

# **NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY FACULTY HANDBOOK**

Last Updated August 5, 2021

Northwestern

## Northwestern University Faculty Handbook

This Faculty Handbook, effective August 5, 2021, reflects updates to the section regarding Academic Freedom and changes that were necessary in order to bring the University into compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Specifically, these changes reflect the creation of a new [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#) to comply with the Department of Education's May 6, 2020 regulations implementing Title IX. This Handbook also reflects the creation of a new [Policy on Institutional Equity](#), which represents a combination of the University's previous Policy on Discrimination & Harassment and Policy on Sexual Misconduct. The faculty process and rights for investigation, discipline, and appeal in matters related to non-Title IX discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct remain unchanged.

The Faculty Handbook describes the rights and responsibilities of membership in the faculty. It is a product of an ongoing cooperative effort between the Faculty Senate and the administrative officers of Northwestern. The adoption of these changes, following formal reviews and votes by the Faculty Senate during a Fall, 2020 meeting and a special meeting during Summer, 2021, is a demonstration of the flexibility necessary in this partnership.

Information in the Faculty Handbook concerning, but not limited to, such matters as the conditions of faculty employment, benefit plans, and University policies is subject to change from time to time. Notice of such changes will be communicated to all members of the faculty through Northwestern News, electronic mail, or relevant website updates in the Office of the Provost, the Office of Human Resources, and other offices, as appropriate.

More complete treatments of many of the issues covered by this document are found in individual policy statements published by the University from time to time. Faculty, like all other employees, are also expected to follow all policies and procedures issued by schools, departments, and other administrative offices. If policies and procedures of schools and departments are in conflict with information in this Faculty Handbook, the statements in this handbook take precedence. The current text of this handbook is available online at: [http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/docs/faculty\\_handbook\\_aug2021.pdf](http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/docs/faculty_handbook_aug2021.pdf).

The online version contains current links to specific policy statements and other resources referenced in this document.

Best regards,

Therese McGuire, President, Faculty Senate, 2020-2021

Lois Hedman, President, Faculty Senate, 2019-2020

Robert Holmgren, President, Faculty Senate, 2021-2022

Kathleen Hagerty, Provost

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# Faculty Handbook

## Academic Freedom

Northwestern University subscribes to the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments issued by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and the Statement on Professional Ethics adopted by the AAUP in 1966 and revised in 1987 and 2009.

Freedom in the pursuit and expression of knowledge is fundamental to the life of the institution. Academic freedom creates an environment in which faculty members may pursue their scholarly research, creative activities, publication, and teaching and related activities. It is essential to the university's fulfillment of its mission to discover, produce and communicate knowledge to students, to colleagues, and to the community at large. This mission depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

All faculty at Northwestern University, tenure-eligible and non-tenure-eligible, and all other officers of instruction to whom this handbook pertains, enjoy the protections of academic freedom in these endeavors, regardless of the campuses or branches of the university with which they are affiliated, inclusive of faculty participating in research, teaching, and related activities abroad. In safeguarding the rights to academic freedom for themselves and for others in the community, faculty also accept their share of responsibilities for the governance of the institution, for fulfilling their duties with intellectual honesty, and for protecting the rights of others in the community to learn, conduct research, and carry out the essential functions of the University free from interference or obstruction. Faculty further accept the responsibility to observe the stated policies of the Faculty Handbook. While academic freedom essentially coexists with established legal frameworks, on rare occasion the two may be in conflict.

### *Academic freedom in research and publication*

Faculty are entitled to the full freedom to engage in their research or creative activities and to disseminate their work in scholarly and public venues, whether print or electronic. Research should be conducted in accordance with University policies and procedures, and faculty are also expected to fulfill their other academic duties.

### *Academic freedom and instruction*

Faculty are entitled to the freedom to discuss their subject in the classroom or other academic and related settings. As teachers, faculty encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their disciplines. Professors demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors.

### *Academic freedom as a citizen*

When faculty speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars,

creative practitioners, and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times endeavor to be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for others, and should avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for the University.

