

Northwestern University

# Master of Science in Health Professions Education

Official Guide to Graduate Study

Updated April 2025

Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

It is the student's responsibility to comply with these regulations and deadlines, and those of The Graduate School. Refer to both regularly and, when in doubt, ask the Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Program Administrator.

It is also the student's responsibility to see that their Department file is up to date. Both the Department and The Graduate School should have a current mailing address on file. All communication with the Department and TGS should be made with a compliant email address: xx@northwestern.edu. Students should not use a xx@u.northwestern.edu or any Google, Firefox, etc. Domains.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction to the Program</b>	5
Graduate Program Overview	6
Graduate Program Mission Statement	6
Graduate Program Objectives	6
Feinberg Safe and Healthy Learning Environment	6
Schools and Entities within Northwestern	7
Nondiscrimination Statement	7
MS-HPE Contact Information	9
<b>MS-HPE Courses Overview</b>	13
MS-HPE Core Courses	14
In-Person Intensive Residencies	17
<b>MS Progress Overview</b>	19
MS-HPE Milestones Checklist	19
<b>Capstone Requirements</b>	20
<b>Capstone Overview</b>	22
Capstone Checklist	24
Capstone Process	25
Capstone Mentors	26
<b>Graduation and Becoming MS-HPE Alumni</b>	27
Celebrating Your Graduation	29
<b>Program and University Expectations</b>	30
Confidentiality	33
Communication with Program	33
Class and Meeting Spaces	34
Provide Feedback	34
<b>Enrollment and TGS Requirements</b>	35
Course Units	36
Registering for Classes	36
Holds	36
Continuous Registration	37
Grades and Incompletes	37
Academic Standing and Probation	38
Master's Completion Time Limit	38
Leaves of Absence	39
<b>Student Finances</b>	40
Tuition	41
Financial Aid and Loans	41
Viewing Your Account and Making Payments	41
<b>Resources Available to Students</b>	43
Health and Wellness Resources	44
Student Life	45
Academic Support and Supplemental Learning	46



# Introduction to the Program

We're excited to have you as a student in the Master of Science in Health Professions Education program. Teaching is an integral activity in academic medicine, and many health care providers are drawn to education. However, few are given instruction in learning theory or teaching techniques that allow them to be effective medical educators. Even more importantly, educational scholarship is rarely mentored and developed as visibly as clinical research. The past several years has seen massive changes in education across all levels. Medical educators everywhere are recognizing the need for flexibility and adaptation to changing environments and learners' needs. As we evolve our thinking about curriculum delivery and assessment (accelerated by the COVID pandemic), educators must be aware of and comfortable with education technology and its applications. Additionally, the need for content and expertise on achieving equity in health professions education has never been higher.

This master's program will give you the tools you need to develop as an effective teacher and scholar. This handbook will guide you through the program and should answer most of the questions you have. We encourage you to review the **Northwestern University Student Handbook** as well as The Graduate School's **Academic Policies and Procedures** to remain in compliance with the program and understand your rights and responsibilities as a Northwestern student.

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,

Karen A Mangold, MD, MEd  
Program Director, MS-HPE  
karen-mangold@northwestern.edu

Michelle L Fletcher, MD  
Associate Program Director, MS-HPE  
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# Graduate Program Overview

The Master of Science in Health Professions Education Graduate Program was started in 2023 to provide a rigorous master's level education in learning theory, educational technology, and scholarship in health professions education. Our students are trained health professionals with a desire to continue their growth in education. Our graduate faculty are diverse in interest and expertise; they include scholars in learning theory, technology, assessment, scholarship, curriculum development, and health equity. Many of them teach in Feinberg's health professions curriculum and/or serve in vital leadership roles.

## Graduate Program Mission Statement

The mission of this program is to train health professions educators to be evidence-based teachers who conduct educational scholarship that molds the future of the field.

The goal of this program is to train health care practitioners on best educational practices and educational scholarship to further their teaching and careers as clinician educators. Common threads of health equity, educational technology, and scholarship will guide the curriculum of this program.

## Graduate Program Objectives

Through the completion of this Master's program, graduates of this program will:

1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of educational theories, principles, and practices applicable to health professions education.
2. Acquire the necessary tools to be outstanding educators and advance their careers as scholars, teachers, and researchers in classroom and clinical settings.
3. Cultivate skills in curriculum design, educational research, and assessment techniques tailored to health professions education learners.
4. Gain expertise in utilizing innovative educational technologies and simulation-based learning tools for health professions instruction.
5. Explore the role of equity in health professions education and scholarship.

