profession. These principles cannot be described by an equation or an integral. They are rooted in the curricula of the best engineering schools and are central tenets of the MPM program. Adherence to these fundamental principles, which are essential not only in project management but also in our entire society, is the responsibility of every student.

Students and faculty are guided in matters of academic integrity at the University, The Graduate School, and the McCormick School of Engineering & Applied Science levels. As members of the engineering academic community, it is the responsibility of every MPM student to be familiar with the specific policies of our school. McCormick's academic integrity standards

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operate within the broader Northwestern policy framework and are detailed in the document *Academic Integrity, A Basic Guide*, which is available on the [Provost's website](#).

Standards of academic honesty are violated whenever a student engages in an action that jeopardizes the integrity of scholarly work. Selected of such actions include:

- Cheating in the classroom or on examinations.
- The intentional and deliberate misuse of data in order to draw conclusions that may not be warranted by the evidence.
- Fabrication of data.
- Omission or concealment of conflicting data for the purpose of misleading others.
- Use of another's words, ideas or, creative productions without citation.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing another's material in such a way as to misrepresent the author's intentions.
- Use of privileged material or unpublished work without permission.

Academic dishonesty is a serious matter that will be adjudicated in accordance with procedures approved by the [McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science](#) and, if applicable, [The Graduate School](#). There are many aspects to this topic. You must become familiar with academic integrity standards and be aware that that the dean's office will investigate through rigorous procedure cases of student conduct that violate academic integrity standards. The MPM Program Director is involved in the process but has little input on the outcome or consequences.

Review Appendix 1 *McCormick's Statement on Academic Integrity* and the [McCormick Academic Integrity](#) [website](#) for more information should an issue of academic integrity arise.

Student Responsibilities

As a community, Northwestern has defined certain [Community Standards](#) that set expectations for students. In particular, it is the responsibility of every student in the

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McCormick School of Engineering & Applied Science to be familiar with and to adhere to the policies of academic integrity for [Northwestern University](#), [The](#) [Graduate School](#), and the McCormick School of Engineering & Applied Science.

We want you to be proud of your degree, your program (MPM) and your school (McCormick). We take seriously any misrepresentation of your degree as coming from any other school in the university including Kellogg. This will include the representation in your resume and any online service such as LinkedIn. Taking a class in another program does not change the origin of your degree. Misrepresentation can have many consequences, in particular with future employers.

Northwestern believes strongly in the equitable treatment of others. There are substantial policies and procedures in place that have evolved over the years to be both fair and balanced for the victim and the accused. The [Office of Equity](#) offers resources and a full description of these policies. It is to your benefit to be familiar with these policies and to follow them at all times.

Professionalism at Northwestern and with Employers

Professional ethics and ethical treatment of others are essential for the long-term health of your career and your reputation. The National Society of Professional Engineers has developed a [Code of Ethics for](#) [engineers](#) which we believe forms merely a foundation of the normative ethical behaviors that we expect of all engineers, whether studying in the engineering school or practicing in industry.

Professionalism is essential for the equitable treatment of others in the workplace and for maintaining a high standard and reputation in the community. Your behavior in the classroom, on campus and in the community at large, including the business community, is a reflection on both you as an individual and upon the community of MPM students and alumni that you are joining. Your actions reflect the entire MPM community. Selected basic

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professionalism practices are described in the following list:

- Arriving on time and well prepared for class and scheduled appointments.

- Focusing on the individual(s) who are presenting to you or you have been scheduled to meet, rather than being distracted with your phone or other devices.

- Giving proper notice of cancellation or a request to reschedule when you are unable to attend a meeting or class and responding with respect when your colleagues or professor(s) are unable to accommodate your new schedule.

- Understanding that University deadlines cannot be changed and that there may not be exceptions for your personal situation.

- Signing up for the courses you intend to complete and not signing up for an overload only to drop the classes you do not like.

- https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/guide/a-guide-to-professionalism-in-the-workplace/

- https://www.thebalancecareers.com/professionalism-526248

- Interacting with employers with transparency and representing your skills, capabilities, and training accurately.

- Honoring the commitments that you make.

