

Graduate Students

General Admission Requirements

Applicants for graduate admission at Northeastern Illinois University must:

1. Submit a completed application. Applying online (<https://apply.neiu.edu/apply/>) is the preferred and quickest way to apply. However, we will accept paper applications.
2. Pay a non-refundable application fee via the online application payment process. If submitting a paper application, the application fee can be in the form of a check, money order or bank draft payable to Northeastern Illinois University. If paid in cash at the Student Payment Services Office, the receipt should be attached with the application package.
3. Possess an undergraduate bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from a regionally-accredited college or university or recognized international college or university.
4. Provide current official transcripts from all schools attended. Transcripts and examination scores must be official and received in an envelope sealed by the sending institution or electronically via credential third-party transcript provider. Hand-carried transcripts will be considered official as long as they are delivered in the sealed envelope. Transcripts become the property of the University and cannot be released.
5. Meet the requirements of the specific program to which they are applying (see below).

Courses taken at colleges and universities outside of the United States must be evaluated by a member of NACES (<https://www.naces.org/members>) for equivalence of our undergraduate degree. A course-by-course evaluation is required. Three-year degrees from a college or university in a country that is a signed participant in the Bologna Process are eligible to be officially accepted as equivalent to a four-year U.S. degree. In addition to all required documented listed above, students who graduated with a three-year Bologna-compliant degree must submit the accompanying Diploma Supplement (DS).

Admission to a Degree Program

In addition to the general requirements listed above, application to a master's degree program requires the following additional materials:

1. Two letters of recommendation.
2. A two-page statement of goals and objectives.
3. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended for which the applicant enrolled in credit-earning courses. Transcripts from NEIU do NOT need to be submitted. It is also not necessary to re-submit any transcripts that have been submitted in a previous application to an NEIU graduate program, as long as no additional coursework was completed since the initial transcript was sent to NEIU.
4. Consult the application instructions for additional application requirements for specific degree programs. Some programs require applicants to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE general as well as the subject test) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Students applying to these programs must arrange to send the test scores to the Graduate Admissions Office at Northeastern Illinois University to avoid delay or denial of admission. The code for Northeastern Illinois University is 1090.

Admission to a master's degree program requires the following level of academic achievement:

1. Demonstrate a high level of scholastic ability as reflected by an undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 or better (4-point scale), though some programs require 3.00 or higher. All undergraduate coursework completed prior to the conferral of the bachelor's degree is computed in this average. Any previous graduate credit is also taken into appropriate consideration.
2. An average of at least B (3.0) in the undergraduate coursework that is the foundation for the master's program.
3. Satisfactory mastery of the program prerequisites.

Applicants must be in good disciplinary standing at schools previously attended. Applicants who are not in good disciplinary standing will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The final admission decision rests with the program faculty.

An undergraduate senior who meets all of the requirements for admission to the College and the specific degree program, and is within 9 semester hours of completing an undergraduate degree may be granted **Contingent Admission**. Prior to the start of classes in the term of admission, an applicant granted contingent admission must submit an official transcript showing conferral of the degree in order to start graduate coursework. Courses used to fulfill the undergraduate degree requirements will not apply to the graduate degree program of study.

Conditional and Provisional Admission

An applicant who does not meet all of the academic requirements for admission to a degree program may be admitted into one of the following two graduate admission categories upon the recommendation of the graduate program and the approval of the College of Graduate Studies and Research.

Conditional Admission: Applicants lacking mastery of certain, specific program prerequisites may be allowed to obtain that mastery by completing prerequisite coursework by a specified time or point in the graduate program as deemed appropriate by the graduate program. Such applicants will be granted admission and assigned to “conditional status.” Students in conditional status will be required to complete their prerequisite work early in their graduate program, in accordance with the sequence of courses recommended by their graduate program advisor. Failure to complete the prerequisite work by the time the student earns 12 credit hours of graduate-level work will result in a hold being placed on their ability to register for courses in all future terms until the completion of the prerequisite work. Registration holds may only be released for the upcoming semester upon a plan of prerequisite course completion agreed upon by the student and the graduate program advisor.

Provisional Admission: Applicants who do not meet the standard academic background expected for full admission to a degree program, may, in some cases, be granted admission to “provisional status” upon the recommendation of the graduate program and the approval of the College of Graduate Studies and Research. Admission to provisional status may result from an applicant having:

1. a degree from an institution for which academic credit equivalency cannot be established, or one that issues transcripts with ungraded academic records.
2. an undergraduate cumulative grade point average that is below 2.75.
3. an erratic undergraduate academic record.

Students admitted to provisional status must achieve a grade of B or better in all courses taken until the term of completion of the first 9 graduate-level credits in the program. Failure to meet this performance standard will result in dismissal from the program.

Students admitted to provisional status who also lack mastery of certain, specific program prerequisites may also be allowed to obtain that mastery by completing prerequisite coursework as described above. Such students will be subject to both expectations described above for students in provisional and conditional status.

