Master of Arts in Medical Humanities & Bioethics

Student Handbook

2023 - 2024 Academic Year

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Welcome/Welcome Back!

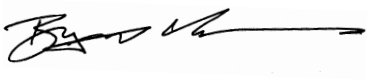
We're happy to have you as a student in the Master of Arts in Medical Humanities & Bioethics program. Our program is distinguished by its multidisciplinary approach to the study of medicine and bioethics. Our faculty are diverse in their interests and backgrounds, and our students are no different. We look forward to working with you this year, to meeting the challenges of the times together with creativity and flexibility, and to helping you to find your own direction in this exciting field.

This handbook will guide you through the program and should answer most of the questions you have. All Northwestern students are also encouraged to read the Northwestern University Student Handbook[1], which details the rights and responsibilities of Northwestern students.

We are always happy to meet with students and are available by phone, videoconference, or email. If you ever have any questions, just let us know.

Sincerely,

Megan Crowley-Matoka, PhD
Director of Graduate Studies
m-crowley-matoka@northwestern.edu
(312) 503-2968



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[1] https://www.northwestern.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf

About the Medical Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Program

Graduate Program Overview

The Medical Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Program was started in 2006 in order to provide a rigorous master's level education in the cultural, historical, legal, and philosophical contexts of medicine. Students acquire a rich understanding of medicine and its ethical implications that can be applied to medical practice, consulting, and scholarship. Our students are of diverse backgrounds, interests, and career paths. Our graduate faculty is similarly diverse in interest and expertise. They include scholars in bioethics, literature, law, history, religion, anthropology, and philosophy. Many of them teach in Feinberg's medical curriculum and some also teach undergraduate courses on Northwestern's Evanston campus.

In 2015, the Feinberg School of Medicine launched the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities with the mission to expand support for research and education in bioethics and medical humanities at Northwestern. The Medical Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Program is now a program within this larger center.

Graduate Program Goals/Mission Statement

The goal of this program is to educate students in the core disciplinary approaches encompassed in the field of Medical Humanities and Bioethics: philosophy, literature, history, law, and the social sciences. The program trains students to identify and implement the key conceptual approaches and methodological tools that each of these core disciplines contribute to addressing problems in medicine. Graduates of our program go on to apply these skills to a range of professional pathways in medicine, genetic counseling, science, and law that may include clinical work, institutional ethics roles, academic scholarship, and policy research and advocacy.

Diversity Statement

A diverse student population is a key element of the educational experience of students in The Graduate School (TGS), and in our MH&B program specifically. Diversity encompasses many different dimensions of identity and experience, among them: socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality or place of origin, disability, unique work or life experience, etc. It is the goal of TGS and the MHB program to cultivate an environment that values and meaningfully incorporates diverse backgrounds, approaches, and perspectives—all essential ingredients for true academic excellence and greater equity.

Schools and Entities within Northwestern

Multiple schools exist within Northwestern University and function somewhat independently of one another. The Medical Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Program is part of the Feinberg School of Medicine. Most of our core graduate faculty have Feinberg appointments and teach courses on bioethics and medical humanities to Feinberg medical students.

Despite the graduate program's physical and organizational location within Feinberg School of Medicine, The Graduate School of Northwestern is responsible for conferring all master's degrees at the university, including ours. This relationship with The Graduate School means the MA program and its students get access to TGS resources and are subject to TGS policies.

Dual-degree MD/MA students are students within both the medical and graduate schools. Single-degree MH&B students and dual-degree Genetic Counseling/MH&B students are students of The Graduate School only.

MH&B Personnel

Megan Crowley-Matoka is our Director of Graduate Studies. Bryan Morrison is the staff coordinator of the graduate program. He is the best contact for most administrative questions. Myria Knox is the other staff person at the program. She mostly coordinates Center events, but also assists with the graduate program.

Another important contact will be your academic advisor. More information can be found in the Academic Advisors section of this handbook.

Graduate Faculty

CORE COURSE FACULTY

Catherine Belling, PhD
Literature and medicine, the humanities in medicine and medical education
c-belling@northwestern.edu

Tod Chambers, PhD
Rhetoric of bioethics, cross-cultural issues in clinical medicine
t-chambers@northwestern.edu

Megan Crowley-Matoka, PhD • Director of Graduate Studies
Sociocultural dimensions of health care, organ transplantation, pain management — *m-crowley-matoka@northwestern.edu*

Sarah B. Rodriguez, PhD
History of reproductive health, the history of clinical care, and the history of medical research ethics — *srodriguez@northwestern.edu*

Mark Sheldon, PhD
Bioethics, philosophy of medicine
sheldon@northwestern.edu

Preya S. Tarsney, JD, HEC-C
Clinical ethics consultation, informed refusals including against medical advice discharges, disability ethics — *ptarsney@sralab.org*

Katie Watson, JD
Health law and medical ethics
k-watson@northwestern.edu

OTHER FACULTY

Sydney Halpern, PhD
Medical sociology, research ethics
sydney.halpern@northwestern.edu

Kathy Neely, MD, MA, HEC-C
Acute medical problems in primary care, Palliative care
k-neely@northwestern.edu

Teresa Savage, PhD, RN
Disability ethics, research ethics, ethical issues involving neonates and children with disabilities — *tsavage@sralab.org*

EMERITUS FACULTY

Kathryn Montgomery, PhD
Literature and medicine, the epistemology of medicine
kmontgomery@northwestern.edu

Our Offices

The Medical Humanities & Bioethics Graduate Program is located on the sixth floor of the Rubloff building (420 E Superior St). Our core faculty and staff have offices here, and our evening classes meet here as well (in Room 618). Our common space is available for students to use, so please feel free to come sit at our table, study in an arm chair, or make yourself a cup of coffee or tea. Also, please feel free to get water, use the microwave, or put your lunch in the fridge in our mailroom/breakroom, Room 621. This is also where you can leave a note or return a book to a faculty or staff member, or where items are sometimes left for students to pick up.

Our building gets locked around 5pm each evening, so MA students need to have their WildCards programmed to access the building. If you have not already done so, please email Myria Knox to request this access and include the five-digit number that is etched (not printed) on the back of your WildCard above the magnetic stripe. If you're unable to find this number, please email Myria Knox. This access will allow you to enter the building from the Superior St, Chicago Ave, and Lake Shore Dr entrances, and will unlock the glass double doors to our suite as well.

Required Courses

MH&B Core Courses

Our curriculum is designed to give students a broader and richer understanding of medicine. Each of our core courses is taught by a different professor who is an expert in that field.

MHB 401: FOUNDATIONS OF BIOETHICS

Course Description: This course will explore major theories and key cases in contemporary bioethics. Participants will learn the history and the application of the major moral theories in the discipline of bioethics, such as principlism, casuistry, care ethics, virtue ethics, and narrative ethics. A survey of the central issues in bioethics will be examined through key historical cases.
Learning Objectives: Identify and apply primary theoretical approaches employed in bioethics case analysis
Assessment Criteria: Discussion contributions, essay, final exam
Offered Next: Fall 2023
Taught by: Tod Chambers, PhD and Mark Sheldon, PhD

MHB 402: MEDICINE & LAW

Course Description: Using judicial opinions as our primary texts, this highly interactive seminar focuses on constitutional law and analyzes how the U.S. legal system mediates conflicts between individuals and the State, parents and children, and doctors and patients in areas including reproductive medicine (contraception, abortion, & assisted reproductive technologies), end-of-life medicine (withdrawal of life support, physician assisted suicide/dying), genetics, and public health.
Learning Objectives: Identify and apply basic legal reasoning to the critical reading and analysis of judicial opinions in medicine
Assessment Criteria: Discussion contributions, oral presentation, mock trial exercise (written and oral components)

Offered Next: Spring 2024

Taught by: Katie Watson, JD

MHB 403: THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

Course Description: In this course, we examine aspects of the history of medicine in the US, from the nineteenth century to the present, paying particular attention to changes and continuities over time. In so doing, we consider the ever-changing and provisional nature of medicine, the ways medicine is embedded within society, and how medicine both supports and is shaped by non-medical factors.

Learning Objectives: Identify and apply historical reasoning and methods to analyzing contemporary problems in medicine.

Assessment Criteria: Discussion contributions, written reading responses, written paper, historical exhibit review, and final exam

Offered next: Summer 2024

Taught by: Sarah Rodriguez, PhD

MHB 404: LITERATURE, MEDICINE, AND BIOETHICS

Course Description: This course surveys the uses of literary texts and theories in understanding the workings of health care, illness experience, and bioethics. The first five weeks focus on narratology and close reading as methods for understanding texts relevant to medicine and illness; the second on how narrative works in bioethics, from clinical ethics to speculative fiction to the design of health policy.

Learning Objectives: Identify and apply concepts and methods of literary analysis to interpret bioethical and clinical texts

Assessment Criteria: Discussion contributions, two writing exercises, final exam

Offered next: Winter 2024

Taught by: Catherine Belling, PhD

MHB 405: SOCIAL SCIENCE & MEDICINE

Course Description: This course will introduce students to key classic and contemporary scholarship in the social science of medicine to explore how empirical research can inform and enrich our understanding of moral issues in medicine. Organized around a series of core topics in bioethics (e.g. death and dying, reproductive technologies, organ transplantation, and disability), the course examines a range of theoretical frameworks and methodological strategies from the social sciences, with a particular emphasis on ethnographic and cross-cultural approaches. Students will learn how to interpret and assess social scientific research, as well as how to bring a social scientific perspective to bear on problems in medicine.

Learning Objectives: Identify and apply concepts and methods of social science research to analyzing core bioethical debates in medicine

Assessment Criteria: Discussion contribution and leadership, two bioethics narrative exercises, participant observation exercise and reflection, final paper

Offered next: Fall 2023

Taught by: Megan Crowley-Matoka, PhD

MHB 406: THE PRACTICE OF BIOETHICS

Course Description: This course takes students from theory to practice, providing an introduction to ways they might put their MHB knowledge into action as they develop careers in various clinical and social contexts. One-third of the course is devoted to the practice of clinical ethics consultation and the work of institutional ethics committees. Other topics covered include writing and publishing academic articles, delivering compelling conference presentations, developing excellent teaching skills, conducting and regulating research, and offering expert opinion to public debate through the media.

