



SCHOOL OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
STUDIES

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

Northwestern University School of Professional Studies  
Professional Development Programs

2025-26

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# Getting Started

Welcome to Northwestern University School of Professional Studies (SPS).

This Professional Development Student Handbook is your guide to your SPS professional development program of study and to Northwestern University. It will provide you with information about various practical aspects of your education and is intended to help you navigate through your program and its administrative procedures. The handbook is your reference tool for a wide range of student concerns, from course registration to your program completion. In many cases, it is the quickest path to an answer. If, after consulting the handbook, you still have questions or unresolved issues, please contact the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) or the appropriate resource.

In addition to the policies set forth in this handbook, you are also expected to be familiar with University-enacted rules and regulations, which are found in the [Northwestern University Student Handbook](#). Please familiarize yourself with the scope and the specifics of the University's [Student Code of Conduct](#).

The SPS Professional Development Student Handbook can also be found on the [SPS website](#), where all updates and new information will be posted. SPS reserves the right to change programs of study, program requirements, teaching staff, class meeting times and other published information without prior notice and in accordance with University procedures.

SPS hopes this handbook will help you plan your studies effectively, provide you with useful information and direct you to the resources you need.

## Noncredit Student Responsibility

The student body at the School of Professional Studies is composed of many different types of students, and access to University and SPS resources, privileges, and opportunities is determined by student type. You are considered a Noncredit Student if you are enrolled in one or more courses in a certificate program housed in the Office of Professional Development Programs (PDP). Noncredit students are required to comply with all applicable University policies, including the [Northwestern University Student Handbook](#), which is the official statement of expected standards of conduct that are applicable to all students.

Noncredit professional development courses are designed for a working adult population and are taught at a high academic level. Most PDP certificate programs are open-enrollment and allow for course registration without a program application requirement. Students under the age of 18 must

have a parent or guardian contact the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) before course registration in order to ensure compliance with the [Minors at Northwestern Policy](#).

## NetID

Northwestern University issues each student an electronic identification known as a “NetID.” The NetID will take the format of three letters and either three or four numbers (i.e., abc123 or abc1234). A NetID enables students to access online course sites and digital course materials and view their student record, including final course grades. A NetID and temporary password are sent via email during the initial course registration process. Students will need to activate their account by changing the password. For more information, click [here](#).

NetIDs automatically expire approximately five months (147 days) after the end of the student’s last enrolled term. Students lose access to online course sites and digital course materials once their NetID expires. More information about the NetID expiration process can be found [here](#).

## Multi-factor authentication (MFA)

Registering for multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a mandatory, integrated step to access Northwestern University systems. Northwestern uses the DUO Mobile smartphone application for multi-factor authentication. Steps to install the DUO Mobile App can be found [here](#). Once you have completed the MFA registration process, you will have access to systems like [CAESAR](#), Northwestern’s Student Enterprise System; and [Canvas](#), Northwestern’s Learning Management System.

It is a student’s responsibility to ensure access to Northwestern systems after registering for a PDP course. If you do not have a smartphone capable of downloading and using the DUO Mobile app, you may want to consider purchasing a [YubiKey](#), available from many online and in-person retailers.

## Email Account

New Northwestern University Professional Development students are **required** to set up a Northwestern email address (@u.northwestern.edu) to receive important university and course communications. PLEASE NOTE: Once set up, a student’s Northwestern email becomes the primary contact email for all communication from Northwestern University.\* Email is the University’s primary mechanism for official communication with students, and Northwestern expects that students will read official email in a timely fashion. Students may choose to forward their Northwestern email to their primary email account. However, students will still need to maintain their Northwestern account by periodically updating the password. For more information on Northwestern email, click [here](#).

\*Students or Northwestern University staff who already use an @northwestern.edu email address are not required to create a separate @u.northwestern.edu account but may do so if they choose.

## **Name and Address Changes**

Essential communications such as grade reports and certificates of completion require up-to-date contact information. Students must provide documentation to the SPS Registrar's Office to affect a name change. Students who wish to change their permanent or local street address must update their address information in their Northwestern student profile by logging into CAESAR (see the [Using CAESAR](#) section for more information on the purpose and uses of CAESAR) and clicking on Personal Portfolio in the Student Enterprise Menu.

## **Financial Aid and Student Loans**

[Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#) – Northwestern is an approved institution for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. Eligible students may apply Award funds to Professional Development course tuition. PDP programs do not qualify for benefits under Workforce Development, the Department of Veteran Affairs, or the Department of Defense.

**MCLE Financial Hardship Policy** – Illinois attorneys unable to afford the tuition for Northwestern University School of Professional Studies courses approved by the Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Board of the Supreme Court of Illinois (Mediation Skills Training, Divorce Mediation Training, or Negotiations for Professionals) due to financial hardship may request a tuition reduction. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and reductions consisting of a percentage of the tuition will be awarded at the discretion of the School of Professional Studies. To request a tuition reduction, Illinois attorneys must submit a letter requesting the reduction, proof of financial hardship, and a completed registration form to the Office of Professional Development Programs. All requests must be received at least 14 days before the course begins. For more information, contact the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#).

**Loans** – Students in non-degree Professional Development programs are not eligible for U.S. federal loans but may qualify for a [private loan](#) to offset tuition charges. Private loan eligibility may vary by lender and by student. For questions regarding private loans, please contact the Chicago Office of Financial Aid [online](#) or at 312-503-8722. SPS recommends that students schedule an appointment with a financial aid adviser two to three months before the beginning of the loan period to review procedures and to discuss their application.

Non-degree Professional Development certificate program students must have an approved loan application and complete a [University Aid Application](#) for the relevant academic year *prior* to enrollment. Contact the Office of Professional Development Programs for any questions.

