

COSMA Annual Report 2025-26

U.S. and non-U.S.-based Programs

This annual report should be completed for your academic unit/sport management program and submitted electronically to COSMA by July 31 of each year.

SECTION 1: PROGRAMMATIC INFORMATION (COMPLETED BY ALL PROGRAMS)

Institution's Name:	Northeastern University				
Address:	360 Huntington Avenue				
City:	Boston	State:	MA	ZIP/Postal Code:	01757
Primary COSMA Contact Name and Designated Alternate Contact:	Name 1: Dr. Robert Prior				
	Name 2:				
Telephone:	617-943-3941	Email:	r.prior@northeastern.edu		
Sport Management Degree Program(s):	Master of Sports Leadership				
Name of College where Sport Management degree(s) is housed:	College of Professional Studies				
Academic Unit URL:	https://cps.northeastern.edu/program/master-of-sports-leadership-boston				

A. Check the box to reflect the accreditation status of your academic unit/sport management program:

X	Accredited
	Reaffirmation of Accreditation (check if within 2 years/letter received) *
	Candidate for Accreditation*
	Program Member (have not been granted Candidacy Status)

*Estimate the month and year you want to hold a site visit:

B. Identify any significant changes that have taken place in your sport management degree programs during the reporting period. Indicate the impact of any of these changes, if applicable, in a written statement of explanation.

1. Did you terminate any degree programs during the reporting year?

X	No
	Yes. If yes, please identify terminated programs.

2. Were changes (e.g., curricular) made in any of your sport management majors, concentrations or emphases?

X	No
	Yes. If yes, please identify the changes by adding an additional page to this document.

3. Were any **new** sport management degree programs established during the reporting year (include Esports management, Associate's degree)?

X	No (skip to Section C)
	Yes. If yes, please identify the new degree programs and answer B4.

4. Was approval of your regional or national accrediting body required for any of these programs?

X	No
	Yes. Provide a copy/URL of the approval letter from your accrediting body.

C. Identify any administrative and other changes that directly affect your academic unit/sport management program and attach an updated organizational chart that shows these relationships. Such changes would include:

- Your sport management unit's primary representative to COSMA
- Your institution's President, Academic Vice President, Dean, Provost, etc.
- The head of your academic unit/sport management program (if different from the primary representative to the COSMA).
- Faculty changes

Position	Name	Title
Email		
Position	Name	Title
Email		
Position	Name	Title
Email		

What impact have these changes had on your program? Comment specifically about faculty changes (faculty leaving, new faculty, other forms of faculty turnover). If you have a new COSMA accreditation primary representative: What are you doing to maintain continuity with the accreditation process? Provide a narrative response to these questions.

Other Changes/Issues

- D. Briefly comment on other changes or issues pertaining to your academic unit/sport management program (e.g., new partnerships, innovations, campus locations, change in program delivery, etc). Describe any modifications made to your program delivery, collection of outcomes assessment data and grading/graduation requirements, if applicable. Provide supporting documentation, as needed. Failure to report changes may result in administrative probation.

SECTION 2: OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT (TO BE COMPLETED BY ACCREDITED PROGRAMS AND PROGRAMS IN CANDIDACY STATUS)

- A. Has your outcomes assessment plan changed from initial approval or since last year's Annual Report?

	No
	Yes. Attach the revised O/A plan.

- B. Complete the following chart if you are responding to feedback from the Board of Commissioners as follows:

- Notes and Observations in a recent accreditation granted letter
- Required response items to a Candidacy Status granted letter
- Action Items from a Site Visit report
- Required response items to an accreditation deferred letter

Copy and paste the note, observation, action item or required response item in Column 1. Indicate your response to the item in the second column. Feel free to include your response as an addendum and attach documentation accordingly. **You have two years to resolve Notes.**

<i>Notes, Observations, Action Items, Required responses</i>		<i>Your Response</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

- C. Provide the URL(s) for the page on your sport management academic unit's home page that makes available to the public the following:
- SLO matrix AND OEG matrix OR
 - Program Information Profile (on page 10)
 - Statement of accreditation status (for both Accredited and programs in Candidacy Status)
 - Accreditation seal (accredited programs only)

This information must be updated annually. Failure to comply with this request will result in Administrative Probation.

URL(s):

CPS Accreditations:

<https://cps.northeastern.edu/about-the-college-of-professional-studies/accreditations>

Master of Sports Leadership Program Pages:

<https://cps.northeastern.edu/program/master-of-sports-leadership-boston/>

<https://cps.northeastern.edu/program/master-of-sports-leadership-online/>

- D. Complete the following program-level student learning outcomes (SLO) matrix and program-level operational effectiveness goals (OEG) matrix.