Applicants must be in good disciplinary standing at schools previously attended. Applicants who are not in good disciplinary standing will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Notification of Admission

The Graduate Admissions Office will inform students in writing of the admissions decision. Students who are admitted should contact their program advisor within two weeks of receiving notification of admission, register for the courses they plan to take in their first term, and participate in orientation programs as specified by the college and/or program.

Since each graduate degree program has its own specific course requirements, it is imperative that the student assumes the responsibility for contacting the assigned advisor in the program. The letter of admission will identify the advisor. The student should contact the program advisor well in advance of any registration period, as detailed program advising cannot be done, and should not be expected, just prior to the start of classes.

International Students

International Students are required to follow all admissions processes and fulfill all of the admissions requirements noted above. Additionally, they must demonstrate that they meet eligibility requirements for F-1 visa status and English language proficiency.

Eligibility for F-1 visa status requires demonstrating the availability of sufficient funds for attending school and for living expenses. This is done by completing and submitting a notarized Northeastern Financial Statement along with notarized supporting documents, which include an official, notarized bank letter obtained from the financial institution(s) of the sponsor(s) identified in the Northeastern Financial Statement. Further details can be obtained on the website of the Office of International Programs (<http://www.neiu.edu/international/>).

English language proficiency: International students must demonstrate English language proficiency as evidenced by an approved standardized test. International applicants are exempt from this requirement if they have earned a degree from a regionally or nationally accredited U.S. college or university.

NEIU accepts scores from both the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as well as from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Minimum acceptable scores are 79 on the TOEFL iBT or a 6.5 composite score on the IELTS. Some programs require a TOEFL or IELTS score that is higher than the university minimum requirement; these can be found on the application along with other program-specific requirements.

Applicants who do not meet the English language proficiency minimum scores may be considered for conditional admission to a graduate degree program in conjunction with Northeastern’s intensive English program (SAELL). SAELL provides training for international students to meet the English language proficiency requirement. International applicants with IELTS composite scores of 5.0 or better or TOEFL iBT scores of 35 or better may be considered for a special joint admission to SAELL with conditional admission to a graduate degree program. Joint conditional admission requires

international students to begin studies at NEIU in the SAELL intensive English program, with a guarantee of admission to the graduate degree program upon demonstration of English language proficiency within 12 months of beginning in the SAELL program. Further details can be obtained on the website of the Office of International Programs (<http://www.neiu.edu/international/>).

Admission Acceptance / Deferral

Students may request, in writing, a deferral of their matriculation for up to one year. Requests for deferment should be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office at grdeferment@neiu.edu.

Graduate Transfer Credit Policy

Graduate transfer credits are any credits used to fulfill Northeastern Illinois University graduate degree requirements which are:

1. earned at Northeastern prior to the term of admission to a graduate program: OR
2. earned at a regionally or nationally accredited college or university or recognized international college or university. These transfer credits may be earned either prior to or after admission to a Northeastern graduate program.

All graduate transfer credits that are used to fulfill degree requirements need to be approved by the program.

Students should submit their transfer credit request form before the completion of 9 credit hours after admission to the program. Any delay in the completion of the transfer credit request may impact the student's graduation date. Credits transferred in the final semester before graduation will delay graduation until the credits are posted.

Credits earned for thesis hours are not transferable.

Coursework credits are eligible for transfer credit only if they meet the following criteria:

- a. Credits must be for graduate-level work;
- b. The course grade must be a B- or higher;
- c. Credits must have been completed within 6 years of expected graduation.

See the Graduate Certificate Programs policy (<http://catalog.neiu.edu/graduation-requirements/graduate-certificate-programs/>) for information explaining the relationship between related certificates and degree programs.

1. Coursework taken at Northeastern prior to admission to a graduate program: Credit for coursework taken at Northeastern prior to admission to a graduate program, which the student wishes to count towards that graduate program, is limited to no more than 50% of the program requirements, except in the case of credits from an earned graduate certificate. The entirety of credits from an earned graduate certificate can be counted towards a graduate degree program (see the Graduate Certificate Programs policy (<http://catalog.neiu.edu/graduation-requirements/graduate-certificate-programs/>)). No additional transfer credit is allowed if credits from an earned certificate represent 50% or more of the total program requirement credits.
2. Coursework taken outside of Northeastern: Graduate transfer credits can be earned either before admission to the student's program or after admission to the program, provided that the total number of transfer credits (regardless of when they were earned) does not exceed 9 hours, unless approved specially as part of a formal university agreement. Formal university agreements allowing external transfer credits that would exceed 50% of the course credit requirements for any graduate program must be reviewed and approved via normal governance process. All transfer credits earned after the student has been admitted to his/her program must be approved by the advisor, program advisor, and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Research prior to enrollment at the other institution.