## Tuition Reimbursement and Benefits

**Employer-provided aid:** Many companies and organizations have designated funds that their employees can use for educational or professional development training through tuition payment or reimbursement. Students who intend to use tuition reimbursement benefits provided through their employer should contact their employer directly to determine eligibility for noncredit-bearing, non-degree coursework before beginning the payment and registration process with Professional Development Programs.

**Northwestern University employees:** Full-time, benefits-eligible Northwestern University employees may use either [the Employee Reduced Tuition Benefit Plan or the Enhanced Employee Reduced Tuition Benefit Plan](#) toward School of Professional Studies noncredit professional development certificate program tuition, upon approval of their [Employee Reduced Tuition Benefit Application](#).

Northwestern University employees are responsible for (1) confirming their eligibility for Northwestern employee tuition benefits, (2) [submitting the correct Tuition Benefit Application](#) and (3) confirming that the benefit has been applied to their student account in CAESAR. Per Northwestern University HR policy, employees must submit a completed application no later than December 15 in the same calendar year for which the benefit is being requested. Employees who do not submit a Tuition Benefit Application by the stated deadline will be responsible for paying the full cost of tuition.

For further assistance, please contact the [Office of Human Resources](#).

## Tuition Refunds

Tuition information is adjusted annually and can be found on the tuition page for each [certificate program](#).

The University reserves the right to cancel programs and/or class sessions when necessary, including due to insufficient enrollment, instructor illness, severe weather, or natural disaster. In the event of program cancellation, registrants will be notified immediately, and all tuition fees will be credited to their Northwestern student account. The University is not responsible for any travel or other related expenses accrued by registrants.

Northwestern University classes are rarely cancelled due to snow or other weather-related emergencies. However, should such an event force the cancellation of on-campus classes and/or closure of the University, students should contact their course instructor or the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) for information, or check the [Northwestern University homepage](#) for alerts. Weather-related course cancellations for the Chicago and Evanston campuses do not apply to SPS online or remote courses.

Registered students who choose to cancel their enrollment in a course may do so by [dropping their course registration in CAESAR](#) (Northwestern University's registration system). In order to receive a full tuition refund, students must have dropped their registration in CAESAR prior to the end of the registration period, generally the day before the course begins. All refunded tuition fees will be credited to the student's Northwestern student account and may be applied toward registration for any future course at Northwestern University.

Students who wish to request a refund to their original form of payment can may do so [through CAESAR](#) or by sending an email with their name, Northwestern student ID number, and refund request to [Student Accounts Chicago](#).

Please note that no refunds will be issued after a course begins.

Students dropping a course after the end of the registration period due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. a medical or family emergency), may request an exception to the Tuition Refunds Policy through the [SPS Student Affairs Petition process](#).

## **Parking**

### ***Chicago Campus***

Students attending evening or weekend classes on the Chicago campus may park in designated garages for a reduced rate. For more information about parking on the Chicago campus, click [here](#).

### ***Evanston Campus***

Parking is permitted without a permit in most lots on the Evanston campus after 4:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and in all lots during the weekend. For additional information about parking in Evanston, click [here](#).

## **Service Animals and the ADA**

Northwestern has adopted the [Service, Assistance, and Other Animals at Northwestern Policy](#), which provides guidance on the appropriate use of and protocols associated with service, assistance and other animals on campus.

Students who require the use of a service animal on campus are strongly encouraged to contact [AccessibleNU](#) to register as a student with a disability and to determine what assistance is available. Northwestern employees who require the use of a service animal on campus are strongly encouraged to contact the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance](#). The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance will assist the employee in navigating the workplace, communicating with colleagues about the presence of the service animal (if desired), and assisting with any related accommodation needs.

## Additional Resources

While noncredit students are not eligible for many of the student services provided by Northwestern University, the wellness of all Northwestern students remains a priority. Below are links to resources that may be helpful for noncredit students.

- [Lactation Rooms](#) – Lactation rooms are available on both the Chicago and Evanston campuses, and can also be reserved within Wieboldt Hall by contacting [the Office of Professional Development Programs](#).
- [Northwestern Women’s Center Community Resources](#)
- [Accessible NU](#)
- [Northwestern University’s Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance](#) – Responds to reports of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct.
  - [Accommodations for Pregnant Students](#)
  - [Accommodations for Religious Holidays](#)
- [Northwestern Crisis Services](#)
- [Northwestern Crisis Intervention](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) (1-800-273-8255) – National network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- [Community and online counseling and psychological services](#) – Free or sliding-fee scale services, or referrals to such services.

## Program Tools and Resources

### Learning Management System (Canvas)

[Canvas](#) is Northwestern University’s Learning Management System. Canvas is a cloud-hosted system that allows Northwestern instructors and students to deliver course materials, submit assignments and tests, view grades, and create learning activities.

Canvas course sites should be available to registered students at least one week prior to the start of each course. If a student registers during the week prior to the start of the course, it typically takes up to 24 hours for the Canvas course site to become available. Canvas course sites are generally available for six months after the end of the course for registered students with an active NetID. Students who are unable to view a course site should email the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#).

To access Canvas and view frequently asked questions and tutorials, click [here](#).

## Using CAESAR

CAESAR provides student web access to Northwestern's Student Enterprise System. Through CAESAR, students can register for classes, view grades and student account information, update address and telephone numbers, check course enrollment levels and more. The [CAESAR help and how-to page](#) provides the information needed to navigate CAESAR confidently and includes tip-sheets and tutorials.