Student Learning Outcomes Matrix - Academic Year 2025 – 2026

Identify Each Student Learning Outcome and Measurement Tool(s)	Identify Benchmark	Total Number of Students Observed	Total Number of Students Meeting Expectation	Assessment Results: Percentage of Students Meeting Expectation	Assessment Results: Does not meet expectation Meets expectation Exceeds expectation Insufficient data
PLO 1 - Demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in sports and society, sports law, and media relations via selected artifacts from over the course of the program and well-crafted reflection on the related competencies and learning.					
Measure 1 (Direct) ePortfolio	85% of students will score 84% and above	33	33	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their learning experience. Used question: "Satisfaction with your overall graduate experience"	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation
PLO 2 - Apply sports leadership principles, practices, and functional knowledge to address a practical challenge in a real-world setting.					
Measure 1 (Direct)	85% of students will	19	19	100%	Exceeds expectation

Capstone Final Paper	score 84% and above				
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their learning experience.	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation
PLO 3 - Integrate personal, interpersonal, and team-based skills and competencies required for leadership roles in sport organizations to offer solutions for change in various contexts within the sports industry.					
Measure 1 (Direct) Leadership Interview (semester long group project)	85% of students will score 84% and above	28	28	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation

	learning experience.				
PLO 4 - Investigate a current ethical and legal issue related to sports, recreation, and leisure services and recommend potential solutions to address the issue.					
Measure 1 Case Analysis (Age Discrimination Case)	85% of students will score 84% and above	25	25	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their learning experience.	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation
PLO 5 - Examine the role of sports in society within sociological, economic, and political contexts and how it can be used to develop community services and foster diversity.					
Measure 1 (Direct) Sport in Society Group Project/Final Project	85% of students will score 84% and above	24	24	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation

Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their learning experience.	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation
PLO 6 - Craft a strategy for building and managing an effective media relations program on the intercollegiate and professional level.					
Measure 1 (Direct) Group Sports Social Media Campaign	85% of students will score 84% and above	24	24	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 2 (Indirect) Internship Supervisor Evaluation	95% of internship supervisors will perceive a high level of satisfaction with MSL interns.	14	14	100%	Exceeds expectation
Measure 3 (Indirect) Summer/Winter Institute Survey	90% of students will perceive a high level of satisfaction from their learning experience.	21	21	100%	Exceeds expectation

Student Learning Outcomes Matrix Narrative:

A review of this year's Program Learning Outcomes Matrix data indicates that the Master of Sports Leadership program met or exceeded all established benchmarks across each of its six PLOs. All six outcomes are addressed through the program's assessment plan, and this year's results show no exceptions, as every PLO reached or surpassed its target benchmark, with no outcomes falling below expectations.

To evaluate direct evidence of student learning, the program relied on a range of assessment tools, including the ePortfolio, the Capstone Final Paper, a semester-long Leadership Interview group project, an Age Discrimination Case Analysis, the Sport in Society Group/Final Project, and a Group Sports

Social Media Campaign. Indirect evidence was collected via the Internship Supervisor Evaluation and the Summer/Winter Institute Survey.

Although this year's results did not reveal any outcomes below benchmark, the program continues to use its outcomes assessment data proactively to inform curricular and programmatic decisions rather than waiting for a deficiency to prompt action.

The College of Professional Studies has undertaken the task of converting from a quarter-based to a semester-based system, with implementation planned for Fall 2026. This transition will reduce the Master of Sports Leadership program from 15 to 10 courses, with every course being reformatted from its current 12-week structure into a shortened 7½-week format.

In terms of closing the loop, the complete redesign of all courses in the program has already begun and has provided an opportunity to re-examine and strengthen the alignment between program-level and course-level learning outcomes and their corresponding signature assignments, ensuring that the redesigned 7½-week courses continue to assess the same rigor of student learning as the current format.

This also has provided an opportunity to consider adding more direct and indirect measures and benchmarks and a more nuanced and rigorous framework for future COSMA outcomes assessment reporting to meaningfully drive program improvement.