Learning Objectives: Identify range of professional roles and skills in bioethics, complete ethics consult experience, and develop and present a scholarly presentation for a bioethics audience

Assessment Criteria: Discussion contributions, CITI training, journal review, ethics case

consultation exercise and reflection, final project (research proposal, research article, syllabus, or policy initiative)

Offered next: Winter 2024

Taught by: Katie Watson, JD; Kathy Neely, MD, MA, HEC-C; and/or Preya Tarsney, JD, HEC-C

Special Topics Lectures

MHB 410: Special Topics in MH&B is a course built around our weekly Montgomery Lectures series. These lectures are delivered by faculty members and special guests, on topics in which they specialize. They are presented weekly at noon on Thursdays throughout the fall, winter, and spring quarters and are 50 minutes in length. Students must attend all three quarters to receive one unit of course credit—most courses are ten three-hour meetings; this is thirty one-hour meetings. Students typically take two years of Special Topics, so first and second-year MA students will be in the same class. These talks are open to the public, so expect to see some new faces as well.

Registered students are expected to attend each week, but are permitted to miss up to two lectures per quarter. In addition to attendance, an online writing component is required. (Students who have an incomplete in Special Topics from a previous year: please complete the writing assignment assigned when you took the course.)

COURSE DATES

- Fall: September 21 through November 30
- Winter: January 4 through March 7
- Spring: March 28 through May 30

LOCATION

These lectures are held in the Searle Seminar Room in the Lurie Research Building (not to be confused with the Lurie Children's Hospital). The building's official address is 303 E Superior, but the best entrance is on Huron, just east of Fairbanks. If you enter there, the room will be the first door on your right in the hall on your right, just past the security guard.

RECORDINGS

These lectures are audio recorded and, on the Thursday afternoon or Friday morning immediately following the lecture, the recording is made available to students via [2]. The recordings are rough, unedited versions and many speakers have asked that theirs be restricted to MA students only. Please do not share the recordings or the link to them with people outside of the MA program.

Students who miss a lecture due to a conflict are permitted to listen to the recording and submit their writing assignment in response to it. However, the recordings are not intended as a substitute for attendance; students missing more than two sessions, should contact Megan Crowley-Matoka.

ONLINE WRITING REQUIREMENT

Students are asked to submit a brief response to each lecture they attend, in Canvas under the Discussions section. These responses should be a short paragraph in length (200 words or so), and should offer a thoughtful response to the presentation that might take several different forms, including (but not limited to):

- critique the presenter's argument;
- explore the implications of the presentation, for medicine, bioethics, medical humanities, society at large, etc.;
- suggest connections with other MH&B lectures or coursework material;
- propose new research directions or questions that the presented material might generate;
- respond to colleagues' responses to further collective discussion of the lecture.

These responses do not require additional outside research, and they are meant to be a reflection of your own intellectual engagement with the Montgomery Lectures as they

[2] https://nuwildcat-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/bmm473_ads_northwestern_edu/EjUrbqwfMC9EpS_HMS6FoFcBS54ETEHrWokmep-aFro4Kw

occur across the quarter. You are also encouraged reply to the responses posted by your classmates, and to their replies to your lecture response.

Responses must be entered into Canvas by 5pm on the Monday following the lecture.

GRADING

The lecturer for the week will read the week's posted responses and respond to the collective discussion. For formal grading, MH&B faculty will evaluate each lecture response on a ten-point scale. Eight responses are required, yielding a total of 80 points for the quarter. Additionally, up to ten points of extra credit may be awarded based on contributions to the discussion beyond the required lecture responses (i.e., on your replies to your classmate's responses). Grading will be done twice per quarter, at the midpoint and at the end.

LINKS

Speaker and topic details for individual lectures can be found on PlanIt Purple:
https://planitpurple.northwestern.edu/calendar/mhblectures

The discussion forum can be found on Canvas:
https://canvas.northwestern.edu/

Tutorials

Tutorials are a chance to study with a faculty member on a topic that they're currently researching. They are "mini" courses in several senses: they meet fewer times, involve fewer students, require less work, and are worth less course credit. Ideally each tutorial involves two to four students, but one-on-one tutorials are common as well.

Several tutorials—on diverse topics—are offered each quarter. You may use tutorials as a way to explore possible thesis topics, or simply choose ones that interest you. Tutorial offerings will be announced four weeks before the start of the quarter. When possible, we will include details for subsequent quarters so you can make more informed tutorial selections. When the announcement goes out, faculty have committed to the tutorials listed for the upcoming quarter, but tutorials listed for later quarters should be interpreted as intentions, not commitments.

Your grade is typically based on your ability to discuss the material, but the instructor may choose to require a written assignment. The readings are determined by the instructor; however, if you find a work that you think would be relevant, feel free to ask her or him if it could be included.

Two tutorials are required for the degree. Each is worth one half course unit. You may take tutorials at any point in your academic career and may enroll in multiple tutorials at once. A tutorial should be at least 15 hours of total work, including about five hours of discussion time. Typically this means five one-hour meetings, but this does not have to be the case. Meetings can be held remotely or in person, based on the instructor's preference.

The scheduling of a tutorial should be arranged directly with the instructor. The five tutorial meetings don't need to be spaced evenly over five weeks, but should be confined to one quarter. This year, the Fall quarter runs September 19 through December 1; the Winter quarter, January 3 through March 8; the Spring quarter, March 26 through May 31; and the Summer quarter, June 17 through August 23.

In addition to setting this up with the instructor, please be sure to enroll in MHB 499: Independent Study, Section 10 to receive program credit for the tutorial. If you are taking two tutorials in the same quarter, please enroll in MHB 499: Independent Study, Section 10 and Section 11. Each of these enrollments carry one half unit of course credit.

Capstone Requirement

All MA students are required to complete a capstone project. This is reflected on your transcript as 1 unit of MHB 499: Independent Study, Section 99. This final requirement will be explored fully in the upcoming Capstone Project section

Progressing through the Program

MA Progress Overview

You are expected to monitor your own progress and ensure that you remain in good academic standing (which is detailed in a later section). The program conducts an annual progress review for each student and will send you an official message regarding your academic standing.

The program requires that you meet with your assigned academic advisor at least once per academic year to update your MA Milestones Checklist (which follows).

MA Milestones Checklist

For single-degree and MD/MA students pursuing the MA over two or more years (most students). Specialized checklists follow for GC students and students on a one-year timeline.

	Enrolled/ Course on Transcript	All Work Submitted	Final Grade on Transcript
MHB 401: Foundations of Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 402: Medicine & Law (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 403: The History of Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 404: Literature, Medicine, & Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 405: Social Science & Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 406: The Practice of MH&B (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #1 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #2 (0.34 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #3 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #4 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #5 (0.34 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #6 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #1 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #2 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499-99: Independent Study, Capstone (1 unit)	...	...	...

A total of ten MHB units is required to graduate. • Taking two tutorials simultaneously may make them appear on a transcript as a single enrollment of 1 unit. This still counts as two tutorials (and two checkboxes). • The capstone unit is required for all capstone project options. Students must enroll in that before completing the capstone project, but, unlike the checkboxes above, it is not a prerequisite for starting the capstone project. • MD/MA students who took the first quarter as a trial: Your transcript will reflect only nine total units, and will not include MHB 401 (submitting all work and receiving a final grade for the course is still required).

MA Milestones Checklist for Genetic Counseling Students

	Enrolled/ Course on Transcript	All Work Submitted	Final Grade on Transcript
MHB 401: Foundations of Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 402: Medicine & Law (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 403: The History of Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 404: Literature, Medicine, & Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 405: Social Science & Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 406: The Practice of MH&B (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #1 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #2 (0.34 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #3 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #1 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #2 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499-99: Independent Study, Capstone (1 unit)	...	...	...

For GC students, a total of nine MHB units is required to graduate. • Special Topics and the tutorials may appear on your transcript as MHB 499. If you have the equivalent of one unit of enrollment for Special Topics, you should check off the first column for all three Special Topics lines. If you have the equivalent of one unit of enrollment for the tutorials, you should check off the first column for both tutorial lines. • The capstone unit is required for all capstone project options. Students must enroll in that before completing the capstone project, but, unlike the checkboxes above, it is not a prerequisite for starting the capstone project.

MA Milestones Checklist for Students on One-Year Timeline

	Enrolled/ Course on Transcript	All Work Submitted	Final Grade on Transcript
MHB 401: Foundations of Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 402: Medicine & Law (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 403: The History of Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 404: Literature, Medicine, & Bioethics (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 405: Social Science & Medicine (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 406: The Practice of MH&B (1 unit)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #1 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #2 (0.34 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 410: Special Topics, Quarter #3 (0.33 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #1 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #2 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #3 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499: Independent Study, Tutorial #4 (0.5 units)	❑	❑	❑
MHB 499-99: Independent Study, Capstone (1 unit)	…	…	…

A total of ten MHB units is required to graduate. • The capstone unit is required for all capstone project options. Students must enroll in that before completing the capstone project, but, unlike the checkboxes above, it is not a prerequisite for starting the capstone project.

Academic Advisors

The program assigns each student a faculty academic advisor. Students are required to meet with their academic advisors once per year, and two or three meetings per year are recommended.

During the required progress meeting, you and your advisor will review your unofficial transcript and update your MA Milestones Checklist (see previous page).

Reviewing your progress isn't the only reason for these advisor meetings. It's also a chance to raise any questions or concerns about the MA program, bounce tutorial or thesis ideas off your advisor, ask for advice on your professional development, and more. (Please always feel free to also contact Grad Director Megan Crowley-Matoka or Grad Coordinator Bryan Morrison with questions or concerns.)

Unlike a thesis advisor, an academic advisor is not selected based on their discipline/ research areas. You may ask your academic advisor to serve on your thesis committee, but there is no expectation to do so.

Area of Scholarly Concentration (MD/MA only)

Our MA curriculum satisfies the medical school's requirement for an Area of Scholarly Concentration (AOSC) and provides four weeks of elective credit (typically in the M4 year). MH&B faculty essentially fill the role of the AOSC mentor, but it is not necessary to identify a specific AOSC mentor. MD/MA students are not required to complete their MA capstone project before their Feinberg graduation, but they must remain in the MA program and be within good academic standing at The Graduate School. More information on the AOSC is available on the Feinberg website[3].

[3] https://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/md-education/curriculum/components/learning-strategies/student-research/aosc-graduation-requirements-electives.html

Capstone Project

Capstone Options

The final requirement of the MA program is a capstone project, which challenges students to analyze topics in bioethics or medical humanities and to employ the field's multiple disciplines in their analysis. Our program offers two rigorous capstone options, both of which provide students an opportunity to demonstrate this mastery, but in different ways and on different timelines.

The first option is a comprehensive exam, which requires long-form essay responses to four questions, followed by an oral defense. The second option is a master's thesis, which is a writing project intended to produce a knowledgeable survey of the current thinking about a specific topic in the field.

Despite the different formats and timelines, the capstone options share a lot of similarities. Both are rigorous and challenge students to draw from the disciplinary approaches covered in our core courses. Both require analytical and writing skills, and the ability to justify one's work in an oral defense.

Students are likely to choose one option over the other based on their goals following their completion of the MA program, on their time constraints for completing the degree, or on a combination of both. Students interested in academia may be attracted to the thesis option, which will allow them to engage directly with faculty members in academic research, writing, and editing. The thesis demands in-depth analysis that is more representative of what is required of a scholar in the field. Some students like that it results in a final product, and the idea of creating a well-reviewed, polished piece of academic writing. Past students have frequently turned their thesis work into conference presentations or published articles. Students interested in teaching and/or publishing may find this attractive. Also, the master's thesis provides an opportunity to deeply explore a single topic, so students who have a topic that they are passionate or curious about may choose it over the exam option, which examines multiple topics and provides more limited opportunity for personal choice.

Whereas the thesis requires in-depth analysis, the comprehensive essay exam demands rapid analysis, which is more similar to what is required in a clinical setting. For this reason, the exam may be a better choice for some students on a clinical path. Also, the exam has the advantage that it can be completed in a much shorter timeframe than the thesis. The minimum timeline for the thesis option is 6 months; for the exam, 6 weeks.

Because of this shorter timeline and because it is the capstone option that most broadly and directly demonstrates a student's mastery of the program's course material, all students are placed on the comprehensive essay exam track by default. In order to pursue the master's thesis, students must submit a Thesis Proposal Form[4] at least six months before they intend to graduate.

Each of the two capstone options have defined processes and expectations which are detailed in their own sections below.

[4] https://bioethics.northwestern.edu/docs/thesis-proposal-form.pdf

Comprehensive Essay Exam

Our comprehensive essay exam provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate a broad, multidisciplinary mastery of both the content and analytic skills relevant to our field. It consists of two components: a written essay exam and an oral defense.

WRITTEN ESSAY EXAM

The written portion is designed to be completed as a take-home, open-book exam. Students are given three days (72 hours) to complete the exam, which can be scheduled as the student chooses (e.g. over a weekend, from 10am Friday to 10am Monday).

Students will be required to write essay responses to four total questions. The first three questions will be selected from a group of five possible questions, each one representing one of the core MH&B disciplines (bioethics, literature, history, law, and the social sciences). The final question requires critical synthesis across disciplines and is mandatory for all students completing the exam.

We anticipate that each answer will require approximately 1,500–2,500 words in length to address. The questions will be sent via email at the start time indicated by the student. At or before the completion of the 72-hour period, the student must submit the responses via email, attached as a Microsoft Word document.

Upon receiving the responses, the program will assemble a committee of three to four faculty members, informed by the disciplinary questions the student selected (as well as faculty availability). If the committee judges the responses to be passable, an oral defense will be scheduled. If one or two of the essays are deemed not passable, the student will have one opportunity to remediate those essays. Like the original exam, the remediation will be take-home, open-book, and scheduled in advance for a specified period. The timeframe given for exam remediation will be proportionate to the number of questions

being remediated—e.g., to remediate one of the four exam questions, a student will be given 18 hours (one-fourth of the 72 hours originally given).

If more than two essays from the original written exam are not passable, or if the exam is still not passable after remediation, the student will no longer be eligible for the MA degree, but will be eligible to receive the Certificate in Medical Humanities and Bioethics, which is further addressed in its own section ahead.

ORAL DEFENSE

All successful exams will be followed by an oral defense, which will provide the committee an opportunity to further explore the student's written responses, understanding, and skills. The committee typically goes through each of the exam responses individually and asks questions that require the student to further clarify, elaborate, and justify their responses. The defense usually takes about one hour. Ideally, it will be held within three weeks of completing the written exam (or remediation) so that the material is fresh in the minds of the student and the examiners. Completing it in person is best when possible, but can be done remotely if necessary.

SAMPLE COMPREHENSIVE ESSAY EXAM QUESTIONS

Example 1 (Literature):

Using the quotation below as a starting point, and referring to at least one text from either the *Health Affairs* "Narrative Matters" or the *Nature* "Futures" collections, describe a way narrative can be employed in bioethics or health care policy-making.

> "A policy is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. … An explicit health policy defines a vision for the future which in turn helps to establish targets and points of reference for the short and medium term." (Wikipedia, "policy")

Example 2 (Bioethics):

Take the case below and using care ethics and principlism analyze the case. In your essay, you are expected to 1) provide a brief summary of each approach, 2) use the approach to analyze the case, and 3) compare and contrast the approaches in terms of how they did or did not provide a resolution to the moral problems in the case.

> Dr. Brown, a hospitalist, admits Mark, a patient transferred from a local jail for management of cellulitis. The patient, who was taken into custody two days prior to hospital admission, has a history of intravenous heroin use. Mark explains that he had been prescribed buprenorphine-naloxone maintenance therapy for opioid use disorder for several years prior to being arrested and had not used other opioids during that time. As a policy, the jail where Mark is detained does not prescribe opioid agonists, and his maintenance therapy was stopped upon his arrival there.
>
> Dr. Brown discovers that Mark is diaphoretic and appears distressed. Mark complains of abdominal pain, describes nausea, and reports that he had diarrhea while in jail. His symptoms had been managed symptomatically with nonopioid agents, following the jail's withdrawal protocol. Mark's symptoms suggest to Dr. Brown that, in addition to having cellulitis, Mark is actively withdrawing from opioids.
>
> Mark tells Dr. Brown that he has felt "horrible" since his buprenorphine-naloxone therapy was stopped and that he now has intense cravings for opioids. He asks Dr. Brown to help alleviate the withdrawal symptoms. Dr. Brown, who is accustomed to treating opioid withdrawal with opioid replacement therapy, wonders if she should initiate ORT for Mark while he is in the hospital.

Shi, C. R., Kandola, M. S., Tobey, M. and Singer, E. (2017) "Managing Opioid Withdrawal for Hospital Patients in Custody." *Hastings Center Report*, 47: 9–10.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

Preparation is key for successfully completing the comprehensive essay exam. Our students who have successfully completed it report that they devoted one to two weeks to full-time studying before taking the exam. This is the program's recommendation. Students may want to start by assembling the syllabi, readings, and completed assignments from each of your core courses, and then review them for major concepts and theories. Some students found it helpful to study in pairs or groups with fellow exam-takers.

SCHEDULING THE EXAM AND DEFENSE

Students should initiate the scheduling of their exam by emailing Myria Knox (p-knox@northwestern.edu). Students should not plan to schedule the oral defense until their written exam is deemed passable; however, if specific scheduling constraints exist, please let us know when scheduling the written portion.

The oral defense must be scheduled for a date at least one week after the responses are submitted, to allow time for review. Please note that if any responses are judged non-passable (which is not uncommon), additional time will be required both for remediation and for review by the committee.

In order to graduate in a given quarter, the defense must be completed at least one week before the TGS Master's Completion deadline for that quarter. Also, the written exam dates must be set at least six weeks before the TGS deadline.

Please be mindful of all dates in the Deadlines section below.

DEADLINES

December 2023 Graduation

Oct 20, 2023: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Oct 20, 2023: Dates set for written exam *(6 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Nov 14, 2023: Written exam begins *(2 weeks plus 3 days before TGS deadline)*

Nov 17, 2023: Written exam submitted *(2 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Nov 24, 2023: Defense completed *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Dec 1, 2023: TGS Master's Completion deadline

March 2024 Graduation

Jan 26, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Jan 26, 2024: Dates set for written exam *(6 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Feb 20, 2024: Written exam begins *(2 weeks plus 3 days before TGS deadline)*

Feb 23, 2024: Written exam submitted *(2 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Mar 1, 2024: Defense completed *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Mar 8, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

June 2024 Graduation

Feb 2, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Mar 29, 2024: Dates set for written exam *(6 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Apr 23, 2024: Written exam begins *(2 weeks plus 3 days before TGS deadline)*

Apr 26, 2024: Written exam submitted *(2 weeks before TGS deadline)*

May 3, 2024: Defense completed *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

May 10, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

August 2024 Graduation

Jul 5, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Jul 7, 2024: Dates set for written exam *(6 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Jul 30, 2024: Written exam begins *(2 weeks plus 3 days before TGS deadline)*

Aug 2, 2024: Written exam submitted *(2 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Aug 9, 2024: Defense completed *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Aug 16, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

Master's Thesis

OVERVIEW

One of two capstone project options, our master's thesis was designed to demonstrate a student's ability to apply various disciplinary perspectives in the analysis of a topic in bioethics or medical humanities. As this is a Master of Arts thesis (rather than a doctoral thesis), the focus is not on primary research but on surveying and synthesizing existing research on the topic. Your thesis should be a knowledgeable survey of the current thinking about your topic. Following the approval of your written thesis, an oral defense will be required. A thesis advisor will guide you through the research and writing process and help prepare you for the defense.

Students who wish to write a master's thesis track are required to be approved for the thesis track, by submitting a Thesis Proposal Form. This form must be submitted at least six months before: (a) your planned MA completion date, (b) leaving the Chicago area, *and* (c) completing your concurrent degree program (dual-degree students only). For example, the submission deadline for MD/MA students is November of their fourth year, and for GC/MHB students, September of their second year. Students who are not approved to switch to the thesis track will remain on the comprehensive essay exam track. Additionally, students who do not meet milestones in the thesis research and writing process may also be switched back to the comprehensive essay exam track.

REQUIREMENTS

Topic

An acceptable master's thesis must display mastery of a topic within bioethics or the medical humanities. You should employ at least three disciplinary approaches in your analysis of the topic and should be able to explain why you decided to emphasize these

approaches over others. See the second step in the Process section below for further guidance.

Structure and Style

All MH&B theses must have a substantive, significant major claim; a clear line of reasoning and subordinate claims supporting the major claim; and adequate and properly documented support for each subordinate claim. The writing style must meet professional standards of clarity and grace, including paragraphs that have unity, coherence, and development.

Length

There is no minimum length, but there is a maximum length of 28,000 words (not including references, appendices, etc). Most submissions have been between fifty and eighty pages in length.

Formatting

Please use the guidelines for manuscript preparation as outlined in either the Chicago Manual of Style or the Modern Language Association's style manual, and adhere to the following manuscript standards: 12pt Times or Times New Roman font, lines double-spaced, one-inch margins, page number on each page, title page. We print our master's theses, so please insert an additional page where necessary to ensure that your title page, table of contents, bibliography, and the first page of each section all fall on an odd-numbered page (to the right of the binding).

WRITING RESOURCES

The university provides one-on-one writing consultations to graduate students via The Writing Place. More information on their services and how to schedule a consultation are available on their website[5].