## SPS Learning Studios

[SPS Learning Studios](#) are skills-building online tutorials available to all current noncredit professional development students. Each Learning Studio is a self-paced, self-directed, and individualized online tutorial designed to support SPS students and assist in student success. Learning Studios are housed in Canvas, and are optional, noncredit, and zero-tuition, with no registration requirements in CAESAR. An active NetID and password are required.

Currently available Learning Studios include:

- Python programming
- R programming
- Go programming
- Structured Query Language (SQL)
- Microeconomics
- Academic Integrity

## Writing Support

The Writing Place is a free tutorial service provided to currently enrolled SPS students who feel that they need extra help with writing assignments. In-person consultations are available on the Chicago and Evanston campuses or can take place by phone or online. All appointments must be made online. Please visit [The Writing Place website](#) to view resources or schedule a consultation appointment.

Appropriate areas for consultation might include:

- Whether a paper draft matches an assignment
- How to select and include relevant examples to support an argument
- Whether the paragraph structure and internal order of a paper are effective
- Questions on specific punctuation, grammar, or syntax rules
- Whether the scope of a paper is appropriate, too broad, or too narrow
- Citation questions or concerns

## **Math Support**

[The Math Place](#) is a free tutorial service provided to currently enrolled SPS students who feel that they need extra help with their math assignments. Appointments are available by phone, in-person on the Chicago campus, or online via Skype. All appointments must be made online.

Tutor assistance includes help with precalculus, algebra, calculus, and statistics. Sessions are most productive when the student seeks help on a specific assignment or subject and attempts an assignment before seeing the tutor. Students should bring all relevant materials, such as the course syllabus, class notes, handouts, assignment sheets and workbooks.

## **LinkedIn Learning**

Northwestern University and [LinkedIn Learning](#) have partnered to offer students unlimited, on-demand access to a full library of online courses at no additional cost. Students with an active NetID can use LinkedIn Learning to stay current in courses or for classes that require additional software skills.

## **Policies and Procedures**

SPS makes every effort to create professional development programs that meet the needs of working adults. SPS therefore allows students to manage their own course schedules, to determine how many courses they can successfully complete each quarter and to complete certificate program requirements at their own pace.

Although SPS programs are flexible, there are several policies to which students must adhere to successfully complete a program. Students should familiarize themselves with the following policies governing all noncredit professional development students.

## **Terms and Conditions of Enrollment**

Students shall conduct themselves according to Northwestern University policies. Failure to conform to University policies shall be considered a breach of these Terms and Conditions and Northwestern University School of Professional Studies may, at its sole discretion, remove students from noncredit course enrollment(s).

## **Northwestern University's Rules and Regulations of Student Conduct**

### **SPS Student Populations**

Students of SPS's wide offerings of academic programming fall into two categories:

- 1) Undergraduate and graduate students who are pursuing a credit-bearing credential:
  - a. These students complete an application for program admittance.
  - b. Upon program completion, a credential award is noted on official University academic transcript.
- 2) Students in noncredit professional development programs and students-at-large taking individual undergraduate courses:
  - a. These students receive approval for attendance by registering online or completing an open-enrollment registration form.
  - b. Professional development programs are noncredit and do not receive a Northwestern University transcript. A grade report, similar to an unofficial transcript, or letter of completion can be provided upon request.
  - c. Individual, credit-bearing undergraduate courses taken as a student-at-large are noted on an official University transcript, but do not automatically apply toward a credential.

The following are SPS conduct policies and procedures specific to noncredit professional development students:

## Student Code of Conduct

All SPS students, as members of the Northwestern community, are expected to conduct themselves maturely and exemplify behavior consistent with Northwestern community principles and values. As a Northwestern student, you are expected to not only excel in the classroom but to engage in socially responsible behavior and to model exceptional conduct, character, and citizenship on campus, online, and beyond. All members of the Northwestern community are expected to deal with each other with respect and consideration. All SPS students are expected to be respectful of SPS staff time and resources.

SPS students are subject to University-enacted policies and standards, some of which are found in the [Northwestern University Student Handbook](#) and on the [Office of Community Standards website](#). SPS reserves the right to investigate and resolve reports of alleged misconduct. Any violation of these policies or assisting or encouraging others in the violation of these policies may lead to student conduct action, including discipline.

Prohibited and restricted conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Endangering self or others, including but not limited to the physical, psychological/emotional well-being of any person.
- Interfering with the learning of others, including but not limited to in-person behavior, online behavior or use of University resources or systems to interfere with the work of another student, a faculty member, or a University staff member, or that otherwise interferes with normal operation of University systems or processes.
- Acts of fraud, misrepresentation, or dishonesty including misuse of University documents or knowingly furnishing false information to the University.
- Unauthorized entry or unauthorized use of University facilities, services, equipment, account numbers, or files, including using a NetID or account assigned to another user or providing another user with access to your NetID or account.
- Theft of or damage to University property.
- Discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct.
- Failure to comply with the reasonable request or instruction of a University staff member or of emergency personnel acting in an official capacity.

## Code of Conduct Violations

Alleged violations of *nonacademic* University policy or professional standards by all SPS students will be initially reviewed by the Assistant Dean of International and Professional Education Programs and/or designee to determine if and how a case will move forward. Options include:

- close the case due to insufficient information;
- school resolution by assistant dean and/or designee and SPS leadership;

- refer case to the Office of Community Standards for resolution; or
- refer case to Office of Equity (including the Deputy Title IX Coordinator).

All cases that involve allegations of violation of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct, regardless of the student involved, are referred to the Office of Equity.

### **Notification**

When the assistant dean or designee determines a code of conduct violation allegation will move forward within the School of Professional Studies, the student involved is notified via University email. Notification will typically include a brief description of the alleged misconduct, including the time, date and place the incident allegedly occurred, a list of any University policies allegedly violated, and next steps. Next steps typically include a request for a written response to the allegations and/or confirmation of meeting with the assistant dean and/or designee to discuss the allegations. The list of policies allegedly violated may be modified based on additional information revealed during case review.

### **Format**

Cases being considered within the School of Professional Studies will be structured as a discussion. The assistant dean and/or designee will share the information gathered and give the accused student an opportunity to respond to the allegations and provide supporting evidence or information. The accused student may also suggest witnesses to the assistant dean or designee.

School resolution of cases for students in noncredit-bearing programs will be managed by the program leadership. Potential sanctions will take into account the student's open enrollment and short-term relationship with the school. Sanctions may include immediate suspension or expulsion from the course or program. Should suspension or expulsion be under consideration, the assistant dean and/or designee will consult with additional SPS leadership to determine whether the accused student is responsible for the alleged policy violation and, if so, appropriate sanctions.

### **Standard of Evidence**

Northwestern University Office of Community Standards and SPS use the preponderance of the evidence standard in disciplinary proceedings. This means that the University determines whether it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred.

### **Notification of Outcome**

After information is gathered and considered, the assistant dean and/or designee will communicate in writing with the student whether a policy violation occurred and if sanctions will be implemented. Alleged violations of policy resolved through SPS will not also be resolved through Northwestern University's Office of Community Standards.

## **Returning to SPS**

If a student is found responsible for a policy violation and sanctions are implemented, all sanctions must be completed prior to re-enrolling at SPS. Students expelled from their program may not return to the program.

## **Participation**

The University expects students to participate promptly and fully in all aspects of the student conduct process, including in cases handled by SPS. If a student elects not to participate in any part of the process, the case may proceed without the accused student's participation. Accused students may be held accountable for any outcomes issued, even if they fail to participate.

## **Scope of the Code of Conduct**

The Student Handbook and SPS Conduct Policies apply to the following situations. SPS reserves the right to investigate and resolve reports of alleged misconduct occurring from the time of a student's application for admission through the completion of a course or program (even if the conduct is not discovered until after completion of program or course of study), including, but not limited to:

- During any part of the academic year, before classes begin or after classes end
- During time pursuing credit away from the campus
- During periods between terms of actual enrollment
- While on leave from the University
- Behavior occurring either on or off campus or online

## **Review of Outcome and/or Sanction Implemented by SPS**

Noncredit professional development students have a right to request a review of any outcome or sanction issued by SPS. Such reviews will be conducted by the SPS associate dean for student and alumni services and an SPS academic leader.

Students must request a review of any outcome or sanction issued by SPS within 15 calendar days of receiving written notice of the outcome.

## **Student Classroom Conduct**

All course participants are expected to behave in a manner conducive to a successful and enjoyable learning experience. Sometimes, relatively harmless behavior can negatively affect the classroom dynamic; for example, a student may be so eager to participate that they unintentionally dominate class activities or discussions. Students must think about their role in class as an individual student but also as an integral part of a group experience.

Some disruptions are of a more serious nature and cannot be tolerated. These policies extend to student interaction with administrative staff. Students should review the [Rules and Regulations of Student Conduct](#). Students with questions about these policies should contact the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#).

## **Student Recording Policy**

Unauthorized student recording of classrooms, Northwestern-related events (e.g. Student Leadership Council events) or other academic activities (including advising sessions or office hours) is prohibited. Unauthorized recording is unethical and may also be a violation of [University policy](#) and state law. Students requesting the use of assistive technology as an accommodation should contact [AccessibleNU](#). Unauthorized use of any recordings – including distributing or posting them – is also prohibited. Under the University’s [Copyright Policy](#), faculty own the copyright to instructional materials – including those resources created specifically for the purposes of instruction, such as syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, and presentations. Students cannot copy, reproduce, display, or distribute these materials. Students who engage in unauthorized recording, unauthorized use of a recording, or unauthorized distribution of instructional materials will be referred to the appropriate University office for follow-up. For more information, please see the University’s general policy regarding student recordings:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies-procedures/classwork-curricular-policies/recording-class.html>

## **Academic Integrity and Ethics**

Academic integrity is fundamental to every facet of the scholarly process and is expected of every student in the School of Professional Studies in all academic undertakings. Integrity involves firm adherence to academic honesty and to ethical conduct consistent with values based on standards that respect the intellectual efforts of both oneself and others.

Ensuring integrity in academic work is a joint enterprise involving both faculty and students. Among the most important goals of professional development education are maintaining an environment of academic integrity and instilling in students a lifelong commitment to the academic and professional honesty that is fundamental to good scholarship. These goals are best achieved through effective dialogue between students and faculty mentors regarding academic integrity and sensitivity to the nuances of ethical conduct in scholarly work. SPS strongly encourages students to visit the [University’s Writing Place](#) which provides a wealth of information about the proper use of resources. This University publication is also helpful: [Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide](#).

Proper acknowledgement of another’s ideas, whether by direct quotation or paraphrase, is expected. In particular, if any written or electronic source is consulted and material is used from that source, directly or indirectly, the source should be identified by author, title, and page number, or by website

and date accessed. Any doubts about what constitutes “use” should be addressed to the course instructor. Failure to adhere to this policy may lead to disciplinary action, including student conduct review.

## **Academic Integrity Violation Procedures**

Instructors may require students to submit their work electronically in addition to or in place of printed submission. All student work may be analyzed electronically for violations of the University’s academic integrity policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content.

Should the issue of academic dishonesty arise, the procedure below will be followed.