### *Academic freedom and its relationship to shared governance*

Northwestern University adheres to the principle that “sound governance practice and the exercise of academic freedom are closely connected,” as expressed in the AAUP statement On the Relationship of Faculty Governance to Academic Freedom (1994). The statement further defines the close relationship of these distinct concepts as follows: “A sound system of institutional governance is a necessary condition for the protection of faculty rights and thereby for the most productive exercise of essential faculty freedoms. Correspondingly, the protection of the academic freedom of faculty members in addressing issues of institutional governance is a prerequisite for the practice of governance unhampered by fear of retribution.” Faculty maintain the right to criticize and seek revision of University policies.

### *Academic freedom and disciplinary action*

Disciplinary action will not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom. If a faculty member believes a disciplinary action, including denial or delay of tenure or promotion, or termination of contract, violates their right to academic freedom, the faculty member may appeal, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

## **The University Community**

Northwestern is committed to identifying and implementing ways to create and support a diverse and inclusive campus community. The institution strives to create a community that fosters personal and intellectual growth by bringing together faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and staff from different backgrounds and perspectives to engage in a mutual exchange of ideas and experiences. Faculty members have a responsibility to educate themselves and act on University policies related to this commitment, as outlined in this handbook. University policies can be found [here](#).

## **The Faculty**

### *Officers of Instruction*

Appointments and promotions of officers of instruction (with the exception of students serving as teaching assistants) are made by the Board of Trustees upon nomination by the president of the University, after consultation with the provost, the appropriate school deans, and faculty hiring committees as appropriate. (For a complete listing and descriptions of faculty categories, see the [myHR Manual](#), published jointly by the Office of the Provost and the Office of Human Resources.)

The officers of instruction ranks are as follows: professors (including adjunct, clinical, visiting,

of instruction, of practice, and in residence), associate professors (including adjunct, clinical, visiting, of instruction, of practice and in residence), assistant professors (including adjunct, clinical, visiting, of instruction, of practice, and in residence), lecturers (including distinguished senior lecturers, senior lecturers and lecturers), and instructors.

As used in this Handbook, the term non-tenure-eligible includes all faculty who are not eligible for tenure, who are benefits-eligible, and who hold positions in faculty member categories of “Regular Faculty,” including clinical faculty, faculty in residence, teaching track faculty or lecturer faculty with the ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor or instructor.

Students serving as teaching assistants and postdoctoral fellows serving in teaching roles are officers of instruction but are not considered faculty members for the purposes of this handbook. Clinical associates (in Feinberg School of Medicine), on the other hand, are members of the faculty, but are not officers of instruction, as they are not engaged in either the teaching or research activities of the University. Likewise, research faculty (assistant research professor, associate research professor, research professor) are not officers of instruction as their efforts are directed exclusively to research and publication. Further information governing [faculty-level research appointments](#) is available from the Office of the Provost [website](#). Research faculty are governed by those Terms of appointment rather than this Handbook.

In addition, Librarian faculty are governed by a separate [terms of appointment](#) document which may be found on the Office of the Provost website.

### *Organization of the Faculties*

The faculty of a college or school consists of the president of the University, the provost, the dean of the school, and all of the school’s officers of instruction (with the exception of students serving as teaching assistants and postdoctoral fellows serving in teaching roles).

The president of the University serves as the presiding officer of each faculty and casts a deciding vote in case of a tie. In the absence of the president, the dean of the school presides at faculty meetings.

### *Voting Members*

The president of the University, the provost, and the dean of the school and all professors, associate professors, and assistant professors (except visiting, adjunct, and contributed service faculty members) are voting members of the faculty of the school in which they hold appointment. Each faculty sets the conditions under which professors emeritus/a, associates, instructors, lecturers (including professors of instruction, associate professors of instruction, assistant professors of instruction, distinguished senior lecturers and senior lecturers) and persons holding a rank designated as clinical may vote, but no such person may vote before completing one year of service as a member of the faculty. Other officers of instruction, including contributed service faculty, but not students serving as teaching assistants, are faculty members but do not have voting privileges. Secondary, non-budgetary appointments generally do not confer voting rights in the secondary department, though it is up to departments to set uniform rules for voting.