We also recommend the following texts for help with structuring arguments and developing a clear, academic writing style: *The Literature Review* (Machi and McEvoy), *The Craft of Argument* (Colomb and Williams), and *Lessons in Clarity and Grace* (Joseph Williams).

Also, reviewing past examples of MH&B theses can help elucidate what the final product should look like. Past theses are available to MH&B students online[6]. Consult your thesis advisor for direction to theses that may be particularly helpful in thinking about your project.

PROCESS

The following steps are expected to be completed in order. Please read through this entire section before beginning the thesis, and refer back as you progress, checking off steps as you complete them. Also, please be mindful of all dates in the Deadlines section below.

Complete all course requirements and verify that transcript has no missing/ incomplete grades

While it's never too early to start thinking about your thesis and potential topics, the thesis writing process cannot formally begin until all other program requirements have been completed. (Please see the MA Milestones Checklist within this handbook).

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5 https://www.writing.northwestern.edu/graduate-faculty-and-staff/

6 https://nuwildcat-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/bmm473_ads_northwestern_edu/ESNoG5lwtYFLgHYQZmHQa2kBi-XwdW0JFENFWgotaPnvrA?e=pxOuHQ

Decide on general thesis topic

Many students use the thesis as an opportunity to delve more deeply into a topic that was touched on in a master's course or Special Topics lecture, or an issue that they observed in action on a clinical rotation. Past topics have included the duty to disclose uncertain genetic findings, expanded genetic screening for newborns, the question of rational suicide, the role of hope in hospice care, satires of surgical practice, female genital cutting, science fiction published in the journal Nature, and proxy decision-making at the end of life.

Ask faculty members to serve on thesis committee

Considering your topic and the disciplines you expect to draw from, contact a faculty member who would be most helpful in researching and writing your thesis. A thesis advisor will guide you through the research and writing process and help prepare you for the defense. Students may select any MH&B graduate faculty member as advisor. If you are unsure who would be most appropriate or are still deciding between potential topics, contact Graduate Director Megan Crowley-Matoka to discuss. Meeting with a faculty member does not imply that you will ask her or him to act as your advisor. The student must ask and the faculty member must agree before the relationship is established. Either party may decide that the faculty member is not the best fit and the faculty member may decline, due to, for example, serving on multiple active thesis committees.

With the assistance of your thesis advisor, you will assemble a thesis committee, which will include two to three other faculty members in addition to your advisor. At least three of your committee members must be Northwestern University faculty members and at least two must be MH&B graduate faculty. Students may have an outside committee member with the approval of their thesis advisor.

Submit Thesis Proposal Form to MH&B

Once you've chosen a topic and assembled a committee, submit a Thesis Proposal Form[7] to Bryan Morrison.

The form notifies the program that you plan to begin working on your thesis and prompts us to check that you've completed the program requirements up to that point. Attaching a completed copy of the MA Milestones Checklist (provided in this handbook) is required for this reason.

Additionally, the form ensures that the student, committee members, and the program have a shared understanding of the student's thesis topic and expected time of completion. Please consult the upcoming Deadlines section when planning your timeline.

Initiate writing and research stage

Once you have been approved for the thesis track, you are free to work with your thesis committee to research and write your thesis. This is the longest stage of the thesis process. At the beginning you will be working almost exclusively with your thesis advisor, but it is recommended that you contact the other committee members early on for recommendations on relevant sources within their disciplines.

Writing the thesis is an iterative process and multiple revisions are to be expected. Most students submit between three and five drafts before one is approved for defense. It is not unusual for a student's outline or even major claim to evolve as the thesis research progresses.

Your advisor will help you determine which portions of your thesis should be shared with which committee members and at what stage. You should allow committee members a minimum of one to two weeks to review each draft. Please be aware of all deadlines, listed in the next section. These deadlines are the last day that each requirement will be

[7] https://bioethics.northwestern.edu/docs/thesis-proposal-form.pdf

accepted; we recommend that you progress two or more weeks in advance of the deadlines.

Throughout this process, students must demonstrate that they can incorporate the feedback from their committee at the same time as maintaining autonomous authorship of their work. If a student is unable to show sufficient improvement and autonomy after multiple drafts (typically within three drafts), the thesis committee can decide as a group that more work on the thesis is not warranted and a failing grade may be given. If the committee members believe a student is in danger of this outcome they will provide warning of this possibility, in writing, and allow the student to turn in one more draft before a final decision regarding failure is reached. A student who receives a failing grade on the thesis will not have an oral defense and will not receive an MA degree. However, they will be eligible to receive the Certificate in Medical Humanities and Bioethics, which is further addressed in its own section ahead.

Enroll in thesis course

Like each of the core courses, the thesis is associated with one unit of enrollment. Please enroll in this unit—MHB 499 Section 99—in the earliest quarter in which you expect to complete your thesis. Like other units, you may receive an incomplete "Y" grade until you've satisfied the requirements. Dual-degree students should enroll in the course before completing their other degree to ensure they are not charged for it as an independent student later.

Submit Application for Degree form

This quick online form, submitted through GSTS, notifies The Graduate School that you plan to graduate that quarter. If you need additional time after submitting the form, simply submit it again for the quarter you now expect to finish in.

Send thesis draft to all committee members

Your advisor will let you know when your draft is ready to be sent in full to the other committee members for formal evaluation. Please allow your committee members at least four weeks to read your thesis and prepare for the defense.

Schedule thesis defense

Once you've been approved to defend, please find a time that works for all your committee members. Typically an hour is sufficient. Once you've chosen a time, please contact Myria Knox (p-knox@northwestern.edu), who will secure a room for your defense.

Successfully defend thesis

The thesis committee will decide how the defense will be conducted, but the following is a typical format:

- **Introduction** from the student including a summary of the thesis, a discussion of why they chose this topic, and a discussion of how this thesis arises out of their master's education (about 10 minutes)
- **Questions** from the committee members, with discussion (about 30 minutes)
- **Conferral** of the committee without the student present (about 5 minutes)
- **Discussion** with the student about what, if anything, they need to do before turning in a final thesis draft, and discussion of what else they might choose to do with their thesis research and write-up, like publication (5 minutes)

Following the defense the committee will award the thesis a) pass, b) pass pending minor revisions, c) pass pending major revisions, d) fail. Most students will be required to make some revisions. Any revisions must be accepted by all the members of the committee. No additional defense is required following revisions. While students are not required to be in Chicago for the thesis preparation process, they may be asked to appear in person for the defense. With your thesis advisor's permission, you may invite other students and faculty members to attend your defense.

Send committee-approved final draft to program coordinator

The last step in the thesis process is to email your committee-approved final draft to Bryan Morrison. He will initiate the graduation process by submitting a Master's Completion Form to The Graduate School. The upcoming Graduation and Becoming MH&B Alumni section will outline further tasks and what to expect as you prepare to leave Northwestern.

DEADLINES

December 2023 Graduation

Jun 1, 2023: Thesis Proposal form submitted to MH&B *(6 months before TGS deadline; must also be at least 6 months before graduating from a concurrent program or leaving campus)*

Oct 20, 2023: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Oct 27, 2023: Final draft of thesis submitted to committee
(5 weeks before TGS deadline; must also be at least 4 weeks before defense date)

Nov 3, 2023: Date set for thesis defense *(4 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Nov 24, 2023: Thesis defended *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Dec 1, 2023: TGS Master's Completion deadline

March 2024 Graduation

Sep 1, 2023: Thesis Proposal form submitted to MH&B *(6 months before TGS deadline; must also be at least 6 months before graduating from a concurrent program or leaving campus)*

Jan 26, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Feb 2, 2024: Final draft of thesis submitted to committee
(5 weeks before TGS deadline; must also be at least 4 weeks before defense date)

Feb 9, 2024: Date set for thesis defense *(4 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Mar 1, 2024: Thesis defended *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Mar 8, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

June 2024 Graduation

Dec 1, 2023: Thesis Proposal form submitted to MH&B *(6 months before TGS deadline; must also be at least 6 months before graduating from a concurrent program or leaving campus)*

Feb 2, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Apr 5, 2024: Final draft of thesis submitted to committee
(5 weeks before TGS deadline; must also be at least 4 weeks before defense date)

Apr 12, 2024: Date set for thesis defense *(4 weeks before TGS deadline)*

May 3, 2024: Thesis defended *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

May 10, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

August 2024 Graduation

Feb 16, 2023: Thesis Proposal form submitted to MH&B *(6 months before TGS deadline; must also be at least 6 months before graduating from a concurrent program or leaving campus)*

Jul 5, 2024: Application for Degree form submitted to TGS

Jul 12, 2024: Final draft of thesis submitted to committee
(5 weeks before TGS deadline; must also be at least 4 weeks before defense date)

Jul 19, 2024: Date set for thesis defense *(4 weeks before TGS deadline)*

Aug 9, 2024: Thesis defended *(1 week before TGS deadline)*

Aug 16, 2024: TGS Master's Completion deadline

Leaving Northwestern/Chicago Before MA Completion

We encourage dual-degree MHB students to finish their capstone project at the same time or before completing their other degree, and encourage all students to finish their capstone project before leaving the Chicago area. A number of factors make the process easier for students on campus, including the ability to meet with faculty in person, having access to the program and university libraries, remaining in "student mode", and being free of the demands of medical residency or new employment.

The comprehensive essay exam option provides a way to complete the program requirements more quickly, so students with time constrictions are encouraged to take that option.

Students interested in completing a thesis may continue to do so after graduating from their other Northwestern program or leaving the Chicago area; however, they must be approved for the thesis track no later than six months before they graduate from their concurrent degree program or leave campus. Additionally, they must continue to hit appropriate milestones in the thesis process, as defined by their committee, in order to remain on the thesis track.

Also, we recommend that students enroll in the capstone unit in their last quarter on campus (if not before). Doing so later can interrupt loan deferments that prohibit enrolling as a part-time student. Students who don't finish the capstone in that quarter will receive an incomplete "Y" grade, but this will be replaced with a final grade once the capstone is complete, and one "Y" grade does not affect a student's academic standing.

Certificate in Medical Humanities & Bioethics

The Certificate in Medical Humanities & Bioethics is an option for students who do not complete a capstone project. This option was created in order to recognize the significant work and educational achievement by these students and to provide a clear way to highlight their training in Medical Humanities & Bioethics. While not on par with a full master's degree, we believe that the inclusion of the certificate on one's CV provides meaningful evidence of one's additional training.

Students are be eligible to receive either the certificate or the MA degree, but not both. All students enter on the MA track. They may switch to the certificate track only after completing the coursework—either as an alternative to attempting a capstone project, or as the result of unsuccessfully attempting a capstone project. In order to be eligible to receive the certificate, students must complete all core courses, two tutorials, and at least one year of Special Topics.