### **Initiation of a Complaint**

All cases of alleged academic dishonesty by students in professional development courses in the School of Professional Studies must be referred to the Assistant Dean of International and Professional Education Programs. Cases should be referred within one month of the date of the alleged incident, or within one month of the date the reporting individual becomes aware of the alleged incident, whichever is later. However, no action will be taken on any case if more than one year has elapsed since the alleged incident. Once a matter has been referred to the assistant dean, it may not be withdrawn without the assistant dean’s approval, nor may the referring faculty member resolve the case without the assistant dean’s approval.

The assistant dean shall review the facts of the alleged incident, including statements of the reporting individual, the instructor(s), and any supporting material. The review process may include electronic searches of plagiarism resources, websites, computer network traffic logs and other databases. If, after the review, the assistant dean determines that there is cause for further investigation, the assistant dean shall notify the student by letter of the date of the incident (if known), the course and instructor, and the nature of the alleged violation. A copy of the current procedures will accompany the letter.

The student will be asked to make an appointment with the assistant dean to discuss the case within seven working days of the date of the letter, at which time the student may present any relevant material or statements on their behalf. The student will have the right, prior to meeting with the assistant dean, to review relevant original materials, to obtain copies of such materials if desired and to discuss the matter with an adviser or other relevant individual. Review of original materials must take place by appointment during normal working hours at the School of Professional Studies and within seven working days of the date of the assistant dean’s letter.

If the student does not schedule a meeting to take place within seven working days, the assistant dean may make their determination based on the evidence present at that time. The assistant dean may grant reasonable requests for an extension of this time deadline at their sole discretion.

In certain cases where timely notification is important, verbal notification of the alleged violation may be made, but such verbal notification will be followed by a letter.

### **Meeting with the Assistant Dean**

In meeting with the student, the Assistant Dean of International and Professional Education Programs will describe the charges made and detail the evidence supporting those charges. At this initial meeting, the student may decline to discuss the matter and/or request that the assistant dean defer their determination until after a subsequent meeting between the student and the assistant dean, at which the student may present relevant information or evidence. This second meeting must be requested at the initial meeting and must be scheduled for a time within seven working days of the initial meeting.

The assistant dean has the authority to determine, based on a preponderance of the evidence available to them, whether a violation of academic integrity has occurred. After their review, the assistant dean shall inform the student by letter of their decision and the sanction, if any, to be imposed.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, a letter of warning; a defined period of probation with the attachment of conditions; disqualification for academic honors; a defined period of suspension with or without the attachment of conditions; permanent exclusion from the program; notation on the official record; revocation of an awarded degree; or any combination of the previously listed sanctions. In cases of suspension and exclusion, the finding and sanctions will be determined by the assistant dean and additional SPS leader. In all cases of permanent exclusion from the program, a notation shall be entered on the student's official transcript.

Any grade entered for a student in a course in which an allegation of academic dishonesty is pending against that student, whether for the course as a whole or for a piece of work submitted in the course, is subject to modification after all proceedings and appeals are concluded. Should the student be found to have violated academic integrity, the course instructor is empowered, at their sole discretion, to determine the effect this violation will have on the student's grade in the course. Possible actions range from disregarding the incident in calculating the grade to failing the student in the course.

### **Appeals to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee**

The assistant dean's decision and/or sanction may be appealed to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee by filing a written notice of appeal within 10 working days of the date of the letter of notification. The student's written notice of appeal must state what is being appealed — whether the finding of academic dishonesty, the sanction imposed or both — and must describe in detail the grounds for the appeal. The student's written notice of appeal should also state whether the student desires to present the appeal in person to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee.

If the student so requests, they will be granted an opportunity to appear to present their case to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee and to hear and respond to any testimony provided by the assistant dean or witnesses appearing before the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee. Likewise, the assistant dean may be present to hear and respond to the testimony of the accused student or any witnesses appearing before the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee. If the student wishes to present witnesses before the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee, the student must inform the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee of the names of the proposed witnesses and of the nature of the evidence they are prepared to present at least seven working days before the appeal is to be heard. However, the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee has sole discretion to determine what witnesses, other than the accused student and the assistant dean it will hear, if any. The Academic Integrity Appeals Committee shall review the appeal as soon as practical after it has been filed.

Following its review, the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee may sustain or reverse the finding of academic dishonesty, if that portion of the assistant dean's decision was appealed, and may, if a finding of academic dishonesty stands, sustain, or modify (but not increase) the sanction if that portion of the decision was appealed. The Academic Integrity Appeals Committee shall inform the student by letter of its decision.

### **Appeal to the Provost**

The student may appeal the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee's decision within 10 working days to the provost of the University. Such appeals must be in writing and include a detailed statement setting forth the grounds for the appeal. Appeals to the provost will be limited to alleged errors in procedures, interpretation of regulations or alleged manifest discrepancies between the evidence and a school finding and/or sanction. The provost will receive appeals only after a sanction has been specified for the alleged violation; an appeal to the provost may concern the finding and/or the proposed sanction.

### **Cross-School Cases**

In instances where a student registered in another school is alleged to have committed an act of academic dishonesty in a School of Professional Studies course, the authority of SPS will extend only to determining whether the alleged action constitutes academic dishonesty and, if so, to the imposition of any grade penalty by the instructor in the course. If the finding is affirmative and all appeals have been exhausted or the time for appeals has expired in SPS, the case will be formally

referred to the appropriate authority of the school in which the student is registered for whatever further sanction that school deems appropriate.