## Powers

Each faculty (excepting that of the School of Professional Studies) has the power to determine how it exercises the powers committed to it under University Statutes and this handbook, including the timing, agenda and conduct of its meetings. Subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, each faculty determines the requirements for admission of students to its school, prescribes and defines the course of study, determines the requirements for degrees, and recommends candidates for those degrees. Each faculty has power to establish rules and regulations for the academic discipline of students. The University itself oversees the rules and regulations for the nonacademic discipline of students.

## The Graduate School

The Graduate School (TGS) offers advanced academic degrees: the Master of Arts (MA), Master of Fine Arts (MFA), Master of Public Health (MPH), Master of Science (MS), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The Graduate Faculty is composed of persons of demonstrated ability and continuing interest in research whose academic duties normally involve instruction and supervision of graduate students. Membership in The Graduate School faculty is granted automatically to persons who hold the academic rank of assistant professor or above on the tenure line in one of the other Northwestern schools. Moreover, term appointments of four years (renewable) to the Graduate Faculty for non-tenure-eligible members of our academic community may be requested by school deans and approved by the Dean of The Graduate School. Members of the Graduate Faculty determine the conditions for admission to The Graduate School in each degree program, for admission to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and for awarding of master's and doctoral degrees. The Graduate Faculty also recommends for these degrees students who have satisfied the program requirements.

## School of Professional Studies

The faculty of the School of Professional Studies includes all persons who teach courses in that school during a given academic year and have been designated as officers of instruction in another school of the University or appointed to a faculty rank by the School of Professional Studies. The faculty of each school is responsible for establishing degree requirements for undergraduate programs under the academic charge of the School of Professional Studies. In consultation with an appointed Faculty Council, the Dean of the School of Professional Studies coordinates the policies of the various schools and the educational offerings for study in the school, admitting and registering students and directing their activities.

## Summer Session

The School of Professional Studies coordinates the offering of undergraduate courses during the summer session. Persons teaching during the summer session are appointed to serve as officers of instruction in one of the schools of the University. In consultation with an appointed Faculty Council, the dean of the School of Professional Studies oversees the activities of the Summer Session.

## *Faculty Governance*

The 2010-2011 Northwestern University Shared Governance initiative, approved by faculty, administration and trustees, created two new bodies: a Faculty Assembly and a Faculty Senate. The Senate is empowered to consider, make recommendations, and pass resolutions concerning matters of general university interest including all educational and research endeavors, policies governing faculty hiring, tenure, promotion and appeals, and campus life. Detailed information concerning Shared Governance, including Assembly and Senate Bylaws, is available from the [Faculty Senate website](#). Faculty Senate membership and activities will be considered as participation in the business of the University.

### **Responsibilities of the Faculty**

The faculty of the University are responsible for transmitting accumulated knowledge. Faculty whose appointments entail research expectations are also responsible for discovering new knowledge. In addition, faculty members are responsible for participating in the business of the University, as well as its schools and departments, through committee service, attendance at faculty meetings and other customary ways.

Faculty are members of a community including undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, staff, and faculty colleagues. Members of the Northwestern community are expected to deal with each other in a civil manner. While faculty enjoy freedom from institutional censorship in their scholarly pursuits and teaching activities, such freedom carries with it a responsibility to be accurate in speech and writing, to abide by University standards of academic integrity, and to maintain civility, even in cases of disagreement and heated argument. Each member of the Northwestern community is expected to treat other community members with civility and respect, recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic community. Behaviors that a reasonable person would perceive to be demeaning, intimidating, threatening, bullying, or violent enough to significantly impair the ability of a community member to learn, work, or live in the University environment depart from the standard for civility and respect. These behaviors have no place in the academic community. Faculty are also subject to the University's [Policy on Civility and Mutual Respect](#).

The University makes electronic resources available to support the University's educational mission and general administration. It is the responsibility of all faculty to be familiar with and to adhere to University policies on the use of technology, including policies on the use of central network and computing resources and on the use and duplication of computer software. Relevant policies governing these activities are available on the [policies page](#) of Northwestern's Office of Information Technology website.