Graduation and Becoming MH&B Alumni

Final Tasks

Once TGS has approved your Master's Completion Form, you have been cleared to graduate. There are only a few steps left that we recommend:

DETERMINE WHEN YOUR DIPLOMA WILL BE MAILED

The Graduate School mails diplomas a one to two months after the degree has been awarded. More specific timeframes can be found on their website[8].

VERIFY THE ADDRESS WHERE YOUR DIPLOMA WILL BE MAILED

It's imperative that you keep The Graduate School updated on your address so that your diploma is mailed to the correct place. Please check GSTS to ensure that the address you entered on your Application for Degree form is still correct. If your address changes in the period between completion and diploma mailing, please email TGS Student Services[9] to ensure that they have your updated address.

KEEP YOUR NORTHWESTERN EMAIL

After graduating, students' net IDs are deactivated, but a Northwestern email address can be retained indefinitely. If you have not already, you will be required to set up your email address using @u.northwestern.edu or @fsm.northwestern.edu. Alternatively, you can transition it to @alum.northwestern.edu. Students will receive an email several weeks before their NetID is deactivated that will explain the options for continuing to use a Northwestern email address. Please watch for this email and see the "Graduating Students" section of this IT support page[10] for further details.

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[8] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/graduation-and-diploma-mailing.html
[9] gradservices@northwestern.edu
[10] https://www.it.northwestern.edu/support/students/

SHARE A SECOND EMAIL ADDRESS

If you don't plan to keep or regularly check your Northwestern email address, please provide us with another address in order to reach you. We occasionally email all former students with updates and announcements on major conferences we're hosting. We will not include you on regular announcements, unless you request that we do so. Former students are invited to subscribe to the newsletter[11] of our parent center, the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities.

EXIT SURVEY AND EXIT INTERVIEW

As part of our commitment to continually improving the program and our students' experience, we ask that all graduates complete a brief, online exit survey and participate in a brief exit interview (which can be done in person or via Zoom).

Celebrating Your Graduation

Degrees are awarded at the end of each quarter—in March, June, August, and December. University ceremonies take place only in June. The University Commencement on the Evanston campus is open to all Northwestern graduate students, but the hooding ceremony is reserved for terminal degree (PhD and MFA) students. Students who graduate in March, August, and December are welcome to participate in the ceremonies the following June.

MH&B holds a graduation party each spring to honor. Faculty, current students, and typically a few alumni get together to toast the MH&B graduates of the past year. Graduates are encouraged to bring loved ones.

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[11] https://eepurl.com/cAYh81

Joining Our Alumni Community

We've had over ten years of MH&B graduates now, and have seen dozens of students move across the country (and world!) to do interesting, important work. We are working to stay better connected with each of you and to connect you to one another. To that end, we have a few reminders and requests.

KEEP IN TOUCH

We like to know where our former students are and how to reach them. If you move to a new city or change your email address, please send a quick email to Myria Knox (p-knox@northwestern.edu) and she'll update our records.

SHARE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

If you've received a promotion, got a publication, received an award, or some other accomplishment, please feel free to let us know! We're always happy to get personal updates too, so don't be shy with the baby photos.

COME BACK AND VISIT

We now host an annual conference each spring that highlights talks by our MA alumni, and features a reception for MH&B alumni and students. Several alums have presented on their thesis work, or on what they're doing now and how it relates to medical humanities or bioethics. We encourage you to attend and to submit a proposal to present at it. Please watch your email for announcements.

Also, if you're in town, feel free to come by. We're still in the same spot. (Though you may want to check with Myria Knox (p-knox@northwestern.edu) first to make sure people will be around.)

LOOK FOR US–AND EACH OTHER

Attending conferences is a great way to stay connected with your classmates and the faculty. If you're attending a conference—like the annual meeting of American Society for Bioethics and Humanities[12] (ASBH)—let us know!

Our faculty often say that in completing the program, you transition from being their student to their colleague. Please think of them—and any MH&B alumni—as colleagues and feel free to reach out to them as you would any colleague.

[12] https://asbh.org/annual-meeting/bioethics-humanities-meeting/

Student Responsibilities

Northwestern University Expectations

All Northwestern students are expected to uphold the university's values regarding community and academic integrity. These are included in the Northwestern Student Handbook, and are included below.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Northwestern University is an **educationally purposeful** community, a place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on campus.

- Commitment to truth and knowledge is unwavering.
- Respect for individual achievement and excellence is the cornerstone.
- Lifelong learning is expected.

Northwestern University is an **open** community, a place where civility is powerfully affirmed and where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected.

- Civility and respect are expected behaviors.
- Individuality is affirmed while all strive to build a stronger sense of campus community.
- Freedom of choice is balanced with responsibility to the community.

Northwestern University is a **just** community, a place where the sanctity of the person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.

- Individual differences and unique perspectives are respected.
- Our common humanity is the basis for community relations.
- Inclusion is the foundation for decision making.

Northwestern University is a **disciplined** community, a place where individuals accept their obligations to others and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good.

- Freedom is balanced with duty.
- Integrity and honesty are expected.
- Consideration for the needs and rights of others is the norm.
- Disagreement and conflict are acknowledged in respectful discourse.

Northwestern University is a **caring** community, a place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.

- "Do no harm to others" is a non-negotiable value.
- Accurate self-understanding is the foundation for empathy, compassion, and understanding others.
- Social responsibility and an ethic of service to others are extended to all members of the community.
- Emotional, physical, and spiritual well being is cultivated in academic and extracurricular life.

Northwestern University is a **celebrative** community, one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared.

- History, traditions, and the contributions of the past are honored.
- Unique cultural and ceremonial practices are affirmed.
- Individual religious and spiritual beliefs are accepted

BASIC STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Registration at Northwestern requires adherence to the University's standards of academic integrity. These standards may be intuitively understood, and cannot in any case be listed exhaustively; the following examples represent some basic types of behavior that are unacceptable.

- Cheating: using unauthorized notes, study aids, or information on an examination; altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for regrading; allowing another person to do one's work and submitting that work under one's own name; submitting identical or similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors.
- Plagiarism: submitting material that in part or whole is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.
- Fabrication: falsifying or inventing any information, data, or citation; presenting data that were not gathered in accordance with standard guidelines defining the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data and failing to include an accurate account of the method by which the data were gathered or collected.
- Obtaining an unfair advantage: (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials prior to the time authorized by the instructor; (b) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (c) unauthorized collaborating on an academic assignment; (d) retaining, possessing, using, or circulating previously given examination materials, where those materials clearly indicate that they are to be returned to the instructor at the conclusion of the examination; (e) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's academic work; (f) recycling one's own work done in previous classes without obtaining permission from one's current instructor; or (g) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students' academic work.
- Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty: (a) providing material, information, or other assistance to another person with knowledge that such aid could be used in any of the violations stated above; (b) providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity; or (c) providing or selling class materials to

websites that sell such materials to students—this includes but is not limited to notes, PowerPoint slides, outlines, and graded assignments.

Confidentiality

Patient information is sometimes shared for teaching purposes in MA classes. Students are obligated to maintain patient confidentiality, and are forbidden from sharing patient information with anyone outside the program. All discussions regarding patient information should occur in a private space. This requirement to maintain patient confidentiality extends to patient information that is learned outside of class as well.

Communication with Program

The program and The Graduate School almost always use email to send announcements and to communicate with individual students. We recommend that students check their Northwestern email addresses at least once per day while classes are in session, and at least once per week at other times.

Faculty and staff are happy to meet, but whenever possible, please send an email first to set up a meeting time. To find someone's email address, check the Northwestern online directory[13] or this handbook, or email Bryan or Myria (who are always happy to help, once other options have been exhausted.)

If you need to miss class or to request an extension for an assignment, please email the course instructor beforehand.

[13] https://directory.northwestern.edu/

Class and Meeting Spaces

Please remember that spaces are shared with other programs. Students are expected to respect spaces and should clean up after themselves at all times.

Provide Feedback

Our program conducts course evaluations at the end of each course, to get your feedback on what worked well and what could be improved to further develop the course. Your responses are extremely valuable to us. Please complete these evaluations each time. The program also conducts exit surveys upon completion of the program.

We welcome feedback more generally as well! Always feel free to get in touch with your advisor, with Megan Crowley-Matoka, or with Bryan Morrison, if you have input on how things are going in the program.

Enrollment and TGS Requirements

Curricular Requirements and Substitutions

Our core courses, MHB 401 through 406, provide the knowledge and skills most essential to our field. For this reason, substituting any of those courses is only permitted in special cases. Substituting another course for the capstone unit is never permitted. Students have more leeway, however, with the Special Topics and Tutorial units.

With permission, additional tutorials or graduate-level Northwestern courses outside of the program may be substituted for one year of Special Topics. GC/MA students receive 1 unit of credit for their ethics training in the Genetic Counseling program; this can be used as a substitute for the tutorials or one year of Special Topics.

As a student of The Graduate School, you may take graduate courses offered by departments outside your own. These courses can be viewed on CAESAR, but you may need to request permission to register from the course instructor.

In special cases, as mentioned above, a student may be able to receive program credit for an outside graduate course, effectively substituting it for one of the required MH&B courses. Typically the substitute and required courses must be on related topics. In all cases, this requires advance permission from the MH&B graduate director. We recommend taking the original course over a substitution whenever possible.

You may also take undergraduate courses or courses offered by other schools within Northwestern (with the instructor and offering department's permission, as necessary), but only courses in The Graduate School may be approved for program credit. Be aware that some financial aid agreements may not cover tuition for non-required courses.

It's also worth noting that The Graduate School requires that no more than one third of units counted toward MA completion may be independent study. This means that 3 units of MHB 499 is the maximum (unless you exceed the ten required units).

Course Units

Course units are used to a measure your course load and your progress in the program, and are generally of greater importance than the number of courses. The six core MH&B courses (MHB 401–406) and the thesis (MHB 499 Section 99) are all one unit. Each tutorial (MHB 499 Section 10) is worth one-half unit. Each Special Topics course is worth one-third unit and is taken in three quarters for two years, for a total of two units. These comprise the ten units required for completing the degree.

Tuition charges are also based on the number of course units, not the number of courses. Also, a student's status changes given the number of units they're enrolled in. Fewer than three units in a quarter is considered part-time. Three to four units is considered full-time. With permission, students may take up to five units. Students with full-time status are eligible for additional services, detailed later in the Resources section. A student activity fee of $125 is automatically charged to all full-time students.

Tuition is calculated differently for full-time versus part-time students (see Tuition section). International students are required to maintain full-time enrollment in the fall, winter, and spring. Students receiving loans are typically required to maintain at least half-time enrollment (two units) in the fall, winter, and spring.