In instances where a student registered in SPS has been found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty in a course offered by another school, the assistant dean will notify the student in writing of the formal referral of the matter to the School of Professional Studies for determination of a sanction, if any. Such notification will inform the student that they should schedule an appointment with the assistant dean, to take place within seven working days, to present any evidence of mitigating circumstances but not on the underlying question of guilt or innocence. If the student does not schedule an appointment within the allotted time, or within such extension of time as the assistant dean may grant at their sole discretion, the assistant dean will make a decision regarding any sanction based on the available information.

The assistant dean will inform the student in writing of any sanction imposed and of the student's right to appeal that sanction (but not issues of guilt or innocence) to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee.

### **General Considerations**

A student charged with academic dishonesty may not change their registration in the course(s) in which a charge is pending or in which a finding of academic dishonesty has been made. Nor may such students receive a University degree while a charge of academic dishonesty is pending or a suspension imposed pursuant to a finding of academic dishonesty is in effect.

At any stage of the proceedings described above, the student may be accompanied by a fellow student, a faculty member, or another individual of the student's choosing, but not by an attorney. This person may not, however, take part in the proceedings; the student must speak on their own behalf.

Sanctions specified by the Assistant Dean of International and Professional Education Programs, as modified by the School of Professional Studies Academic Integrity Appeals Committee or the provost (if an appeal has been filed), shall take effect at the expiration of the period for appeal of a decision if an appeal has not been filed, and after a decision has been reached by the SPS Academic Integrity Appeals Committee or the provost if an appeal has been filed. If the appeal is not granted, the sanction will be applied retroactively to the date specified by the assistant dean, and if necessary, current registrations may be canceled.

All materials relating to an allegation of academic dishonesty will be kept in the SPS Office of Registration and Records for up to 10 years after the incident.

All references to the Assistant Dean of International and Professional Education Programs in these procedures include the assistant dean's designee, whom the assistant dean may appoint at her/his/their discretion.

If circumstances (e.g., departure of the faculty member) prevent the instructor of the course in which the violation is alleged to have occurred from participating at any stage of these procedures, the assistant dean may act on the instructor's behalf.

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct**

Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates. Harassment, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. Further prohibited by law is discrimination against any employee and/or job applicant who chooses to inquire about, discuss, or disclose their own compensation or the compensation of another employee or applicant.

Northwestern University complies with federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination based on the protected categories listed above, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX requires educational institutions, such as Northwestern, to prohibit discrimination based on sex (including sexual harassment) in the University's educational programs and activities, including in matters of employment and admissions. In addition, Northwestern provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants, students, and employees with disabilities and to individuals who are pregnant.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions with respect to nondiscrimination or reasonable accommodations should be directed to Northwestern's Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [equity@northwestern.edu](mailto:equity@northwestern.edu).

Questions specific to sex discrimination (including sexual misconduct and sexual harassment) should be directed to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu).

A person may also file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html) or calling 800-421-3481. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to Northwestern may be referred to Northwestern's Title IX

Coordinator, the United States Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, or both.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

Under the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA), all students have certain rights with regard to their educational records. A copy of Northwestern's student records policy is available at the above link or by contacting the [SPS Registrar's Office](#).

## **Curriculum Policies and Procedures**

### **Certificate Requirements**

To receive a professional development certificate of completion from SPS, students must fulfill the following requirements:

- Completion of the program-specific curriculum, as outlined on the program website.
- Adherence to policies on [student conduct](#) and [academic integrity](#) to the satisfaction of SPS.
- Submission of the [Program Completion Form](#).

### **Language of Instruction**

As an international institution for higher education, Northwestern University School of Professional Studies Professional Development Programs (PDP) attract students from around the world. Please note that the language of instruction for noncredit courses is English. Maximum benefit is derived for students with English language proficiency. Students registering for PDP courses are expected to be able to read and comprehend written and spoken English at the college level.

### **Course Substitutions**

Some professional development certificate programs may allow students to use comparable courses completed at other institutions to meet certificate requirements. Students should refer to the [certificate program webpages](#) or contact the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) for additional information.

### **Curriculum Requirements**

Students are responsible for noting any curriculum requirements in place at the time of initial enrollment into each certificate program. The most current curriculum requirements can be found on each [program's webpage](#).

### **Course Registration**

Students should consult the [Professional Development Programs \(PDP\) certificate pages](#) for the most up-to-date information. Course descriptions, instructor information, course schedule and delivery information, course start and end dates, and course prerequisites are listed.

Students register for all courses through the [PDP website](#) or [CAESAR](#). More information may be found in the [Using CAESAR](#) section of the student handbook.

Room assignments for on-campus courses are posted next to the course listing on the PDP website and will be displayed in Wieboldt Hall on digital signage located on each floor.

Generally, students may register for courses from the time registration opens until the day before the course begins. Late registration may be allowed on a case-by-case basis but is not guaranteed. Students are responsible for adhering to registration deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to register for and, if necessary, drop courses by the posted deadlines.

SPS encourages students to register for courses at the earliest possible date. Early registration helps SPS schedule courses more effectively. Some courses fill up quickly, and early registration allows SPS staff to schedule additional sections, when possible. Students who delay registration may find that a popular course has reached maximum enrollment, or that an under-enrolled course has been cancelled due to apparent lack of interest.

If registration questions or problems arise, please contact the SPS Registrar's Office at [pdp-reg@northwestern.edu](mailto:pdp-reg@northwestern.edu) or 312-503-6951.

### **Prerequisites**

Prerequisites indicate the expected background for a course and are listed in the course description on the website. If no prerequisite is noted, none is required. Students are responsible for being aware of course requirements as listed in the course description on the [PDP website](#).