## Feinberg Safe and Healthy Learning

# Environment

The **Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine** is committed to the principle that educational relationships should be one of mutual respect between teacher and learner or teacher and teacher. Because the school trains individuals who are entrusted with the lives and well-being of others, we have unique responsibilities to ensure that students learn as members of a community of scholars in an environment that is conducive to learning. Feinberg wants to encourage students to bring attention to any breach or perceived breach of the Safe and Healthy Learning Environment. The school also **offers an ombudsperson** for student support.

## Schools and Entities within Northwestern

Multiple schools exist within Northwestern University and function somewhat independently of one another. The Master of Science in Health Professions Education Graduate Program is part of the Feinberg School of Medicine. Most of our core graduate faculty have Feinberg appointments and teach Feinberg health professions students.

Despite the graduate program's physical and organizational location within Feinberg School of Medicine, The Graduate School of Northwestern is responsible for conferring your degree. This relationship with The Graduate School means that the MS program and its students get access to TGS resources and are subject to its **policies**.

## Nondiscrimination Statement

Northwestern University prohibits discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, caste, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, height, weight, or any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance or any other classification protected by law in the matters of admissions, employment, housing or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended in 2008; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and any other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or ordinances that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

The University has designated the Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to coordinate the University's compliance with federal and state civil rights laws

regarding protected characteristics, including Title IX and those other laws and regulations references above.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions with respect to nondiscrimination or reasonable accommodations should be directed to Northwestern's Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60201.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions with respect to sexual misconduct or sexual harassment should be directed to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60201, (847) 467-6165.

**[TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu)**.

A person may also file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting the **[Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights website](#)** or calling 800-421-3481.



# MS-HPE Contact Information

**Karen Mangold, MD, MEd** is the Program Director and Graduate Program Director for the Master of Science in Health Professions Education program.

**Michelle Fletcher, MD** is the Associate Program Director for the MS-HPE program.

For course specific questions, contact the appropriate **Course Director**.

For any general questions, contact the **MS-HPE email address**.

Another important contact throughout your duration in the program will be your capstone mentor. More information on their role can be found in the **Capstone Mentor section** of this handbook.

# Core Graduate Faculty

**Karen A Mangold, MD, MEd**

*Program Director*

Associate Professor of Pediatrics (Emergency Medicine) and Medical Education

**Michelle L Fletcher, MD**

*Associate Program Director*

Assistant Professor of Medicine (Hospital Medicine)

**Mark D Adler, MD**

*Course Director – Introduction to Education Research*

Professor of Pediatrics (Emergency Medicine) and Medical Education

**Robyn Ann Bockrath, MD, MEd**

*Course Director – Curriculum Development*

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics (Hospital-Based Medicine) and Medical Education

**Brigid M Dolan, MD, MEd**

*Course Director – Assessment*

Associate Professor of Medicine (General Internal Medicine) and Medical Education

**Patricia M Garcia, MD, MPH**

*Course Director – Learning Theory*

Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology (Maternal Fetal Medicine)  
and Medical Education

**Khalilah Latrece Gates, MD**

*Course Co-Director – Health Equity*

Assistant Dean of Medical Education

Associate Professor of Medicine (Pulmonary and Critical Care) and Medical Education

**Omari W Keeles, PhD, MS, MEd, MA, MPH**

*Course Co-Director – Health Equity*

Lecturer of Preventive Medicine (Public Health Practice)

**Rebecca Lipner, PhD**

*Course Director – Statistics*

Adjunct Lecturer of Medical Education

Senior Director of Assessment and Research, American Board of Internal Medicine

**David H Salzman, MD, MEd**

*Course Director – Educational Technology*

Vice Chair of Education, Department of Emergency Medicine

Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Medical Education

**Christine Wood, PhD**

*Course Director – Qualitative Research*

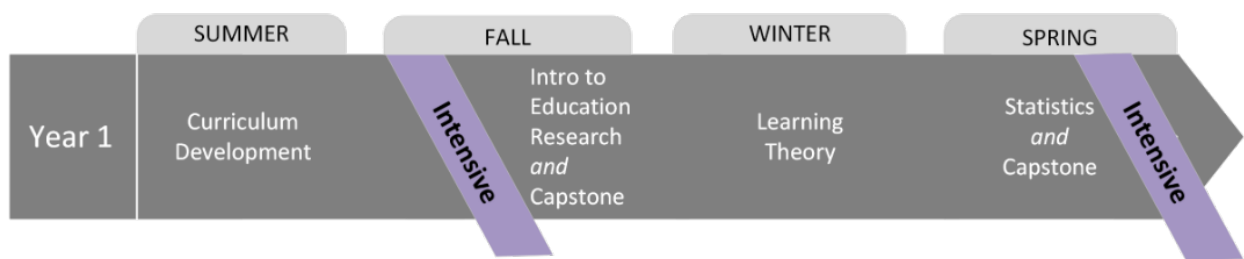
Research Assistant Professor of Medical Social Sciences