Registering for Classes

You are responsible for your own registration. Course instructors will receive class rosters before the first class meeting and will verify that all students in attendance are listed on the roster. The Office of the Registrar website offers more information on registration, including deadlines[14].

[14] https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/registration-graduation/registration/

Registration is done online via CAESAR[15], which is generally easy to use. It offers a list of course offerings, which you can filter by course subject (our course subject is "MHB"). You can then select the courses you'd like to take and check out, as you would from an online retailer. CAESAR also allows you to indicate a "preferred" name, which will be displayed on class rosters, on Canvas (Northwestern's course management system), and in the online directory. The CAESAR website maintains an online help[16] section for students.

Please make every effort to register online before the class's first meeting. However, please do not miss class due to registration problems. If you are unable to register before the add/drop deadline, please send an email to gradservices@northwestern.edu, providing your student ID number & the course's section ID number and explaining the problem.

Registering Beyond Four Units as a Genetic Counseling Student

Per TGS policy, students cannot register for more than four units in a quarter; however, dual-degree GC/MHB students have advanced permission to exceed this limit and enroll in up to five units in a quarter. Each quarter, please enroll in the GC courses you intend to take and then email Bryan Morrison. He will contact TGS on your behalf to request your enrollment in the MHB courses.

Holds

You will be prevented from registering if you have a registration hold on your account. A common cause for a registration hold is having an unpaid account balance from the previous quarter. For new students, another common cause is failing to submit proof of Illinois-mandated immunizations.

Another common reason is if you have not submitted or recently verified your emergency contact information. The university requires that all students submit a telephone

[15] https://caesar.northwestern.edu
[16] https://ses.northwestern.edu/student_help.htm

(preferably a cell phone) number at which the university can call them in case of an emergency. To enter this information, please go to CAESAR and sign in with your netID & password. Click the green "REVIEW EMERGENCY INFO" button on the top right. Enter or verify your information, making sure that at least one of the phone numbers is checked in the "Use for Emergency Notification" column.

Typically, when the system tells you that a hold has been placed on your account, it will also tell you whom to contact to have the hold removed. After doing so, if you need additional help, please contact Bryan Morrison.

Continuous Registration

All active students in The Graduate School must maintain registration throughout the fall, winter, and spring quarters until all degree requirements have been completed, including thesis acceptance.

If you are not registering in any courses in a fall, winter, or spring quarter, you must enroll in TGS 512: Continuous Registration, which maintains your active student status. Per the TGS Student Handbook, TGS 512 is "required for all students who are continuing in their degree programs and are not registered in program coursework", including "students away from campus or on leave for any reason (medical, family, research, etc.)" The cost for TGS 512 is $100 per quarter.

MD/MA students are required to maintain registration in the graduate school, but are not required to pay the cost of TGS 512 while active in the medical school. The correct enrollment for active MD/MA students is TGS 514. If you complete the MD requirements before the MA requirements, however, you will need to register for TGS 512 and incur the quarterly fee. Students are not permitted to enroll themselves in TGS 514, so each quarter Bryan Morrison will complete this enrollment for all MD/MA students who have completed the MH&B core courses. If you'd like to enroll in a tutorial or the thesis, first drop TGS 514 for that quarter.

TGS 512 and 514 confer full-time status. They provide access to the university library, but other services may be limited. If you receive university health insurance, you will still be eligible when enrolled in TGS 512 or 514. You will not be charged the student activity fee (as you would if you were truly registered as full-time) and may not be eligible for all of the resources provided to full-time students[17].

Students who fail to register in a fall, winter, or spring quarter will be withdrawn from the university, resulting in a loss of their email account and library privileges. Students then must apply for readmission, which if granted will result in retroactive enrollment in TGS 512 for each quarter missed (excluding summer), a charge of $100 for each quarter of TGS 512 (with a cap of $1,000), and a $250 readmission fee. Any account balance must be paid before you can register.

Grades and Incompletes

MH&B courses are evaluated using letter grades, in descending order: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, and F (A+ and D are not options). Graduate students are required to maintain a minimum grade of "B" to remain in good academic standing. A grade below a B would be an item for discussion with your academic advisor and may result in a meeting with the graduate director.

An incomplete grade ("Y") is given when you have received permission from the instructor to complete the course requirements after the course has finished. If you do not receive advance permission, you will receive a failing grade ("F") for the course. The course instructor will decide the deadlines and conditions for submitting the work and the method by which the new grade will be calculated. The Graduate School requires that you complete the course requirements within one calendar year; otherwise, the incomplete will appear permanently on your transcript.

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[17] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/general-registration-policies.html

Academic Standing and Probation

Per Graduate School policy, a student will be placed on academic probation if *any* of the following apply:

- the student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 (a "B" average)
- the student have no more than three incomplete ("Y") grades,
- the student fails to complete all the degree requirements within the five-year maximum time to degree set by TGS (more on that in the next section)

Per the policy, a student placed on probation has *at most* two quarters in which to remediate before they are excluded by TGS. The full policy can be found in the TGS Student Handbook[18].

In addition, a student will be placed on academic probation by the MH&B Graduate Program if *all* of the following apply:

- the student is not enrolled in any MHB courses
- the student is not making progress on the capstone project
- the student is not responding to program requests for an updated timeline for completion
- the student is not on an approved leave of absence
- it is the fall, winter, or spring quarter (not the summer quarter)

A student placed on probation by the MH&B Graduate program has two quarters in which to remediate before the MA faculty will consider whether to recommend exclusion. Students excluded by the program may appeal the decision to TGS.

[18] https://www.northwestern.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf

Master's Completion Time Limit

The Graduate School requires that students complete all requirements for a master's degree within five years of their entry to the master's program. Once five years—i.e., 20 quarters—have passed since a student's entry quarter, the student will be placed on academic probation for two quarters and then be excluded from TGS if all degree requirements are not met by the end of the probationary period. Exclusions are final and cannot be appealed, so it's imperative that students stay aware of their time limit. If completion within the time limit is not possible, students should consider a leave of absence (see below).

Leaves of Absence

If you need to take a leave from the university—including for medical or family reasons—you must request an official leave of absence. This is done using the Petition for Absence form, which is available in GSTS under "TGS Forms". Leaves are granted for as short as one quarter and as long as one calendar year.

According to TGS policy, "approved leaves of absence automatically extend milestone deadlines by the length of the leave." This means essentially that the clock on your Master's Completion Time Limit stops ticking during a leave of absence. A leave of two quarters, for example, will result in your completion deadline being postponed by two quarters. Students cannot fulfill any degree requirements or work on their thesis while on a leave of absence. According to TGS policy, "students on leave of absence must request return prior to the first date of the quarter in which a return is planned." Students who fail to do so must apply for readmission in a later term.

Student Finances

Tuition

Per Northwestern policy, all students "are responsible for fulfilling their financial obligations to the University. If a student's account becomes overdue, the student must pay a late payment fee of $200." If your bills are past due, the Office of Student Accounts may will place a hold on your account that will prevent you from registering. Also, if you have overdue bills, you "may not be given a diploma or transcript until all financial obligations are paid in full."

The amount and timing of your tuition charges depend on whether you're in the single-degree, dual MD/MA, or dual GC/MA program. Please see the relevant section below.

FOR SINGLE-DEGREE STUDENTS

Your tuition amounts are set annually by The Graduate School (TGS)[19] and increases should be expected each year. Tuition is charged quarterly. You'll be billed on the 10th of the month and payment is due by the 1st of the following month. Tuition is charged by the individual course unit if you enroll in fewer than three units that quarter (part time) or at a flat rate if you register in three to four units (full time). If you enroll in over four units, the cost of the additional unit or half-unit is added to the full-time charge. The rates for the 2023-2024 are:

- 1 unit: $7,667
- Full time: $21,550
- Student activity fee (for full-time students): $125
- TGS 512 (for maintaining enrollment): $100

[19] https://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/tuition/graduate/the-graduate-school.html

Refunds

The Graduate School policy is to refund tuition for any course as long as you have officially dropped it before TGS's drop deadline[20]—the fifth day of classes of the quarter.

FOR GENETIC COUNSELING STUDENTS

All information in the above section for single-degree students also applies to Genetic Counseling/MA students. However, the MH&B program believes that students adding the MA degree to an existing program should be charged less than students who are pursuing the MA alone; for genetic counseling students the total cost is halved. GC students beginning in the Fall 2023 will owe a total of $38,800 for the MA. Tuition is charged by The Graduate School at their typical rates; however, since the same full-time rate is charged for quarters of three or four units, often no additional tuition will be owed for the MA courses. Any MH&B tuition beyond the $38,800 (which is typically minimal) will be returned as financial aid.

FOR FEINBERG STUDENTS

The MA tuition for MD/MA students is approximately $45,000, significantly reduced from the $78,000 charged to single-degree students. Your MA tuition follows the same billing cycle as the medical tuition, with the first half of each year's tuition in the summer and the second in the winter. The annual surcharge for the 2023-2024 academic year is $10,637. This amount is set annually by the medical school and increases should be expected each year—typically at about 4%.

The annual surcharge reflects the total program cost divided over four years. It is not dependent on registration; for example, you will be charged in your third year even though you likely won't be taking any courses. Once you have paid for four years of the program, you will not be charged additional surcharges, even if your MA coursework

[20] https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/academic-calendars/

extends into a fifth year. You will, however, be charged the $100 fee for TGS 512, which is needed to maintain an active student status (as described in Continuous Registration section).

Despite paying MA tuition via the surcharge, MD/MA students are automatically charged each quarter based on their course registration, which is how tuition is charged for most TGS students. These charges—labeled "Med Grad Div"—will appear on your account each quarter, but will be reversed by a credit of the same amount. The annual surcharge (applied in two halves) is the only tuition you should ever pay for the MA.

Refunds

Since tuition is charged regularly over the duration of the program, independent of course registration, dropping a course will not result in a refund. It is assumed that you will complete the course at some point before completing the program.

If you decide to withdraw from the program, you may be eligible for a partial refund. We will compare your tuition owed with your tuition paid. If your tuition paid exceeds your tuition owed, we will refund the difference; if your tuition owed exceeds your tuition paid, you will neither owe nor receive money. The tuition owed is calculated as follows:

> tuition paid + tuition remaining at the current rate = total cost
>
> total cost / 10 = cost per unit
>
> cost per unit × number of units taken = tuition owed

Any course not dropped before The Graduate School's drop deadline is counted as taken.

Financial Aid

The MH&B graduate program offers financial aid to students in the master of arts program. Eligibility is based on financial need alone, not on merit. The university does

not offer financial aid toward master of arts degrees; all aid is awarded by the graduate program itself. Students are encouraged to seek outside funding as well. The Graduate School website offers more information on financial aid and how it is distributed[21]. Financial aid is calculated differently depending on student type; please see the relevant section below.

FOR SINGLE-DEGREE STUDENTS

Our program provides some financial aid depending on need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)[22]. You must submit a FAFSA to receive aid through the program. Once you have done so, please notify Bryan Morrison. Some students receive tuition reimbursement through their employers; employed students should check with their employers about the availability of tuition benefits. Full-time Northwestern University faculty and staff are eligible for a 90% tuition reduction through Human Resources, with a possible annual cap of $12,000 (based on years of employment); all employees are eligible, but you must apply[23] annually.

FOR FEINBERG STUDENTS

In addition to the tuition reduction that all dual-degree students receive, MH&B provides financial aid to MD/MA students based on need. If you receive need-based financial aid toward your medical tuition, you are eligible for financial aid toward our graduate tuition. Students in the highest need level can expect over half of their MA tuition to be covered by financial aid. Aid levels can be expected to remain about the same each year, unless you have a significant change in your financial situation.

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[21] https://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/financial-aid-and-loans/index.html
[22] https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
[23] https://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/educational-assistance/ee-reduced-tuition-benefits.html

FOR GENETIC COUNSELING STUDENTS

Our program may provide need-based financial aid in addition to the tuition reduction available to all GC students. In order to request additional aid, please notify Bryan Morrison. We will then ask the Office of Financial Aid to provide your financial need as determined for your Genetic Counseling tuition, which we will use to determine your level of aid.

Student Loans

Student loans are an option to help cover your remaining tuition costs. The Graduate School advises that before you "consider student loans, please explore the possibility of other financial aid, such as grants, scholarships, and fellowships, which, unlike student loans, do not need to be repaid."

Student loans require that you maintain half-time enrollment (two course units) in each quarter, except summer. If you fall below two units, your loan periods (if applicable) or repayment will begin. The Graduate School website offers information[24] and answers to frequently asked questions[25] related to student loans, as well as a page of tax tips[26].

Viewing Your Account and Making Payments

You can access and pay your bills via CAESAR. You can also authorize others, such as parents or sponsors, to view your account and submit payments[27]. The Student Financial Services website offers guides on how to check your account, pay your balance, and other finance-related tasks[28].

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[24] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/assistance/loans.html
[25] https://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/financial-aid-and-loans/loan-types/index.html
[26] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/taxes/index.html
[27] https://ses.northwestern.edu/guestaccess/
[28] https://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/help/caesar-how-to-guides.html

Funding Travel for Conferences and Research

The Medical Humanities & Bioethics Program offers some funding to our MA students to support travel to relevant conferences and research sites. Applications are considered in the order they're received.

These awards are designed to subsidize student activities that increase knowledge and/or skills in the medical humanities and/or bioethics, including activities like data gathering, attendance at specialized conferences, workshops, or short courses that contribute to professional development.

These awards are not stipends. They are meant to cover expenses for items such as travel, lodging, fees, services and materials necessary for research or education. Receipts must be submitted upon return. Any money not accounted for must be returned.

As there are various funding sources available for international travel, we require that students requesting funding for international travel apply to other funding sources as well. Applying for other sources is not required for travel within the US, but is strongly encouraged for any proposals for which it would be possible. Please be aware of stipulations on other funding sources.

APPLICATION

Students should make a request in writing to the Graduate Director for these funds.

Describe in detail the activity, why you want to do it, and what you hope to gain from it. Include the dollar amount you are requesting and an itemized budget justifying that amount. Also include answers to the following questions:

1. How will your proposal increase your knowledge and/or skills in the medical humanities and/or bioethics? Why do you need this knowledge and/or skill?

2. Will the activity you seek to fund contribute to your thesis? How? (Priority will be given to these projects.)
3. Will your proposed activity increase your ability to find employment in bioethics or the medical humanities? How?
4. What other funding sources have you applied to?

Resources Available to Students

Health and Wellness Resources

HEALTH INSURANCE

If you are a degree-seeking Northwestern graduate student and you are registered for classes (or TGS 512), then you are enrolled by default into the NU Student Health Insurance Plan (NU-SHIP) at the start of each academic year. Students with other health insurance may waive this coverage; instructions are available online[29]. Optional dental and vision plans[30] are available to students as well.

HEALTH SERVICES

Emergency and non-emergency medical care are available to Chicago-campus students through Northwestern Medicine. Eligibility and further details are available online[31].

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Northwestern's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)[32] provides free, confidential mental health care service to students. Counselors are available by appointment on both campuses and are trained to help with stress, sadness, grief, trauma, challenges in adapting to academic life, and more. Crisis counselors can be reached on the same day.

CAPS also offers a drop-in virtual counseling consultation service called *Tele Talk*[33]. This program is free, requires no appointment, and meets regularly on both campuses. While it is does not aim to be a substitute for formal mental health treatment, it may provide comfort and insight to students, and can connect them to further options, if needed.

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[29] https://www.northwestern.edu/student-insurance/insurance-requirements/nu-ship-information/enrollments-and-waivers/
[30] https://www.northwestern.edu/student-insurance/optional-insurance-plans/
[31] https://www.northwestern.edu/healthservice-chicago/
[32] https://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/
[33] https://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/workshops-outreach/tele-talk/

STRESS MANAGEMENT, SLEEP, AND MINDFULNESS

Northwestern's Counseling and Psychological Services website[34] offers guides and tools for managing stress, getting a good night's sleep, and practicing mindfulness. An introduction to mindfulness meditation clinic is offered regularly on the Chicago campus[35]. Additionally, a few religious/spiritual spaces are available on campus[36].

FITNESS & RECREATION

Northwestern's fitness and recreation facilities are unfortunately all located on the Evanston campus. Chicago-based students are eligible to free use of these facilities[37], but may prefer exploring options closer to campus. The university offers a "Chicago Campus Fitness/Recreation Benefits" plan that provides access to Fitness Formula Clubs (including the nearby Gold Coast location) and Lake Shore Park's Field House[38], which is directly adjacent to campus. Lake Shore Park also features tennis courts and a quarter-mile soft surface running track that are open to the public as part of the Chicago Park District (no membership required).

Additionally, students interested in participating in competitive indoor soccer, basketball, or volleyball should consider joining the university's Chicago Campus Intramural Program[39].

Finally, the Chicago Lakefront Trail is an excellent local asset, featuring a scenic 18-mile trail for jogging, walking, and biking. You can access the trail by taking the stairs at Chicago Ave and Lake Shore drive (by the Lake Shore Park Field House).

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[34] https://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/self-help-resources/
[35] https://www.northwestern.edu/religious-life/explore-our-programs/mindfulness/drop-in-meditation.html
[36] https://www.northwestern.edu/religious-life/discover-our-spaces/meditation--prayer-spaces-on-campus.html
[37] https://nurecreation.com/sports/2015/8/12/studentmembership.aspx
[38] https://www.northwestern.edu/auxiliary-services/fitness/
[39] https://www.northwestern.edu/auxiliary-services/fitness/intramural.html

Student Life

HOUSING

Northwestern's only designated graduate housing is located on the Evanston campus. Some resources for finding off-campus housing in Chicago are provided on their website[40] and on the Northwestern Student Affairs site[41].

TRANSPORTATION

As parking downtown is difficult and expensive, public transportation is the best option for students commuting from other neighborhoods. The **Chicago Transit Authority** (CTA) connects campus to virtually every neighborhood in the city via buses and trains. The nearest train station is the Chicago Red Line stop at Chicago Ave and State St, about 3 blocks west of campus. Several bus lines, like the #66 Chicago Ave bus will get you even closer. One strategy for living off-campus is to find an area you like that connects directly with our Streeterville/Gold Coast neighborhood via one bus or train.

Students enrolled full-time are eligible for a **U-Pass** which provides free, unlimited transit on any of the buses or trains operated by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA).[42]

Many students may also want to take advantage of Chicago's **Divvy**[43] bike share system, which makes thousands of bikes available for short-term use at hundreds of stations around Chicago. Single and daily rates are available, but frequent riders will want to take advantage of annual membership, which is discounted for Northwestern students[44]. The *Transit* smartphone app is the best way to find Divvy stations and to plan a trip is using the CTA.

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[40] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/index.html
[41] https://www.northwestern.edu/offcampus/housing/find-housing/
[42] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/transportation/index.html
[43] https://www.divvybikes.com/
[44] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/divvy-bikes.html

Students interested in occasional car use may want to join the **Zipcar** carshare service, which offers discounted membership to Northwestern students[45].

Northwestern connects its campuses via an **Intercampus Shuttle**, which is free to ride and the fastest, easiest way to attend lectures or events on the Evanston campus. The route and timetables can be found online[46].

STUDENT GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

Student groups offer opportunities to interact with other Northwestern graduate students beyond those in your specific program. The Chicago Graduate Student Association (CGSA)[47] unites NU grad students on the Chicago campus, and strives to support students' rights, academic and professional development, social interaction and community outreach. A similar, inter-campus group is the Graduate Leadership and Advocacy Council (GLAC)[48], which meets regularly with TGS deans and administrative staff to voice concerns on behalf of all Northwestern grad students and advocate for improvements to student life.

Additionally, student groups exist to unite students who identify as black, LatinX, Indian, Chinese, and LGBTQA—or who share a professional or extracurricular interest[49].

Finally, multiple student groups exist based on volunteer opportunities[50].

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[45] https://www.northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/commuter-options/zipcar-carshare.html
[46] https://www.northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/shuttles/routes/intercampus.html
[47] https://northwestern.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/CGSA
[48] https://sites.northwestern.edu/glac/
[49] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/community-campus-life/tgs-affiliated-student-organizations-campus-partners/index.html#
[50] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/community-campus-life/volunteerism-community-outreach.html

CHILD AND FAMILY RESOURCES

Graduate students who are parents are encouraged to explore the online list of resources offered by Northwestern and to meet with the TGS Family Resource Liaison[51].

Nondiscrimination Statement

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

[51] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/family-resources/child-family-resources.html

Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, 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.

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 the OCR Complaint website[52] 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.

Academic Support and Supplemental Learning

NU LIBRARIES

Northwestern's libraries provide access to a vast collection of books and articles, provide spaces to study, and offer additional tools to support your research as a graduate student.

Northwestern has eight libraries. The main one is on Evanston campus, and may be useful for humanities research related to your thesis.

The medical school's Galter Health Sciences Library[53] is the one you'll likely use most often. Chicago-based students might also be interested in visiting the Schaffner Library in the Wieboldt Building, which offers additional computers and meeting spaces. Additionally, the Law library has resources for legal research[54].