### **Course and Program Cancellation**

The University reserves the right to cancel programs, courses, and/or class sessions when necessary, including due to insufficient enrollment, instructor illness, severe weather, or natural disaster. In the event of program cancellation, registrants will be notified immediately, and all tuition fees will be credited to their Northwestern student account. The University is not responsible for any travel or other related expenses accrued by registrants.

Northwestern University classes are rarely cancelled due to snow or other weather-related emergencies. However, should such an event force the cancellation of on-campus classes and/or closure of the University, students should contact their course instructor or the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) for information, or check the [Northwestern University homepage](#) for alerts. Weather-related course cancellations for the Chicago and Evanston campuses do not apply to SPS online or remote courses.

## Third Party Payment Documentation

Students paying by third party billing must submit a PDF registration form, along with a Letter of Credit from their employer or institution, to the [SPS Registrar's Office](#). A PDF registration form can be requested from the SPS Registrar's Office.

## Dropping a Course

### *How to drop a course during the Registration Period*

Students can [drop a course via self-service in CAESAR](#) until the end of the registration period for the course, generally the day before the course begins. Courses dropped during this time will not appear on the student's grade report, and all tuition fees will be credited to the student's Northwestern student account.

### *How to drop a course after the Registration Period*

Students may request to be removed from a course after the end of the registration period by submitting the [Change of Registration Form](#) to the SPS Registrar's Office before the last day of the course for which they registered. Per the [Tuition Refunds](#) policy, no refunds will be issued after the course begins; however, dropping a course will remove that course from the student's course record.

### *Additional policies regarding dropping a course*

- If a student needs to drop a course, they must officially [drop through CAESAR](#) or through the SPS Registrar; it is not sufficient to simply notify the instructor, speak with the program manager, or stop attending class.
- Students may drop courses without financial penalty up until the day before the course begins. For specific information on refunds, please refer to the [Tuition Refunds](#) policy or contact [NU Student Finance](#).
- Students are not eligible for a tuition refund after the registration period has passed. For specific information on refunds, please refer to the [Tuition Refunds](#) policy or contact [NU Student Finance](#).
- Students dropping a course after the end of the registration period due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. a medical or family emergency), may request an exception to the Tuition Refunds Policy through the [Student Affairs Petition](#) process.

## Grading and Attendance

PDP courses are either graded on a Satisfactory Performance (S)/ Unsatisfactory Performance (U) or a letter grade basis. The grading basis is noted in the course description and/or syllabus. Students who wish to be graded on a letter grade basis should submit their request to the instructor at the beginning of the course. All grades of 60% or higher are considered passing grades and satisfy course completion; however, no courses with a grade of D (60-69%) may be used to fulfill a

certificate requirement. Grades of U or F may be given for failing work (below 60%) or for cases where a student has failed to attend a single class or submit work.

Each instructor determines their own grading guidelines and expectations for satisfactory performance or grades, including how attendance and participation is evaluated. As a general guideline, for courses that consist of four or fewer class sessions, a student should not miss any class. For courses with more than four class sessions, a student may miss one class session without penalty, provided that the student coordinates with their instructor to make up missed work.

### **Incompletes**

In rare circumstances, students may be granted a grade of incomplete, which is designated with a grade of Y. A student must receive permission from both the instructor and the program manager to receive a grade of incomplete. It is expected that requests will be made and approved prior to the end of the course. When an instructor grants an incomplete, they will also determine the amount of time the student has to finish the work within the maximum allotted one term of additional time allowed. Instructors may establish an earlier deadline for the completion of missing work based on considerations specific to their course. Students with extenuating circumstances, who are unable to coordinate with their instructor, can petition for an extension through the SPS [Student Affairs Petition](#).

Students who fail to complete course requirements within the agreed-upon extended time period will receive a failing or unsatisfactory grade.

### **Course Credit**

All professional development courses are noncredit and are not eligible for academic credit. Some professional development courses are eligible for professional or continuing education credit. Students should consult the [Professional Development Programs certificate pages](#) for more information on course eligibility and professional or continuing education credits earned.

### **Auditing courses**

PDP courses cannot be audited.

### **Grade Concerns**

SPS follows Northwestern University practice which gives faculty members complete grading authority at their sole academic discretion. Accordingly, a course grade may be changed only to correct a clerical or computational error. It is not appropriate for students to seek grade changes for reasons of financial reimbursement by an employer or dissatisfaction with a grade, or to seek to submit new or revised work after final grades have been submitted to the SPS Registrar's Office.

Students are entitled to an explanation of how their final course grade was determined and how the component parts of that grade were weighted. If a student seeks further clarification of a final course grade, they should discuss that matter directly with the course instructor.

Students are reminded to adhere to the [University's Student Code of Conduct](#) in all their interactions with faculty members and staff.

If, after consulting with the course instructor, a student believes a clerical or computational error has not been rectified or the student has not been given a reasonable explanation of the final grade, the student should submit a [Student Affairs Petition](#). Students are required to provide detailed documentation as evidence to support their petition.

All members of the Northwestern community – including students, faculty, and staff – must adhere to the university's policy on discrimination and harassment. If you believe you have been discriminated against or harassed, carefully review the [University's policy on discrimination and harassment](#) and contact Northwestern's Office of Equity at 847-491-7458 or [eeo@northwestern.edu](mailto:eeo@northwestern.edu).

## **SPS Student Affairs Petition**

Students who feel that they have an extenuating circumstance related to the enforcement of school policy and procedures may request an exception to stated policies and procedures through the SPS Student Affairs Petition process. A petition must be submitted within one calendar year of the academic quarter in which the issue occurred (e.g., a student must submit a petition by no later than the end of the fall quarter to request an exception for an issue that arose in the fall quarter of the previous year).

To submit an SPS Student Affairs Petition, use the electronic form found on the SPS website on the [Forms and Documents page](#). A [NetID](#) and password are required to login to this page.

Students must include all relevant documents and evidence in the initial submission. Electronic supporting documents (doctors' notes, etc.) may be emailed to [spspetitions@northwestern.edu](mailto:spspetitions@northwestern.edu) or delivered to the SPS Registrar's Office on the Chicago campus. All petitions should include an explanation of the issue in question and requested outcome, legible documentation from a credible source, and an accurate timeline of their actions within the situation (e.g., last date of attendance).

Students should not use the petition process frivolously. The committee will be most understanding of cases in which the student could not have reasonably foreseen the circumstances.

## SPS Student Affairs Appeal

Students may appeal a decision made by a Student Affairs committee, or appeal a decision based upon policy (i.e., dismissal from the program due to academic performance). The decisions of the SPS Student Affairs Appeal process are final.

To submit an SPS Student Affairs Appeal, use the electronic form found [here](#). Students must include all relevant documents and evidence to support their appeal. Electronic supporting documents (doctors' notes, etc.) may be emailed to [spspetitions@northwestern.edu](mailto:spspetitions@northwestern.edu) or delivered to the SPS Registrar's Office on the Chicago campus.

## Completing the Certificate

### Program Completion Form

Once all program requirements have been met, students may submit a Program Completion Form to request a digital Certificate of Completion from Northwestern University School of Professional Studies. The online Program Completion – PDP/Post-baccalaureate form can be found on the [SPS Forms and Documents](#) page. A [NetID](#) and password are required to login to this page. Students who cannot access the online form can request a Program Completion Form (fillable PDF) from the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#).

After program completion form submission, a digital certificate of completion will be sent to the student's preferred email address listed in the student's Northwestern University student account (CAESAR). Students with a Northwestern University email address (@northwestern.edu or @u.northwestern.edu) will receive their certificate at this account. Students who are unsure of how to access university email or their CAESAR account should email the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#) for assistance.

Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing. Students who have not received their digital certificate after this period should contact the [SPS Registrar's Office](#) with their follow-up inquiry.

### Grade Report

The Grade Report is an official University document that lists the grades of all noncredit courses a student has taken, similar to a transcript. As transcripts only list courses taken for academic credit, students requiring official documentation of their final noncredit course grade(s) should submit a request for a Grade Report.

Students requesting a Grade Report should submit a Grade Report Request Form to the [SPS Registrar's Office](#). (The handwritten signature can be signed in ink first, and then scanned and

emailed.) This letter and handwritten signature are required to comply with federal regulations concerning student records (FERPA). Grade Report Request Forms are sent out via Canvas at the end of each course and can also be requested from the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#).

Grade Reports will only be issued as a physical document and can either be picked up by the student in-person or mailed via the U.S. Postal Service (USPS); students will indicate their preference on the Grade Report Request Form. Students electing to pick up their Grade Report in person must schedule an appointment to do so with the [SPS Registrar's Office](#). Digital or electronic copies of Grade Reports cannot be provided, as FERPA regulations prohibit student records from being sent via email.

### **Official Letter of Completion**

Students needing confirmation of course or program completion may request an official letter of completion from the [Office of Professional Development Programs](#). This letter is generally sufficient to document continuing education credit or to satisfy inquiries from employers. Grades are not included in this document.

## Additional Resources

### Community and Online Counseling and Psychological Services Resources

*Free or sliding scale services.*

#### [Family Institute at Northwestern University](#)

*Services:* Clinical staff, therapy groups, specialized services

*Phone:* 847-733-4300, ext. 0

*Locations:* Primary locations are in Evanston, downtown Chicago, Northbrook, and Westchester.

There are several satellite locations in addition to the four main facilities. Call to determine the site nearest to you.

#### [Bette D. Harris Family and Child Clinic](#) (Housed within the Family Institute)

*Payment:* The clinic uses a sliding fee scale that gives clients of all income levels access to high-quality care. Fees range from \$5-\$75, with an average of \$12- \$15 for individuals.

*Phone:* 847-733-4300, ext. 263

#### **Evanston (Headquarters)**

Bette D. Harris Center

618 Library Place

Evanston, IL 60201

#### **Downtown Chicago**

8 S. Michigan, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

Chicago, IL 60603

#### **Northbrook**

666 Dundee, Suite 1501

Northbrook, IL 60062

#### **Westchester**

Westbrook Corporate Center

One Westbrook Corporate Center

Tower One, Suite 300

Westchester, IL 60154

#### [Center on Halsted](#)

*Services:* Psychotherapy, counseling, support groups (free of charge for individuals of low income or who are experiencing relationship violence).

*Phone:* 773-871-CARE (2273)

*Location:* 3656 N Halsted St, Chicago, IL 60613

#### [Chicago Women's Health Center](#)

*Services:* Counseling, health education, primary care, and a host of physical health resources

*Phone:* 773-935-7145

*Payment:* To make quality health care accessible for all clients, CWHC offers all services on a self-pay sliding scale. CWHC also accepts Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO insurance plans for all services, and BCBS PPO, Humana PPO, and United PPO plans for gynecological care and trans health services.

*Location:* 1025 W Sunnyside Ave, Suite 201, Chicago, IL 60640

#### [Resilience](#)

*Services:* Offers free and confidential counseling, education and training, medical and legal advocacy for victims of rape and sexual assault.

*Phone:* 312-443-9603

*Location:* 180 N Michigan Ave, Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601

#### [NoStigmas](#)

*Services:* Online mental health support groups, access to a directory of free and affordable mental health resources, and informational and self-help articles and videos.