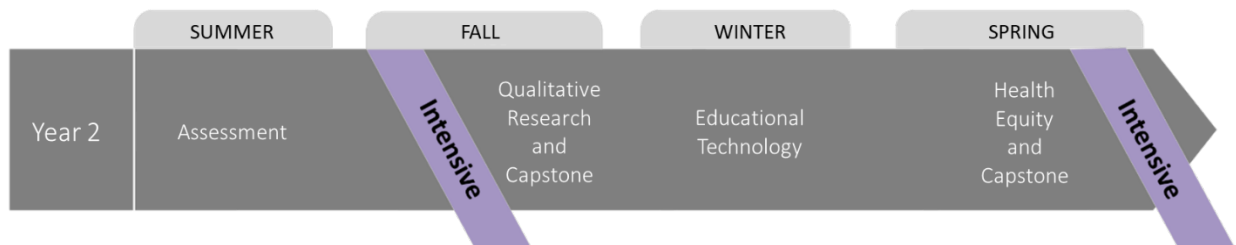
# MS-HPE Courses Overview

Our curriculum is designed to give students a broader and richer understanding of health professions education. Each of our core courses is taught by a professor who is an expert in that field. The courses are taught in sequence and build upon information learned in the previous course.

## *Year 1 Course Sequence:*



## *Year 2 Course Sequence:*



# MS-HPE Core Courses

## **HLTH\_PRF 401-1 | Curriculum Development**

**Taught by:** Robyn Bockrath, MD, MEd.

This course will focus on the formal process of curriculum development. Students will explore the various stages of curriculum development: problem identification, needs assessment, learning objectives, educational strategies, implementation, and evaluation. Much of the course will cover the standard medical education curriculum development process developed by Kern and Thomas (Thomas PA, Kern DE et al. *Curriculum Development for Medical Education: A Six-Step Approach*. 3rd ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press). Alternative approaches, including instructional design models, will also be presented. Students will work with peers to develop a curriculum of their choosing throughout the course, receiving feedback from classmates and their instructors. The course will culminate in a final presentation of their curriculum.

## **HLTH\_PRF 410-1 | Introduction to Education Research**

**Taught by:** Mark Adler, MD

Health professionals are usually familiar with clinical research early in their professional education, but they are rarely exposed to educational research. This course will introduce the field of educational research, demonstrating how it is similar and where it is different from clinical research. The course will cover both qualitative and quantitative educational research design (as well as mixed methods) and discuss various levels of assessment outcomes. Unique aspects of medical educational research will be covered, including ethics, clinical outcomes, and quality improvement educational interventions.

## **HLTH\_PRF 420-1 | Learning Theory**

**Taught by:** Patricia M Garcia, MD, MPH

This course will focus largely on the field of general education and adult learning theory. Learning theory will be presented, and students will be challenged to apply this to the unique environment of healthcare education. Special attention will be given to best instructional practices drawing upon educational theory and research.

## **HLTH\_PRF 430-1 | Statistics**

**Taught by:** Rebecca Lipner, PhD

This course will be an introduction to the statistical methods required for educational research. Students will have access to a statistical software program (to be determined by faculty) and do weekly assignments in this program to become familiar with it. Statistical concepts that will be covered include descriptive statistics, probability, hypothesis tests, regression models and graphical presentations of data.

### **HLTH\_PRF 440-1 | Assessment**

**Taught by:** Brigid M Dolan, MD, MEd

Health professionals are exposed to extensive testing and assessments for their professional studies, but they rarely are introduced to the theory and methods behind these. Students will spend time exploring various ways of assessing and testing learners for this course.

They will receive an overview in testing theory, psychometrics, generalizability theory and standard setting. Special attention will be given to validity and how this applies both to assessing health professional students and to educational research. The course will also explore the current movement in health fields towards competency-based assessment.

### **HLTH\_PRF 450-1 | Qualitative Research**

**Taught by:** Christine Wood, PhD

The nature of the educational environment in the health professions makes qualitative research methods an ideal approach for many research questions. This course will cover when qualitative or mixed methods approaches are appropriate. Various qualitative approaches, including ethnography, grounded theory, and phenomenology will be presented. Common methods used in health professions research will be reviewed, including focus groups, interviews, and open-ended survey questions. Students will work throughout the course to develop and explore a research question using qualitative methods. The course will culminate with them presenting their project and results to their classmates.