Program-Level Operational Effectiveness Goals Matrix Academic Year 2025-26

Identify Each Operational Effectiveness Goal and Measurement Tool(s)	Identify the Benchmark (e.g., 80% will achieve a rating of 5)	Data Summary	Assessment Results: Does not meet expectation Meets expectation Exceeds expectation Insufficient data
Measure 1 Annual SWOT analysis of MSL Program	MSL program should show positive growth and presence in the sport management education marketplace	The Master of Sports Leadership program enrollments reached 88 students in 2025 and 82 as of Summer 2026. Both above the 2024 peak enrollment of 65 students.	Meets expectations

Measure 2 Graduation rates for the MSL Program	Graduation of at least 35 students per cohort	The program graduated 25 students in Spring 2026. Graduation numbers are expected to increase in the coming academic year.	Does not meet expectations
Measure 3 Retention rates for the MSL Program	Retention rate of 75% for MSL students enrolled in each cohort.	The 2025 Master of Sports Leadership cohort achieved an overall retention rate of 77.4%, with female student retention at 83.3% and male student retention at 71.4%.	Exceeds Expectations
Measure 4 COSMA Accreditation Status	MSL Program will complete all COSMA reaffirmation requirements	All required COSMA reaffirmation action item were completed	Meets expectations
OEG 2 – Ensure that MSL Faculty are delivering excellence in sport management education			
Measure 1 Course Evaluations	90% of learners in classes taught by Sports Leadership faculty will be satisfied with teaching effectiveness (rate the instructor's teaching effectiveness as "Almost always effective" or "Usually Effective")	90% of students in Sports Leadership classes rated their instructor as either "Almost always effective" or "Usually Effective"	Meets Expectation
Measure 2 Full Time MSL Faculty Annual Reviews	Full-Time MSL Faculty will receive a positive Annual Assessment/review from the Associate Dean	All Full-Time MSL Faculty received positive Annual Assessment/reviews from the Associate Dean in 2026	Meets Expectation
Measure 3 Professional Development Seminar Attendance	Full-Time MSL Faculty should attend multiple professional development conferences, training sessions and meetings each year	Full-Time MSL Faculty attended multiple professional development conferences, training sessions and meetings during the AR year	Meets Expectation

OEG 3 – Engage Alumni in shaping the future of the MSL Program			
Measure 1 Engage Alumni interaction through experiential opportunities	Secure alumni to speak to and engage with students in at least one course per term	Alumni have visited at least one course as a guest speaker during every quarter during AY 26	Meets expectation
Measure 2 Host MSL Alumni Reception	Work with Alumni Relations to create and host an MSL Alumni Event	The MSL program successfully hosted an MSL Alumni reception during the 2025 Summer Institute	Meets expectation
Measure 3 Engage Alumni and MSL students through social media platforms	Facilitate Alumni-managed MSL social media accounts	Dr. Prior launched a Sports Leadership blog and podcast. This initiative has significantly strengthened alumni engagement and industry connectivity.	Meets expectation

Operational Effectiveness Goals Required Narrative:

OEG 1 – Strengthen the MSL Program's Position in the Sport Management Marketplace

Measure 1: Annual SWOT Analysis of the MSL Program - The Master of Sports Leadership program continues to demonstrate strong and positive growth trends. Enrollment reached 88 students in 2025 (34 new and 54 continuing) and stood at 82 students as of Summer 2026 (40 new and 42 returning), both figures well above the 2024 peak enrollment of 65 students.

The program's planned transition to a semester-based calendar, which will reduce the curriculum from 15 to 11 courses, is expected to allow students to complete their degree more efficiently, finishing in five semesters over a single calendar year. This streamlined format is anticipated to strengthen the program's competitive standing among comparable 34-semester-hour master's degrees in the field.

Measure 2: Graduation Rates for the MSL Program - The program had 25 graduates in the Spring of 2026, and current enrollment trends suggest a comparable or higher number of students will be positioned to graduate in the coming academic year.

Time-to-degree data reflects continued improvement, dropping from an average of 2.03 years in AY 2021 to 1.48 years in AY 2025, as students increasingly move through the program at a faster pace. Disaggregated data by gender shows both female and male students trending toward faster completion times, with no meaningful equity gap between the two groups. Taken together, these results indicate the program is graduating students more quickly and in greater numbers, outperforming its college peer benchmark.

Measure 3: Retention Rates for the MSL Program - The 2025 Master of Sports Leadership cohort achieved an overall retention rate of 77.4%, with female student retention at 83.3% and male student retention at 71.4%.

Looking at completions over the five-year reporting window, the program shows an encouraging trajectory, including a notable rebound in AY 2024–25. After reaching a high of 41 completions in AY 2020–21, the program saw completions climb to 47 in AY 2024–25, reflecting a positive overall trend.