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[52] https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html
[53] https://galter.northwestern.edu/
[54] https://www.library.law.northwestern.edu/

All of the libraries' collections can be searched online through a central system.[55] Many physical items are available for borrowing[56] and those at other NU libraries can be sent to the Galter library for convenient pickup[57]. Northwestern students also have access to visit and borrow from the libraries of University of Chicago, Loyola University of Chicago, and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)[58]. If you need a book found in none of these libraries, you can make an interlibrary loan request[59].

Online access to journals, reference volumes, and academic library databases[60] will make your research easier—and offer lots to explore. The Complete Oxford English Dictionary[61] is a personal favorite of the author of this handbook. The Galter Library offers additional resources[62] and guides[63] for finding articles in medical journals.

In addition to materials, the libraries can support your research with trainings, guides, and consultations[64]. The university's subject librarians[65] have expertise in specific topics or disciplines and can suggest books, articles, and other resources that you might not have found otherwise—and they can be reached via email. The Galter Library offers classes every month on PubMed, EndNote, and more[66].

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55 https://search.library.northwestern.edu/
56 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/find-borrow-request/
57 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/find-borrow-request/requests-interlibrary-loan/getting-available-items.html
58 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/visit/visitor-privileges/reciprocal-university/
59 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/find-borrow-request/requests-interlibrary-loan/
60 https://libguides.northwestern.edu/az.php
61 http://www.oed.com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/
62 https://galter.northwestern.edu/
63 https://galter.northwestern.edu/galterguides/
64 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/research/scholarly/
65 https://www.library.northwestern.edu/research/subject-librarians/
66 https://galter.northwestern.edu/classes

Finally, the libraries offer places to work and study. Galter library has designated quiet zones and collaborative zones[67]. Computers are available for use in Galter library and offer printing and scanning capability[68].

THE WRITING PLACE

The Writing Place[69] is a free service that provides extra help on writing assignments to Northwestern graduate students. They offer one-on-one consultations with "an experienced writer who can analyze the student's text and suggest improvements." This can be helpful with final papers for the core courses, or for portions of a Master's Thesis. Any students interested in improving their writing skills are encouraged to take advantage of this service.

They also offer workshops[70] like *Strategies for Revising, Editing, & Proofreading Your Own Writing*; *Performance Techniques for Delivering Conference Papers*; *Negotiating the Revision & Resubmission of Journal Articles*; and *Writing About Visual & Ephemeral Evidence*.

TGS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Various programs and resources are available to TGS students related to research computing skills, critical theory, civic engagement, programming, English language proficiency, career advising, and more.[71]

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[67] https://galter.northwestern.edu/visit/classrooms-and-study-spaces
[68] https://galter.northwestern.edu/about-us/printing-and-scanning
[69] https://www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries-collections/schaffner-library/writing-place.html
[70] https://www.writing.northwestern.edu/graduate-faculty-and-staff/
[71] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/professional-development/opportunities.html#skill=&participant=Master's

ONLINE COURSES THROUGH LINKEDIN LEARNING

LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com)[72] provides accessible online courses on a wide range of practical topics. You can get a general introduction to most popular types of software, including PowerPoint, Excel, EndNote, PhotoShop, InDesign, Wordpress, and Final Cut Pro; and learn how to complete some very specific tasks using each of these. They also have courses on plain english writing, giving presentations, time management, teaching techniques, writing grant proposals, digital photography, and other skills that may serve you as a student and beyond. Northwestern students have access to their full catalog.

ACCESSIBLENU

AccessibleNU[73] works to "provide students with disabilities a learning and community environment that affords them full participation, equal access, and reasonable accommodation." If you feel that you need accommodations in order to succeed in or fully engage with our program, you are encouraged to contact AccessibleNU. Please also feel free to discuss this with any course instructor, graduate director Megan Crowley-Matoka, or program coordinator Bryan Morrison. The program will work with you and AccessibleNU to determine what we can do to accommodate your needs.

COMPUTERS FOR SPECIALIZED TASKS

The Galter Library provides computers available for student use, some of which are set up with specialized software. Students working on projects that involve design work may appreciate that many of the computers there are set up to run Adobe Creative Suite. Students engaged in quantitative research may want to use the computers equipped with specialized analytical, statistical and visualization software[74]. Additionally, data-related

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[72] https://www.northwestern.edu/hr/workplace-learning/lynda/
[73] https://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu/
[74] https://galter.northwestern.edu/About%20Us/software-on-library-computers

trainings and consultations on tools for data storage, sharing, visualization, and more are available[75].

TGS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Graduate School website includes a listing of professional development opportunities[76] available to its students, which can be filtered by skill category (e.g., teaching, research skills, leadership, etc.), campus location, and more. Students are encouraged to check the listing and take advantage of any interesting or potentially helpful opportunities.

TGS CO-SPONSORSHIP GRANT

The Graduate School offers funding[77] to students to develop or arrange academic, professional development, or community-building events. The funding—up to $500—can be used for paying an outside speaker, creating educational materials, and more. The expectation is that this opportunity will be open to graduate students beyond one individual program. All active students in The Graduate School are eligible to apply. If you have an idea for such an activity or identify a need for professional development, you are also encouraged to discuss this with MH&B faculty or staff.

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[75] https://www.it.northwestern.edu/departments/it-services-support/research/training-consultation/

[76] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/professional-development/opportunities.html

[77] https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/tgs-co-sponsorship-grant.html

ACCESS TO CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago

Northwestern students receive free admission to the MCA galleries anytime the museum is open to the public. Just present your WildCard at the ticket counter. Bonus: go on a Tuesday during the warmer months and visit the farmer's market on their plaza.

Block Museum of Art

The Block Museum is an art museum on the university's Evanston campus. Admission to its exhibitions[78] and film screenings[79] are free.

Others

Discounted admission for students is available at:

- the Art Institute of Chicago[80]
- DuSable Museum of African American History[81]
- Chicago History Museum[82] (for city of Chicago residents)
- the International Museum of Surgical Science[83]
- the Field Museum[84]
- Steppenwolf Theatre Company[85]

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78 https://www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/view/exhibitions/
79 https://www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/view/cinema/
80 https://artic.edu/visit/admission-information
81 https://www.dusablemuseum.org/visitor/
82 https://www.chicagohistory.org/visit/
83 https://imss.org/plan-your-visit/
84 https://www.fieldmuseum.org/visit
85 https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/steppenwolf-theatre-company.html

- the Gene Siskel Film Center[86].

NEWSPAPERS

Current content from the Chicago Tribune, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post are available through the Northwestern Library[87]. Additionally, Northwestern students are eligible for free full online membership to the Wall Street Journal,[88] and discounted full online membership ($1 weekly rate) to the New York Times[89].

Student Discounts

In addition to the institutions listed above, many local businesses offer discounted rates to students who present a Northwestern WildCard. A full list is available online[90]. Some highlights include:

- Divvy Bike Share[91]
- Zipcar[92]
- Megabus[93]
- J. Crew[94]
- Timberland[95]

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[86] https://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/tickets
[87] https://libguides.northwestern.edu/quicknews
[88] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/wall-street-journal.html
[89] https://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/edu/lp8LQFK.html
[90] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/list/
[91] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/divvy-bikes.html
[92] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/zipcar.html
[93] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/megabus.html
[94] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/jcrew.html
[95] https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/timberland.html

- Quartet Digital Printing[96]
- Dollop Coffee on Ohio St[97]
- Indian Garden[98]

And Maybe A Few More

Additional resources and services may also be found on the Graduate School's website[99]

96 https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/quartet.html
97 https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/dollop-coffee-tea.html
98 https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/services/businesses/indian-garden.html
99 https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/

Appendices

Appendix 1: Important Forms

Application for degree

Informs The Graduate School that you plan to graduate in the coming quarter

→ GSTS: https://gsts.northwestern.edu/site/login

(*TGS Forms* tab » *Create New Form* » *Application for Degree*)

Application for Leave of Absence

Requests a leave of one to four quarters from The Graduate School

→ GSTS: https://gsts.northwestern.edu/site/login

(*TGS Forms* tab » *Create New Form* » *Petition for Absence*)

Application for Readmission

Requests readmission to TGS after your student status has lapsed due to nonenrollment (More information in the Continuous Registration section)

→ Online: https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/readmission.html

Thesis Proposal Form

Informs the program of your intention to write a Master's thesis instead of the comprehensive essay exam as your capstone project. You will be required to provided details on your project's topic and structure, and on your committee members. Thesis advisors will not review drafts until this form is approved. (More information in the Capstone Project section)

→ Online: https://www.bioethics.northwestern.edu/docs/thesis-proposal-form.pdf

Appendix 2: Technologies and Resources for Tech Support

CAESAR

Course registration, viewing account and paying bills, updating personal information

→ https://www.northwestern.edu/ses/students/index.html

Canvas

Course management system; access to class readings and syllabus

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=1469

Email

Your personal email through Northwestern; the primary contact method for most students

→ https://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/it/services/messaging-calendaring-and-collaboration/index.html

Graduate Student Tracking System (GSTS)

Track graduate student progress and many elements of graduate student activity

→ https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/graduate-student-tracking-system-gsts.html

NetID and password

Allows you to sign in to all of the above Northwestern technologies

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=99

OneDrive

Service that allows you to store, share, and sync 5TB of files

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=222

Virtual Private Network (VPN)

Allows you to connect from off-campus to secured Northwestern networks, like the library's electronic journals (not necessary for the above technologies)

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=50

WiFi

Wireless internet connection available on Northwestern's Chicago and Evanston campuses

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=1851

Zoom

Participate remotely in lectures, classes, tutorials, and meetings (when available)

→ https://services.northwestern.edu/TDClient/30/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=1837

Appendix 3: Feedback Is Encouraged

We will update the MA Handbook at the beginning of each academic year, and as needed throughout the year. (Check the back cover to see when your copy was last updated.) We invite you to provide feedback on the handbook in order to improve it. If you...

- think a topic needs more clarification,
- know of a resource for students that wasn't included,
- think of another topic that we missed,
- found any broken internet links or other errors,
- have other suggestions on how to make it more helpful,

please send an email to Bryan Morrison (bryan-morrison@northwestern.edu).

Thank you and good luck in the coming year!

Did you know...

that you are responsible for your registration and progress in the program? (pg 74)

that you cannot register for courses if you have an unpaid tuition balance? (pg 75)

that you must complete the program within five years? (pg 79)

that you must register for something every quarter even if you're not taking a class? (pg 76)

that a guide is enclosed to monitor your progress in the program? (pg 30)

Content updated September 14, 2023