- Understanding that reneging with employers is highly discouraged and that reneging on an accepted job is an serious matter that should be undertaken only under extreme conditions.

Managing Conflicts

The McCormick School of Engineering recognizes that during the course of graduate study conflicts may arise among professional graduate students and between students and faculty. Outlined below are steps professional graduate students can take to address such conflicts, and an order of escalation for resolution.

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1. The first step is to try to address the issue with the person or people directly involved, such as the instructor or other student. If additional escalation is necessary;

2. Contact your Academic Advisor or Associate Director of your program. (Please allow 24 hours – 48 hours for a response.) If additional escalation is necessary;

3. Contact your Program Director. (Please allow 24 hours – 48 hours for a response.) If additional escalation is necessary;

4. Contact the Assistant Dean, Office of Professional Education. (Please allow 24 hours – 48 hours for a response.)

Students and graduate faculty are expected to conform to all Northwestern University policies and graduate program and/or departmental policies that are published in each graduate program handbook. Students and advisers are encouraged to use the principles outlined in the [Guidance for Positive Graduate Student and](#) [Faculty Adviser Relationships](#) authored by the Graduate School to prevent conflicts that may arise from miscommunication or differences regarding expectations.

Degree Requirements:

1. Students must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA), with no incomplete grades, to graduate.

2. Students must complete the following:

   - A minimum of 12 units,

   - Required courses for given specialization,

   - Zero-unit required MPM courses.

3. Degree Completion:

   - The degree must be completed in a maximum of five years from the first

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quarter of matriculation.

- Students that do not meet the completion deadline will be academically excluded from the program.

Note: Northwestern University uses the course "unit" system (as opposed to the course "hour" system or credit "hour" system) for keeping track of completed courses.

Academic Policies:

Grades

The instructor establishes the grading criteria for each course under the following scale:

A   Excellent performance. Advanced mastery of the material. Superior performance in all aspects of the course. This is expected from our outstanding students.

A-   Good performance. Good understanding of the material but had some difficulties with the most advanced concepts in the course and with solving more challenging problems that required creativity. This is expected from our good students.

B+   Average performance. Had some trouble with parts of the course, but still got most concepts correct.

B   Below average performance. Had significant trouble with the course and missed some of the more complex concepts.

B-   Weak performance. Barely passed the course. Learned simple and basics concepts but had difficulties with more complex concepts of the course. This is an alarming signal. This is below what we expect from our students.

C+ or below   Poor and below-standard performance.

F   Failed the course. Needs to retake the course again.

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Only courses that are passed count toward graduation. A grade of "F" is not a passing grade and carries no credit; however, it impacts the cumulative GPA. A grade of "F" in a core course (non-elective) will require the student to register to complete the course again, and both the original grade and the grade from the retake will count in the cumulative GPA.

Grades impact the GPA based on the following scale:

A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	F = 0.0
A- = 3.7	B- = 2.7	C- = 1.7	
B+ = 3.3	C+ = 2.3	D = 1.0	

Each quarter the university Registrar posts grades online through CAESAR approximately one week after the last day of class.

(Check the Academic calendar on Registrar's website for more information:

https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/academic-calendars/

Students will need to have their Northwestern University Net ID and password to access grades online. This is considered a student's official university grade report – nothing will be mailed to a student from the Registrar's office.

Incomplete Grades

Instructors may assign incomplete grades using the following criteria:

- "X" = Failed to earn credit, missed final examination (0 Grade Point)

- "Y" = Failed to earn credit, work incomplete (0 Grade Point)

Students who receive an incomplete grade in any course will have one year from the end of the quarter in which the incomplete grade was received to convert that grade to an acceptable letter grade. After one year the "X" or "Y" grade becomes a permanent grade on the student's transcript. Incomplete grades can affect a student's standing with financial aid, because "X" or "Y" grades convert to an "F" in GPA calculations.

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Students must work directly with the course instructor to formalize a work plan and timeline to submit outstanding work and resolve the incomplete grade. At the instructor's discretion, a timeline for resolution may be shorter than the one year limit cited previously.