Measure 4: COSMA Accreditation Status - Having earned initial COSMA accreditation in 2015 and successfully achieved reaffirmation in 2022, the Master of Sports Leadership program continues to demonstrate its commitment to excellence in sport management education. Industry connectivity remains a cornerstone of the accreditation standards, and the program's residencies and experiential learning opportunities continue to be a defining strength that reinforces this connection between students and the sport management industry.

OEG 2 – Ensure MSL Faculty Are Delivering Excellence in Sport Management Education

Measure 1: Course Evaluations - Ninety percent of students in courses taught by Sports Leadership faculty rated instructor teaching effectiveness as "Almost always effective" or "Usually effective," meeting the program's benchmark that at least 90% of learners report satisfaction with teaching effectiveness.

Measure 2: Full-Time MSL Faculty Annual Reviews - This measure was met, as the program's full-time MSL faculty member received a positive Annual Assessment/review from the Associate Dean in AY 2026, satisfying the expectation that full-time faculty receive positive evaluations.

Measure 3: Professional Development Seminar Attendance

Full-time MSL faculty are expected to participate in multiple professional development opportunities each year, including conferences, training sessions, and meetings. This benchmark was met, as the full-time MSL faculty member attended the 2025 COSMA Conference in Las Vegas, NV, and participated in the virtual CPS Faculty Development Conference in Fall 2025.

OEG 3 – Engage Alumni in Shaping the Future of the MSL Program

Measure 1: Alumni Engagement Through Experiential Opportunities - The program's goal of securing alumni to speak with and engage students in at least one course per term was fully met, as MSLD alumni served as guest speakers in at least one course during every quarter of AY 2026.

Measure 2: MSL Alumni Reception - Working in partnership with Alumni Relations, the program successfully hosted an MSL Alumni reception during the 2025 Summer Institute, drawing more than 50 attendees and meeting this year's engagement goal.

Measure 3: Alumni and Student Engagement Through Social Media - Dr. Prior launched a Sports Leadership blog and podcast highlighting MSL alumni who have gone on to become successful leaders within the sports industry. This initiative has significantly strengthened alumni engagement and industry connectivity. In addition, former Master of Sports Leadership students continue to maintain active alumni social media presences on LinkedIn and Facebook, further sustaining the program's connection with its graduates.



PROGRAM INFORMATION PROFILE

This profile offers information about the performance of a program in the context of its basic purpose and key features.

Name of Institution

Institution: Northeastern University
Program Accreditor: COSMA
Institutional Accreditor: NECHE

Date of Next Comprehensive Program Accreditation Review: September 2029
Date of Next Comprehensive Institutional Accreditation Review: Fall 2028

To learn more about the accredited status of the program, click here: <https://www.necche.org/institutions/northeastern-university>

Program Context and Mission

Program Mission: Master of Sports Leadership program's mission is to educate students for a life of fulfillment and accomplishment and to create and translate knowledge to meet global and societal sports leadership needs.

Program Goals:

- Identifying your leadership styles and strengths and taking steps to improve your leadership capacity
- Understanding what it takes to build highly effective teams
- Obtaining approaches and techniques for effectively tackling ethical dilemmas
- Exploring legal issues related to equipment use, facility management, and accommodation for special populations
- Learning how to leverage sports for greater social and economic good
- Examining the planning, scheduling, and financial issues associated with running a successful athletics program
- Discovering how to use sports to foster diversity, prevent violence, and improve the health of local and global communities

Brief Description of Student Population: Northeastern University's Master of Sports Leadership is a practice-oriented degree structured to accommodate mid-career athletic administrators and coaches, and individuals seeking to prepare for sports careers.

Admissions Requirements: Undergraduate Transcripts, Foreign Credential Evaluation (FCE) Resume, Two letters of recommendation and a personal statement.

Indicators of Effectiveness with Undergraduates As Determined by the Program

1. Graduation
Year: 2026 # of Graduates: 25 Graduation Rate: 93%
2. Completion of Educational Goal (other than certificate or degree – if data collected)
of Students Surveyed: __ # Completing Goal: _____
3. Average Time to Certificate or Degree
1-Year Certificate: _NA__ 2-Year Degree: _NA__ 4-Year Degree: _NA__
4. Annual Transfer Activity
Year: _NA__ # of Transfers: _NA__ Transfer Rate: _NA__
5. Graduates Entering Graduate School
Year: _NA__ # of Graduates: _NA__ # Entering Graduate School: _NA__
6. Job Placement (if appropriate)
Year: _NA__ # of Graduates: _NA__ # Employed: _NA__
7. Licensure/Certification Examination Results: _____
8. Additional Indicators, if any: