We have been busy implementing a series of changes to accommodate the growth of the Master of Science in Leadership for Creative Enterprises (MSLCE) program in its second year. The thirty-six students who are enrolled this year are benefiting from the addition of new classes and extracurricular activities designed to enhance their learning experience and career development potential. These changes include:

- Four new classes: Organizational Processes in Creative Enterprises (fall), Professional Development (fall, winter, and spring), Marketing Strategies in Creative Industries (spring), and Culture and Globalization (spring).
- Monthly site visits to Chicago-area creative sector organizations.
- Twice-a-quarter, day-long executive education workshops that allow students to focus on competencies and knowledge that are essential for a successful career in the creative sector.
- Twice-a-quarter seminars with distinguished Northwestern faculty who do not teach in the program but whose research is relevant to understanding the creative sector.
- Social outings and community service projects to help build a positive and engaged culture among the student body.

These changes have contributed to a rich and intense learning and professional development experience. The students have embraced them, which made for a terrific fall quarter. Current student, Benjamin Levine, summarized as follows his experience of the quarter in an article he wrote on LinkedIn: “This first term was full of fantastic information that I’ve already applied to my career. While the program covers a wide variety of topics in a short period of time, they all function together well and function as pieces that build up into a bigger picture.”

With the winter quarter now in full swing, I can’t wait to see the continued growth of students both in the classroom and in their professional lives.

Pablo J. Boczkowski
AT&T Research Professor, School of Communication
Faculty Director, MSLCE

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MSLCE Newsletter Winter 2016
STUDENTS

HAYLEY BULLOCK
Bullock hadn’t been walking very long by the time she started to dance. At the age of three she was taking tap, jazz and show choir lessons. Soon after she was performing in public. She knows she wants to keep one foot in the office and another active in dance and working with students. “I’m really passionate about both business and dance and I can see the necessity for dancers and artists to have an understanding of the business aspects of dance, which is something that not many people have.”

DANIEL DVORKIN
Dvorkin’s creative career started earlier than most: In 2008, he began a production company called Two Lights Theatre Company with Rebecca Leifman. Seven years later, Two Lights is still cranking out shows. “When we started it I never had an idea in my head, ‘Oh, I’m starting a theater company…’ It was more, ‘Oh, we have this project, we needed a name and an organization to put the project under.’”

ZACH HYMAN
While majoring in Creative Writing for the Media at Northwestern as an undergraduate, Hyman learned about what goes on behind the scenes to get a television show produced. Now, he’s excited to see what doors will open for him as a result of the MSLCE program. “I have a lot of interests throughout this industry, and I’m hoping the program will help focus that.”

TANYA TANG
Tang learned of the MSLCE program and decided to reorient his professional path in a direction that would allow him to converge his interest in finance with his love of photography and his desire to help others. “I am really interested in the non-profit art scene and arts organizations, so my main goal is to make a contribution to society and not just profit. I believe they can coexist.”

MARIS O’TIERNEY
O’Tierney has worked as a curatorial fellow at the Block Museum in Evanston, as a research assistant for an International Relations professor at Northwestern, and, perhaps most importantly, as a musician and composer. She’s already released a couple of albums and has performed in both Chicago as well as her native Alaska. “I’m really interested in collaborating with people across fields.”

SHELLEY BISHOP
Bishop has worked as an engineer and producer at the Chicago Recording Company, where she writes and produces her own music in addition to recording and working with big names from the music industry. “With the clients I’m working with now, my real focus is on finding good bands and helping them produce their own albums… When I own my own label, that is what I want to do.”

Photos provided by students.
Zach Hyman, photo by Winfield Winter; Maris O’Tierney, photo by Christian Wilson Photography.
MARA WEBSTER  
**Panels and Programs Producer**  
**Tribeca Film Festival**  
Webster, who works as the Panels & Programs Producer for Tribeca Film Festival, grew up in a small English village, and fell in love with film. She spent her time watching Lars Von Trier movies and whatever foreign title she could get her hands on. “My parents picked up on it,” she said. Now, Webster’s job involves putting together the panels that are a huge draw at the Tribeca Film Festival, like last year’s with Monty Python and John Oliver. “I feel like a talent scout,” Webster said, “figuring out who should come to the majors.”

THREADLESS  
“We never want to become static,” said Jeffrey Guerrero, the graphics coordinator at Threadless, as he gave students a tour of their Madison Street madhouse on Chicago’s near west side. Founded in 2000 by Jake Nickell and Jacob DeHart, the e-commerce platform and artist community is the longtime darling of Chicago’s tech and creative sectors, having innovated the crowdsourcing model. However, as Guerrero clarified, at Threadless it’s “all about the artists.” The compound makes this evident. Every inch of wall space is covered with a rotating mélange of pieces from street artists, both local and from abroad. Touring the offices, students were given incredible insight into a creative organization that empowers artists to create and control their own identity and brand. Students were able to engage with the employees and ask pertinent questions about operations, work-life balance, artistic integrity, and more. -John Matthew Simon

LEN KASPER  
**TV Play-by-Play Announcer**  
**Chicago Cubs**  
After a decade working as the Chicago Cubs television play-by-play announcer, Len Kasper has made himself an integral part of the local game-watching experience. At 162 games a season, Kasper spends about 500 hours on the air each summer. Lately, he’s noticed how his industry is changing. “It’s all on the Internet for me now and I think that’s fundamentally changed the way that the business works,” he said. “There will be a team or a sport within the next five years that’s going to do a broadcast rights deal with Yahoo or Google or some sort of Internet company — they will produce it, and it will be on the Internet and on television. The days of just TV networks having the monopoly on it … I think that’s going away.”

ERICA LABOVITZ  
**Head of Product Marketing**  
**Indiegogo**  
Labovitz advised students in the room to always keep their ears open, not just for opportunities but for learning. “Listening is much more valuable than talking,” she said. “I was very confident when I left school that I had a great foundation in academics and work experience, but I think the best thing I did was take some humility with that confidence to soak up others’ knowledge like a sponge.” She said that it is important for people to maintain connections with smart, driven people, both for inspiration and opportunity. “I wouldn’t be where I am today if it weren’t for the people I met along the way and staying in touch with them,” she said.

JEFF McCCLUSKY & ASSOCIATES/AUDIOTREE  
“Sometimes you have to stop, assess yourself, and start over,” said JMA founder, Jeff McClusky, as he spoke with students about the ever-evolving state of the music industry. There is nothing standard about the digitization of music media and the shifting landscape that organizations such as JMA, a promotion-al and music marketing firm, and Audiotree, an “artist-centric music company,” find themselves operating in. Chris Watkins, charged with “business affairs” at Audiotree, insisted that what sets them apart is their authenticity, willingness to take risks, and the quality of the content they create. While meeting with the staff of JMA and Audiotree, students learned that success in the current state of the music industry is about being innovative, diligent, and forthright. -John Matthew Simon

LOOKINGGLASS THEATRE  
“A big part of my job when we began was proving to artists that they were simultaneously producers,” said Lookingglass artistic director Andy White. “When we started, we knew we were doing something different for the city,” White said. The company’s mission is truthfully quite unusual for a city respected for its improv and kitchen-sink dramas. From high-flying acrobatics to immersive culinary experiences, Lookingglass Theatre is unlike the rest. Highly focused on design, their values are ambitiously forged in collaboration, invention, and transformation. While narrating the company’s story, White proudly pointed out the pictures behind students to reference their vivid, colorful imagery. -Daniel Dvorkin
CROWDFUNDING/CROWDSOURCING RESEARCH
Liz Gerber, Faculty Founder of Design for America
When the Internet started to challenge the traditional ways of idea-collecting, Gerber left [a job at a toy company] in order to pursue a PhD in organizational behavior. As Associate Professor of Design at Northwestern, her research focuses on how new technologies and platforms, including sites like Indiegogo and Kickstarter, have affected innovation. -Cameron Kong

NETWORKS RESEARCH
Noshir Contractor, Jane S. & William J. White Professor of Behavioral Sciences
Following their Saturday workshop on building and maintaining professional networks, students read a recent paper from Professor Contractor related to his research on the science of networks and learned more about how he leverages his knowledge of teams and multi team systems (MTSs) for projects with companies and organizations like Boeing, Procter & Gamble, NASA, and the US National Institutes of Health.

PRESENTATION SKILLS
Brian Burkhart, President, SquarePlanet
At times, the hardest part about leadership can be conveying your beliefs effectively and convincing others to share them. This is why Brian Burkhart, founder of the presentation and strategy firm SquarePlanet, emphasizes that "a presentation is an opportunity." At the core, effective presentations require a deep understanding of what you believe. And this is not always easy. However, learning how to squeeze the most out of the communication and human interaction tools at your disposal can help you reap the most benefits from these opportunities. According to Burkhart, if a presentation is an opportunity and our beliefs are a fundamental mechanism in communicating who we are, the best presenters are those who vocalize their authenticity. Transmitting authenticity in a concise and emotive way captures the attention of the audience and helps solidify the message of your presentation. During a workshop, Burkhart explained that the best presenters are those who vocalize their authenticity. "The goal of business is to work with those that believe what you believe," he said. -John Matthew Simon

MANAGING YOUR NETWORKS
Noshir Contractor, Jane S. & William J. White Professor of Behavioral Sciences
"I've grown to see everything as a network. I hope to infect you with the same bug." With these words, Northwestern Professor and social network expert Noshir Contractor kick-started an all-day workshop with the entire cohort of MSLCE students. The session began with a look into the history of social connections since the early 1900s, before diving into understanding the balance between efficient networks and happy networks. "Networking doesn't have to feel icky – it can come from a place of giving, gratitude, and comfort," Contractor explained. Contractor serves as Director of the Science of Networks in Communities (SONIC) Research Group alongside teaching positions in the McCormick School of Engineering, the School of Communication, and the Kellogg School of Management. He said that with social networks bringing people together like never before, we need to be conscious about making – and maintaining – both strong and weak ties. "True scientific achievements are made by teams, not individual heroes." -Zach Hyman
FUN TIMES AT MSLCE
Students in the MSLCE program work hard, but there’s always time for a little fun. We took a few breaks throughout the quarter, including a trip to see ‘Feathers and Teeth’, a production at the Goodman Theatre directed by Northwestern professor Henry Godinez and starring Northwestern student Olivia Cygan. #GoCats!

THREE QUESTIONS WITH AJ CHRISTIAN
Assistant Professor, School of Communication
Founder, Open TV

What does ‘indie’ mean in the world of television?
I view indie not as a genre or aesthetic category but one of industrial categorization. For me “indie TV” is television produced and distributed wholly independently of corporate interference. This means that a corporation has not hired the staff, shaped the story or participated in the release and marketing of a specific show. There are always gray areas. Some series start independent and acquire a corporate sponsor or distributor after a season or two. Sometimes these series are still indie because the corporate sponsor/distributor has little to no say in the story and its marketing. But most of the time when corporations participate in the production and release of a show they influence the story and its marketing. This changes the aim of a show from the idea of an artist looking to speak to a particular community, to the idea of a company looking to profit from that artist and their community. Indie stories exist to represent and mediate sincere conversations between producers and fans.

Is making a television show easier or harder than it’s ever been?
It’s marginally easier. With digital production and marketing tools (social media) you can make a series for very little money, particularly if you’ve written or planned for lower costs. YouTubers do this by making themselves the ultimate subject of the show, their production costs are limited to equipment and the time they invest in making it. Last year a movie shot on an iPhone was a hit at Sundance, so it’s possible to make more sophisticated fare as well. The glut of content makes marketing the biggest challenge. Smart creators spend as much time and effort marketing as making. This means connecting with other creators and finding out where your fans are. The result of this ecosystem is that more people are making shows and they’re more representative of the country and its cultures.

You’ve overseen a number of Indie TV productions. What’s been the biggest surprise so far?
So much! I’ve been surprised at how many artists in Chicago are eager to make television and the great diversity of ideas in a city we don’t historically define as a center of media production. People here are game for collaboration and experimentation. I started Open TV with the theory that by bringing historically excluded arts and artists into television production I could discover further innovations in series development. It’s turned out to be an easy theory to prove.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Prof. AJ Christian at Woman Made Gallery, Open TV; Pilots By Women and Feminine-Spectrum Artists. Photo by Zakkiyyah Najeebah.

On the set of one of Christian’s Open TV shows. Photo courtesy of AJ Christian.
WINTER SPEAKER SERIES

January 7          Jane Gottlieb, VP/Executive Producer, CBS Marketing Group
February 4         Harry Gottlieb, Founder, Jellyvision
March 3            TBD

First Thursday of each month at 5:15pm in Frances Searle #1-441. Free + open to the public.
Scan the QR code or visit http://creative.northwestern.edu/speaker_series to register.

LEARN MORE

Sign up for an online information session at http://communication.northwestern.edu/programs/mslce/events.

Interested in applying? The next deadline for fall 2016 or winter 2017 admission is March 1, 2016.

Newsletter Editor: Jacob Nelson
Contributors: Jacob Nelson, Amy Ross, Kathryn E. Lawson
Unless otherwise stated, photos by Kathryn E. Lawson