### **HLTH\_PRF 460-1 | Educational Technology**

**Taught by:** David H Salzman, MD, MEd

The educational environment is rapidly changing as technology advances, and as educators we must adapt to this advancing landscape for learning. This course will explore a range of education technologies tailored specifically to the healthcare field which allow educators to extend their teaching and enhance the students' learning. The course will cover technology that enhances learning in various educational settings, including in-person, hybrid or hyflex, and online (both synchronous and asynchronous). Participants will examine the applications of AR, VR, and simulation-based learning in healthcare education. The course will include discussion to understand AI's applications in health professions education, empowering them to incorporate cutting-edge AI technologies into their teaching. Attention will be given to how educational technology can be applied using learning theory and can enhance curriculum development. Participants will engage in hands-on activities, case studies, and discussions to apply their learning in real-world contexts and equip learners with the skills necessary to improve their educational programs.

### **HLTH\_PRF 470-1 | Health Equity**

**Taught by:** Khalilah Latrece Gates, MD and Omari W Keeles, PhD, MS, MEd, MA, MPH

This course offers health professionals a comprehensive exploration of health equity. The course aims to equip students planning careers as practitioners, healthcare administrators, or researchers

with essential knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of equity in contemporary healthcare settings. Through critical discourse, evidence-based insights, and practical applications, students will gain a deep understanding of challenges and opportunities, fostering their abilities to effect transformative change and promote equitable healthcare access, culturally competent care, and patient-centered practices. By cultivating adeptness in these areas, students will emerge as empowered advocates and change agents dedicated to advancing health equity principles within their respective healthcare roles.



# In-Person Intensive Residencies

The MS-HPE program includes four in-person intensive residencies. The in-person sessions will take place over the course of four consecutive days: Thursday – Sunday. Students must attend the intensive residencies in their entirety. Students will be required to arrange and book their own travel and lodging for the intensive weekends; tuition does not cover any travel or other expenses incurred during the intensive weekends. For an overview of the intensive weekends, [please click here](#).

It is a requirement to attend the entirety of all four intensives in person. Intensive coursework is tied to the capstone course requirement and non-attendance will result in an incomplete grade for the capstone course during the associated quarter of enrollment. In extreme situations where a student must be absent from an intensive weekend, they must meet with the Program Director and their capstone mentor to determine a course of action for extending their time in the program to complete a missed intensive.

## **Intensive 1 | Planning Stage – Drawing up the Blueprints**

*Fall of First Year*

During the first intensive, students will build upon their Summer Quarter coursework and continue to develop their skills in curriculum development. In-person instruction from Course Director Robyn Bockrath, MD, MEd will allow students to present their work in progress to their colleagues and program faculty. This intensive will include a more detailed orientation to the MS-HPE program and one-on-one meetings with program leadership. At the end of this intensive, students will be matched with their capstone mentor.

## **Intensive 2 | Manufacturing – Building the Pieces**

*Spring of First Year*

In the second intensive, students will focus on the building blocks to becoming outstanding educators that are not included in the eight core courses. This will include a workshop on implementation science, where students will learn to disseminate evidence-based educational practices. Students will also delve into program evaluation with Celia O'Brien, PhD and gain a deeper understanding of how to set program goals and intentions when evaluating curriculum.

## **Intensive 3 | Assembly – Connecting the Learning**

*Fall of Second Year*

During the third intensive, students will participate in the Northwestern University **Designing and Implementing Simulation-Based Mastery Learning Curricula**. The course gives participants from all health professions opportunities to acquire fundamental mastery learning skills and knowledge. This combination of skills and knowledge prepares learners to design, implement, and evaluate mastery learning health professions curricula focused on at least three key domains: Resuscitation, Procedural skills, and Communication skills. Additionally, during this intensive, students will spend time developing an educator portfolio with Program

Director Karen Mangold, MD, MEd and working with their Capstone Mentors on their research projects.

**Intensive 4 | Launch – Making Education a Career**

*Spring of Second Year*

The final in-person intensive will culminate in student presentations of their capstone projects. Students will have final meetings with their capstone mentors and present their work to their cohort through oral presentations, followed by a graduation poster session in conjunction with the Health Professions Educators Certificate graduates. The weekend will end in a program graduation brunch.

**LOCATION**

All events and learning sessions during intensive weekends are held in person on the Chicago Campus of Northwestern University.

# MS Progress Overview

Students are expected to monitor their own progress and ensure that they remain in good academic standing and that their capstone project is on track for completion during the Spring quarter of their second year. The program conducts an annual progress review for each student and will send an official message about their progress before their second year begins.

The program requires that students meet with their assigned capstone mentor at least twice per academic quarter to discuss the capstone project.

## MS-HPE Milestones Checklist

Year/Quarter	Course	Enrolled in Course	All Work Submitted	Final Grade on Transcript
Year 1 – Summer Quarter	HLTH_PRF 401-1: Curriculum Development (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 1 – Fall Quarter	HLTH_PRF 410-1: Introduction to Education Research (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 1 – Fall Quarter	HLTH_PRF 510-1: Independent Study, Capstone (.5 units)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	...
Year 1 – Winter Quarter	HLTH_PRF 420-1: Learning Theory (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 1 – Spring Quarter	HLTH_PRF 430-1: Statistics (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 1 – Spring Quarter	HLTH_PRF 510-1: Independent Study, Capstone (.5 units)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	...
Year 2 – Summer Quarter	HLTH_PRF 440-1: Assessment (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2 – Fall Quarter	HLTH_PRF 450-1: Qualitative Research (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2 – Fall Quarter	HLTH_PRF 510-1: Independent Study, Capstone (.5 units)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	...
Year 2 – Winter Quarter	HLTH_PRF 460-1: Educational Technology (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2 – Spring Quarter	HLTH_PRF 470-1: Health Equity (1 unit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2 – Spring Quarter	HLTH_PRF 510-1: Independent Study, Capstone (.5 units)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	...

*A total of ten MHPE units are required to graduate.*

• *The capstone units will coincide with another course during 4 distinct periods of the program. Enrollment in the capstone course is required for all students.*

# **Capstone Requirements**

The final requirement of the MS in Health Professions Education program is a capstone project, which challenges students to analyze topics in health professions education and to employ the field's multiple disciplines in their analysis. The capstone is a writing project intended to produce a knowledgeable survey of the current thinking about a topic in the field. All MS-HPE students are required to complete the capstone project.

The Capstone Project serves as a culminating experience and summative product of students' experiences in the MS-HPE program. It provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their research development, data gathering and management, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination skills. Students spend their first several quarters in the program developing an original and independent research proposal. Ultimately, the final product must be a well-reviewed, polished piece of academic writing that can be turned into a published article.

Students will be mentored by an appointed capstone mentor who works with them through the two-year program to develop, implement, and write their Capstone project. The Capstone will culminate in a formal presentation of the project to fellow students and faculty prior to graduation. The final committee who will review and sign-off on the Capstone project includes the Program Director, the appointed capstone mentor, and one additional advisor. This final advisor may be another member of the faculty in the MS-HPE program or a mentor from the student's home institution.

The Capstone is reflected on your transcript as four enrolled courses of 0.5 units of HLTH\_PRF 510-1. Students are required to submit the Written Capstone Project Proposal Form by the Fall Quarter of their first year at the end of their first Capstone course.

# Capstone Overview

The goal of the MS-HPE capstone is to demonstrate the student's ability to apply various disciplinary perspectives in the analysis of a topic in health professions education. The focus of the project should be on primary research. All capstone projects must be presented during the final in-person intensive during a student's second Spring Quarter in the program. An assigned capstone mentor will guide you through the research and writing process and help prepare you for the presentation.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

### *Topic*

An acceptable capstone project must display mastery of a topic within health professions education. The project must consist of more than a new curriculum, although it could be studying outcomes for a curriculum, and must be more substantial than a literature review.

### *Structure and Style*

All MS-HPE theses must have sound educational research design and an original research concept. The project should be stylized in a way that is suitable for publication in a health professions education journal or health professions clinical journal that will publish educational research.

### *Length*

There is no length requirement for the capstone project. The final project should follow the length requirement for publication in a health professions journal in the writer's field of study.

### *Formatting*

Please use the guidelines for manuscript preparation as outlined by any of the bibliographic styles that conforms to the health professions education journals of a student's field of study. Projects should 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.

## **WRITING RESOURCES**

Northwestern 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**.

## **PROCESS**

Students should refer to the capstone project checklist throughout their time in the program. These steps are expected to be completed in order. Please read through this entire section before beginning the capstone project, and refer to it as you progress, checking off steps as you complete them.

# Capstone Checklist

Below are tasks to keep students on track as they complete their Capstone project. Deadlines for specific tasks should be discussed and agreed upon with the Capstone mentor.

Task	Completed
Receive capstone mentor assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify 3 <sup>rd</sup> capstone committee member.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit Capstone Project Proposal Form to Department.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit completed IRB materials and confirmation of approved IRB status.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit first draft of capstone project to mentor.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit Application for Degree form through GSTS.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Present finished capstone project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit completed capstone to Department.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Capstone Deadlines

### By Month/Year

Dec Year 1	Submit capstone project proposal to MS-HPE program.
Feb Year 2	Submit application for a degree through GSTS.
Apr Year 2	Final draft of thesis submitted to committee <i>(3 weeks before TGS deadline; must be at least 2 weeks before final intensive residency)</i>
May Year 2	Present capstone project <i>(1 week before TGS deadline)</i>
May Year 2	TGS Master's Completion deadline



# Capstone Process

## *Submit Capstone Project Proposal Form*

Once you've chosen a topic and assembled a committee, submit a Written Capstone Project Proposal Form to **program administration**.

## *Enroll in capstone course*

Students will enroll in the capstone course during four quarters of the program in addition to their enrollment in a core course. The capstone course is associated with one half unit of enrollment. The enrollment code for this half unit is HLTH\_PRF 510-1. Like in other units, you may receive an incomplete "Y" grade until you've satisfied the requirements.

## *Submit Application for Degree form*

All students should graduate in the Spring Quarter of their second year in the program. Prior to graduation, students must submit an Application for Degree form. This quick online form, submitted through **GSTS**, notifies The Graduate School that you plan to graduate that quarter.

## *Successfully present capstone*

The fourth and final in-person intensive residency of the program will focus on capstone presentations from the entire graduating cohort. Presentations should follow the following format:

- **Presentation** including a summary of the project, a discussion of the content, and a discussion of how this capstone project incorporates elements of their master's education (about 20 minutes)
- **Questions** from committee members and their cohort (about 10 minutes)

Following the presentation, 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.

Students who receive a fail must meet with the Program Director and are allowed the opportunity to reattempt the thesis presentation.

## *Send final draft to program*

The last step in the thesis process is to email your committee-approved final draft and a Master's Completion Form to The Graduate School. The upcoming **Graduation and Becoming MS-HPE Alumni** section will outline further tasks and what to expect as you prepare to leave Northwestern.

# Capstone Mentors

The MS-HPE program assigns each student a faculty mentor. Faculty mentors will be introduced and assigned at the end of the first in-person intensive residency at the end of the Summer Quarter of the first year.

Students are required to meet with their capstone mentor at least twice per academic quarter and more frequently when enrolled in the capstone course. Capstone mentors will track student meeting frequency and if they do not meet the required threshold, students will receive an incomplete for the quarter they are enrolled in the capstone course. These meetings allow students to raise any questions or concerns about the program, bounce tutorial or thesis ideas off their advisor, ask for advice on professional development, and more.

Please feel free to also contact the **Program Director** or **program administration** with questions or concerns about capstone mentor assignments or this process.

# Capstone Project Committee

Capstone project will be developed under the guidance of a committee. The committee should be comprised of the Director of the Graduate Program, Karen Mangold, the assigned Capstone Mentor, and one additional reader. The additional reader can be an external mentor from their home institution or a course director from the MS-HPE program. Members of the committee should plan to attend the final capstone project presentation.

# **Graduation and Becoming MS-HPE 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:

## 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** to ensure that they have your updated address. The Graduate School mails diplomas one to two months after the degree has been awarded. More specific timeframes can be found [on their website](#).

## 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 "Managing your @u.northwestern.edu (or other Google G Suite) account after graduation" [support page](#) for further details.

## SHARE A SECOND EMAIL ADDRESS

If you don't plan to keep or regularly check your Northwestern email address, please provide us with an alternate email address. We occasionally email all former students with updates and announcements on major conferences we host. We will not include you in regular announcements, unless you request that we do so.

## 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 [The Graduate School Master's Exit Survey](#) and participate in a brief exit interview with the program (which can be done in person or via Zoom).

# Celebrating Your Graduation

Northwestern University awards degrees 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, and MS-HPE students are welcome to attend and participate. The hooding ceremony at Commencement is reserved for terminal degree (PhD and MFA) students.

The MS-HPE program holds a graduation event each spring to honor that year's graduates during the final in-person intensive. Faculty, current students, and alumni get together to toast the cohort of MS-HPE graduates.

Graduates are encouraged to bring loved ones to the celebratory graduation events during the spring intensive of their final year.

# **Program and University Expectations**

# 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 **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 of 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 (including selling) class materials to websites that sell or otherwise share such materials – including homework, exams and exam solutions, submitted papers or projects, as well as original course materials (for example, note packets, power point decks, etc.). In addition to violating Northwestern's policies on academic integrity, such conduct may also violate University policies related to copyright protection.
- Falsification of Records and Official Documents: altering documents affecting academic records; forging signatures of authorization or falsifying information on an official academic document, grade report, letter of permission, petition, drop/add form, ID card, or any other official University document.
- Unauthorized Access to computerized academic or administrative records or systems: viewing or altering computer records, modifying computer programs or systems,



releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access, or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems or information.

## Northwestern University Guidance on the Use of Generative AI

Generative AI offers the potential for new capabilities in research, education, and productivity. Expectedly, use of tools and services, including OpenAI's ChatGPT, Microsoft's Bing Chat, and Google's Bard, is growing within higher education and across Northwestern University. Understanding what to look for when adopting these tools is key to ensuring the intended use is met while protecting University data. For more information on Northwestern's AI Guidance, visit the [Northwestern Information Technology website](#).

Instructors permitting the use of GAI tools will clearly communicate their expectations for attribution and specific citation formats from the guide(s) they prefer. Failure to properly attribute GAI tools may violate the University's academic integrity policy:

- Cheating: Allowing another person or resource (including, but not limited to, generative artificial intelligence) to do one's work and submitting that work under one's own name without proper attribution.
- Plagiarism: Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one's own.

## Confidentiality

Patient and student information is sometimes shared for teaching purposes in MS 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 extends beyond the classroom. While students/learners do not have the same federal legal protections as patients do, we ask that all information shared in the program is done so in a sensitive way and information shared by students maintains confidentiality outside of the program.

## Communication with Program

The program and The Graduate School almost always use email to send announcements and to communicate with individual students. All students will be assigned an official University email address. The University has the right to send official communications to students by email and expects that students will receive and read email in a timely fashion. 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. This policy will ensure that all students can comply with course requirements communicated to them by email from their course instructors.

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** or this handbook. If you are still unable to find the necessary contact information, email [mshpe@northwestern.edu](mailto:mshpe@northwestern.edu).

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

## Class and Meeting Spaces

During in-person intensive residencies, please remember that spaces are shared with other programs. Students are expected to respect spaces and should always clean up after themselves.

## 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. This program also conducts exit surveys upon completion.

# **Enrollment and TGS Requirements**

# Course Units

Course units are used to measure your course load and your progress in the program and are generally of greater importance than the number of courses taken. The eight core MS-HPE courses are all one unit, and each capstone (HLTH\_PRF 510-1) is one-half unit. These comprise the ten units required for completing the degree.

Tuition charges are 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. All students in the MS-HPE program are considered part-time. Tuition is calculated differently for full-time versus part-time students.

# Registering for Classes

MS-HPE administrators will register you for your courses. Course instructors will receive class rosters before the first class meeting of the quarter 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**. Students intending to withdraw from or drop a course must meet with the Program Director prior to this action. After receiving approval, students can withdraw from the course themselves.

Registration can be verified online via **CAESAR**, which is generally easy to use. It offers a list of course offerings, which you can filter by course subject (our course subject is "HLTH\_PRF"). 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 University's online directory. The CAESAR website maintains an online **help section** for students.

# Holds

You will be prevented from registering if you have a hold on your account. The most common reason you would receive a hold is if you haven't paid your balance from the previous quarter. 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 (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 **program administration**.

## 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 capstone project acceptance.

If you are taking time off from the program and are not eligible for medical or parental leave, you may request a **general leave of absence**. Students must submit the “Petition for Absence” form via TGS Forms in **GSTS**. General leaves of absence must be approved by the program director as well as The Graduate School. Refer to the course withdrawal deadline as published in the University’s [academic calendar](#). You may not withdraw after the due date has been reached for the final assessment. General leave is approved for a minimum of one quarter and can be extended for a maximum of one year.

Per **TGS Policy**, degree-seeking students who miss one or more quarters of registration (excluding summer), who fail to request return after an approved period of leave of absence, or who request to withdraw from their program, will be discontinued from The Graduate School (TGS). Those who are discontinued are not enrolled and are not considered active students. Discontinued students must apply for readmission and are subject to a readmission fee.

## Grades and Incompletes

MS-HPE courses are evaluated using quality 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 point average of 3.0 (B-average) or above to remain in good standing in the program and The Graduate School (TGS). Students with below a 3.0 average will receive a formal letter and will be placed on probation by TGS. They will be required to meet with their Capstone Mentors to discuss progress forward. Students have a two (2) month probationary period to raise their grade point average above 3.0. If a student fails to raise the grade point average, they will be dismissed from the program and The Graduate School.

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 states that students should complete the

incomplete course requirements within one calendar year for a class in which a Y grade has been assigned. Outstanding incomplete grades may lead to probation and/or may prevent graduation. Students cannot graduate with Y grades on their transcript; however, the grades can be changed after one year with the permission of the program director.

## Academic Standing and Probation

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

- the student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 (a "B" average).
- the student has more than three incomplete (Y or X) grades
- the student fails to complete all the degree requirements within the five-year maximum time to degree set by TGS.

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**.

In addition, a student will be on academic probation by the MS-HPE Graduate Program if *all* the following apply:

- the student is not enrolled in any MS-HPE 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.

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

## 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. Students who have not achieved The Graduate School's minimum GPA requirement or exceeded The Graduate School's milestones or degree deadlines and do not remediate within the two-quarter probationary period may petition The Graduate School for a one-time extension of the probation period. 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 Finance 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.”

Your [tuition and fee rates](#) are set annually by the University 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).

## *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**—the fifth day of classes of the quarter.

# Financial Aid and Loans

The MS-HPE graduate program does not offer financial aid. Eligibility is based on financial need alone, not on merit. The university does not offer financial aid toward master’s degrees. Students are encouraged to seek outside funding. The Student Finance website offers more information on [student loans](#) and how they are distributed.

Some students receive tuition reimbursement through their employers; employed students should check with their employers about the availability of tuition benefits.

# Viewing Your Account and Making Payments

You can access and pay your bills via **CAESAR**. The **Student Financial Services website** offers guides on how to check your account, pay your balance, and other finance-related tasks.

# Health Insurance

If you are a degree-seeking Northwestern graduate student registered for classes (or TGS 512), 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**. **Optional** [dental and vision plans](#) are available to students as well.

# **Resources Available to Students**

# Health and Wellness Resources

## HEALTH SERVICES

The University maintains a health service for students on the Evanston campus at Searle Hall, 633 Emerson Street and for students on the Chicago campus at the Northwestern Medical Faculty Foundation, 675. N. St. Clair St., Suite 18-200. For more information visit **The Graduate School website** and the **Northwestern Student Health Insurance webpage**. Eligibility and further details are **available online**.

## COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Northwestern's **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** 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 [\*Let's Talk\*](#). This program is free, requires no appointment, and meets regularly on both campuses. While it 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. Additionally, Northwestern University has partnered with [TimelyCare](#) which offers 24/7 access to select support and expands the options available to students seeking mental health resources.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT, SLEEP, AND MINDFULNESS

Northwestern's Counseling and Psychological Services **website** offers guides and tools for managing stress, getting a good night's sleep, and practicing mindfulness. **Drop-in meditation sessions** are offered weekly on the Chicago campus. Additionally, a few religious/spiritual spaces are available [on campus](#)

## FITNESS & RECREATION

Northwestern's fitness and recreation facilities are located on the Evanston campus. Chicago-based students are eligible to free use of **these facilities**, 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](#), 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).

# Student Life

## 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.

Many students may also want to take advantage of Chicago's **Divvy** bike share system, which makes thousands of bikes available for short-term use at hundreds of stations around Chicago. The *Transit* smartphone app is the best way to find Divvy stations and to plan a trip is using the CTA.

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](#).

## 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**) 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**), 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.

## 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](#).

# 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 branch is on Evanston campus.

The medical school's **Galter Health Sciences Library** 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.

All of the libraries' collections can be searched online through a **central system**. Many physical items are available for borrowing and those at other NU libraries can be sent to the Galter library for convenient pickup. 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). If you need a book found in none of these libraries, you can make an interlibrary loan request.

In addition to materials, the libraries can [support your research](#) with trainings, guides, and consultations. The university's subject librarians 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.

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

## THE WRITING PLACE

[The Writing Place](#) 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 the capstone project. Any students interested in improving their writing skills are encouraged to take advantage of this service. They also offer workshops 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

The Graduate School website includes a listing of [professional development opportunities](#) 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.

### ACCESSIBLENU

**AccessibleNU** 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 accommodation 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, program director Karen Mangold, or program administration. The program will work with you and AccessibleNU to determine what we can do to accommodate your needs.

### TGS CO-SPONSORSHIP GRANT

The Graduate School **offers funding** to students to develop or arrange academic, professional development, or community-building events. The funding—Up to \$500, not exceeding a total of 50% of the effort's overall budget 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 MS-HPE faculty or staff.