Pass/Not Pass Grading

Students are eligible to opt out of letter grades and receive Pass/Not Pass (P/N) grading for one course outside of the required 12 courses of the program. For any students that transfers in outside electives, we allow one P/N course to count towards their MPM degree. Receiving a P/NP grade has no impact on a student's GPA.

Academic Standing and Probation

Academic standing is a term used to describe your status in the MPM program and changes to academic standing may restrict the program options available to you. Each student starts in the program with "Good Academic Standing" and successfully maintaining that status will ensure that you have the most options available throughout your studies.

The MPM program evaluates academic standing based on the following two metrics:

- Cumulative GPA: To demonstrate that you are meeting the quality standards set by the program, you must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better (based on your performance in at least two classes). In other words, you must maintain a B average. If you do not meet this criterion, then your academic standing will change.

- Academic progress: To demonstrate that you are making satisfactory academic progress We will evaluate your performance compared to these metrics on a quarterly basis. If during a given quarter you do not meet just one of these metrics, then your academic standing is subject to change.

Good Academic Standing. Good academic standing is achieved by maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better and demonstrating satisfactory academic progress during each quarter in the program.

Academic Warning. MPM program leadership cares about your academic progress, and although we believe that it is your individual responsibility to maintain awareness of your risk for falling out of good academic standing, we will notify you when you are at risk. Such notification will arrive in the form of an academic warning letter from the Program Director. Next steps. If you receive a letter of academic warning, review

Academic Probation. When a student is no longer meeting the requirements of good academic standing, their status will change to academic probation. The student will be notified of the change to their academic status through a letter from the Program Director. **Next steps.** If your academic standing changes, you will be encouraged by the Program Director to develop a personal improvement plan with your academic advisor. The goal of that plan will be to empower you to return to good academic standing, which is achieved by bringing your cumulative GPA above 3.00 and getting back on track for satisfactory academic progress. When you have achieved these milestones, your status will return to good academic standing.

Academic Exclusion (Dismissal)

In rare and unfortunate circumstances, it is necessary for academic exclusion (or dismissal) of a student. Situations in which this may occur include – and are not limited to – the following:

- Academic exclusion due to unsatisfactory performance: At the option of the program, a student may be excluded from the program if they fail a course.
- Academic exclusion due to academic standing: A student may be excluded from the program if they remain on academic probation for two quarters (excluding quarters during which no classes are taken, such as the summer quarter).
- Academic exclusion due to violation of academic integrity standards: A student may be excluded from the program if he or she is found guilty of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic integrity issues.

Academic exclusion must be approved by the Program Director and the Senior Associate

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Dean or Dean of the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science. The student will be informed in writing of the Academic Exclusion within five days of the decision. The student has 10 days to submit a written appeal to the Senior Associate Dean concerning the academic exclusion. When a student is academically excluded from the program, communication must be sent to the University Registrar to have the academic exclusion placed on the Northwestern University transcript and to have the student blocked from re-registering with the University. **Next steps.** If you receive notification of academic exclusion, review Appendix 1 McCormick's Statement on Academic Integrity and the McCormick Academic Integrity website for more information.

Academic Exclusion (Dismissal)

If a student's cumulative GPA does not rise to a level to be removed from academic probation, the student may be academically excluded from the program as soon as within two consecutive quarters (excluding quarters during which no classes are taken such as the summer quarter) of being placed on academic probation. At the option of the program, a student may be excluded from the program if he/she fails a course. A student may also be excluded from the program if he/she is found guilty of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic integrity issues.

Review Appendix 1 *McCormick's Statement on Academic Integrity* and the McCormick Academic Integrity website for more information should a case of academic exclusion arise.

Readmission

It is MPM Program policy that a student who has been dismissed from the program for poor or incomplete grades is not permitted to reapply or be readmitted. Other master's or graduate programs in the McCormick School of Engineering may have different policies or processes for readmission. The MPM Program does not have a specific process as readmission is not permitted.

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Course Registration

MPM Program staff will register each student for classes. MPM students are given priority enrollment for all MPM courses; however, certain MPM elective courses may be made available to other McCormick master's students.

Other McCormick Courses. Students that want to register for master's level courses outside the MPM Program and within the McCormick School of Engineering should work with the Deputy Director to determine enrollment options. Depending on availability and prerequisites, students are permitted to enroll in select courses within the civil engineering (CIV_ENV), industrial engineering & management sciences (IEMS), and engineering management (MEM) as well as other approved department courses.

Kellogg Courses. All Northwestern University students who are actively enrolled in a graduate program are eligible to enroll in one credit unit per quarter at Kellogg School of Management. Be aware of the following conditions:

1. The student must be active in another graduate program at Northwestern.

2. Requests for enrollment must receive signed approval from the MPM program.

3. The enrollment request must be for a course that (i) is listed on the Kellogg "open class list" and (ii) has seats available at time of processing. (The "open class list" is typically emailed to the MPM program one week before the quarter starts.)

4. The enrollment request must be submitted by the student directly to the Kellogg registration survey.

5. Classes open to non-Kellogg students have a limited number of seats available. Registration requests are processed by Kellogg on a first-come, first-served basis.

6. Kellogg does not offer summer courses to non-Kellogg students.

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7. Requests to enroll in courses at Kellogg are subject to availability and cancellation.

8. MPM recommends students do not enroll in Kellogg courses their first quarter at NU.

Course Overload

The maximum number of course units allowed for a student in a quarter is 4 units. However, there are special circumstances when a student can request up to 5 units to resolve unforeseen academic or personal challenges. This is called a course overload. Students must have a 3.60 CGPA and submit a written request for approval to the MPM Director to enroll in a course overload.

Course Auditing

Neither the MPM Program nor the Registrar will give formal recognition and academic credit to course auditors. An MPM student in good academic standing is permitted to audit an MPM course depending on the limitations of space and facilities, permission of the instructor, and approval by the MPM Program. No formal registration will occur.

An auditing student must receive the professor's permission to audit before the course begins. Approved students are required to attend all classes, and the instructor can dismiss an auditing student at any time of the quarter. Students cannot request retroactive credit nor take the audited course again in the future for credit.

Course Waivers / Exceptions

Students who have completed similar coursework in the past can apply for a course waiver. All requests must be submitted in writing and be approved by the MPM Director. A course syllabus, a summary of why the course meets MPM requirements, and details as to why the course content cannot be learned within the MPM curriculum must be included in the request. Students must be in good academic standing for a course waiver or exception to be approved. Students must replace the course with an elective course.

Attendance Policy

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The program recognizes that students must balance school and family commitments, and that occasional absences from class are inevitable. For all students to benefit from the program, however, class attendance is required. If you miss more than two classes in a 10-week course or one class in a 5-week course, your grade may be affected. Professors reserve the right to establish a more stringent attendance policy for their specific course and set specific grade implications for absences. If you know you are going to miss more than two classes in a given quarter, the MPM Program requests that students do not register for classes during that quarter. If a student must miss a class, please notify the instructor by email as far in advance as possible to communicate make-up requirements. Students should make arrangements with the instructor directly to complete any missed assignments. In addition, it is expected that students will be on time for each class. Arriving late is disruptive to fellow students and to the professors.

Cell Phone and Laptop Use

Turn off your cell phone or place it on vibrate during class and in the common space so as not to disturb your classmates and instructors.

Laptops are allowed in class for the purpose of taking notes, following along with PowerPoint slides, or engaging in required class activities such as using software, performing internet searches for class materials, or as described by the instructor. Students should not use their laptop for outside activities during class if unrelated to the current instruction. The intention of this policy is to prevent internet surfing and visual distractions to surrounding students during class.

Professors reserve the right to make their classrooms a cell phone- and laptop-free class.

Medical Leave of Absence

Students are permitted to request a leave of absence due to medical conditions. Re-

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entrance into the program and timelines to finish the degree requirements after a medical

leave will be reviewed by the director on a case-by-case basis.

For additional guidelines and resources on Northwestern University medical leave,

please [visit the Dean of](#) [Students Office website](#).

Leave of Absence

Full-time Students. In extenuating circumstances, a leave of absence request may be approved

by the program. Such requests must be made in writing and are subject to the approval of the

Program Director. Students must be in good academic standing to be considered for a leave of

absence.

A student who takes a leave of absence from the program must re-enter within the

following academic year to ensure his/her ability to meet all degree requirements. A student

who takes a leave of absence from the program must be in touch with the program to make re-

entrance plans one full quarter before the MPM quarter in which they wish to re-enter.

International students must abide by all visa requirements when considering a leave of absence.

A student must complete the [Graduate Student Term Withdrawal](#) form found on the

Registrar's website. When returning to NU, the student must complete a [Non-TGS](#) [Application](#)

[to Return from Time Away form](#) (also known as a FRET form). Send the FRET form to the

Program Director for approval signature.

Part-time Students. Part-time students do not need to make a formal request if they are taking

one, two, or three quarters away from school. If a part-time student is away from school for

more than one year, a meeting with the Program Director will be required to confirm the

student's commitment to complete the degree. Part-time students that are away from school for

more than a year may be required to reapply to join the program.

Deferral

A full-time student who defers a fall quarter admission has until December 31 of the

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year the deferral was approved to communicate plans to enroll in the fall quarter of next academic year. A deferral can last no longer than one year.

Tuition and Billing

Each student is responsible for paying each quarter's tuition in full by the due date. If a student has a student loan, a student must pay the difference between the loan amount and tuition amount. Late fees are automatically added to any outstanding balance, and the University places a hold on a student's registration for the subsequent quarter. Thus, a student will not be able to attend classes in the new quarter until overdue tuition and fines are paid.

MPM tuition rates are set for an entire academic year (fall-summer quarters) and may change year to year. Each spring the Northwestern University Board of Trustees reviews and confirms MPM tuition rates for the next academic year. MPM students will pay the MPM tuition rate for all registered courses, including all electives taken outside of the MPM program.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974):

Unless a student specifies otherwise, some contact information will appear in the Northwestern University online directory and MPM website. Students can control this in two ways:

- If a student does not want their name to appear at all, the student needs to complete a "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Request to Invoke" form and submit it to the MPM Program.
- A student can be listed in the online directory but specify what information appears. To do this, go to http://directory.northwestern.edu/ ," then click "Edit your Directory Information."
- Note that the University does not sell any student information or lists to outside vendors or telemarketers.

Waivers

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The MPM Program may request students to sign specific waivers during their academic career that include a multimedia release (e.g. the use of a student's photo in marketing material) as well as a liability waiver and release (e.g. waiving claims for injuries sustained during voluntary student activities.)

MPM+

The MPM+ program is a course of study for full-time students that provides the opportunity for an optional internship following completion of the required 12.0 units of coursework. Most students seek industry-related internship positions, but some students choose to focus on project-based work or even personal start-up initiatives. There are no common paths nor industries for our full-time students due to their breadth of experience and diverse backgrounds. Students are responsible for securing their own internships.

Performance Expectations. To participate in the MPM+ program, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Be in good academic standing.
2. Attend the MS Career Bootcamp.
3. Work with an Engineering Career Development (ECD) to create a strategy for your co-op search.
4. Accept an offer, report your hire to McCormickConnect, and schedule a registration meeting with your ECD Advisor.

VA Pending Payment Policy:

For Northwestern students using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, the University will not prevent enrollment, assess a late fee, deny access to resources available to other students, or require they secure additional funding while payment from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs is pending to the University.

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To qualify for this provision, students may be required to:

- Produce the VA's Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class;

- Provide written request to be certified;

- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies

Additional University Policies Resources:

Northwestern strives to create an environment that fosters innovation, excellence, and collaboration, seeking always to do so responsibly, ethically, and with integrity. To this end, we must have in place thoughtful, strategic guidelines and policies that promote the success of our students, faculty, and staff in their daily work. Our University policies thus are meant to guide and enable our community to uphold Northwestern's values and expectations. We encourage all community to use the [Northwestern](#) [University Policies website](#) as the main source for University-wide policies, as it will feature the most current information and updates on all policy-related items.

The Master of Science in Project Management Program will do its best to update this document

as new policies and procedures are approved by the program, school, and/or university.