The University recognizes that teaching responsibilities take a variety of forms, including but not limited to fostering students' performance or skills in the studio or laboratory; tutoring undergraduate students; supervising graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and clinical trainees; and developing courses and curricula. Through the work of the [Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching](#), the University seeks to support effective and innovative teaching. Faculty are encouraged to participate in the activities and avail themselves of the services of the Searle Center.

Because of the many scholarly and professional enterprises represented at Northwestern, the University does not provide a common standard for faculty productivity. Faculty members are responsible for being active and productive in the creative, artistic, scholarly, and research pursuits appropriate to their respective fields. Descriptions of expectations of faculty productivity should be provided by the school in concert with the department of the faculty member. The University is responsible for providing adequate facilities and resources to support the scholarly efforts of its faculty and students. The University recognizes that faculty time devoted to research, scholarship, and artistic endeavors is of vital importance in promoting the University's central goals of excellent scholarship, stimulating teaching, and a vigorous, creative academic community.

Throughout a faculty member's career at Northwestern, the proportion of effort devoted to teaching, research and administrative activities may change. While it is the duty of the faculty to remain engaged fully and productively in these various pursuits, it is the responsibility of the departments and schools to monitor their activities and to assist faculty in redistributing their efforts as appropriate.

As members of the Northwestern community, faculty may encounter individuals (undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, staff, visitors, etc.) whose behaviors raise concerns about their health, their safety or the safety of others or who are highly disruptive, aggressive, or violent. Such individuals may make explicit threats of violence against another member of the Northwestern community or express overtly suicidal thoughts. Faculty members who encounter such individuals must report their concerns promptly to the dean's office of the school to which they belong or to the Office of the Provost or, if the risk of danger appears imminent, to University Police by calling 911. Resources and policies are available within Northwestern on [suicide prevention](#), [threat assessment](#), and [violence prevention](#).

### *Teaching Activities of the Faculty*

School deans, department chairs, and program directors assign teaching responsibilities and courses to each faculty member with consideration for a faculty member's engagement in research, service and other professional activities.

Before student registration, faculty members should make available to students a written description of each course they will teach, in accordance with the policy of the school. Every member of the faculty is responsible for ordering books and other required teaching materials in advance of class, meeting classes at scheduled times, honoring reading and examination periods, and evaluating students' work, including providing adequate and timely feedback to students and submitting grades by the stated deadlines. Faculty members are responsible for informing students in their classes of the criteria and methods to be employed in determining final course grades. Faculty should report major academic problems (poor performance, frequent absences, etc.) to the Office of the Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled, or to The Graduate School in the case of graduate students.

In case of illness, emergency, or other pressing reason necessitating absence while the University is in session, faculty members should observe the policies of their department or school. Affected

students should be informed promptly.

Faculty members should hold regular office hours, although in exceptional circumstances faculty members may, instead, with the approval of the department chair, offer students an alternative, easily accessible, regular method for communicating outside class. For students whose schedules conflict with the instructor's posted office hours, opportunity for consultation by appointment should be provided. Graded examinations and papers should be provided for student inspection and discussion with the instructor. The faculty member is responsible for all work carried out by teaching assistants. During the term, tests and quizzes should be graded and returned promptly. Reasonable opportunity shall be provided for students to review final examinations and papers with their instructors during a period of at least two weeks at the beginning of the subsequent term. Instructors normally retain students' papers and answers to examination questions during this period. In order to verify grades recorded by the registrar and to answer possible inquiries, instructors should retain their grade books for at least one year.

When reproducing materials for class, faculty should take care to secure the author or copyright owner's permission in cases where reproduction may exceed the "fair use" permitted under copyright laws.

#### Academic Integrity Violations

It is the responsibility of each faculty member to maintain standards of student academic honesty in accordance with the University's [Principles Regarding Academic Integrity](#) and school policy. Individual cases of alleged student academic dishonesty are handled by the Office of the Dean of the appropriate school. Each faculty member is responsible for promptly reporting cases of suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of the school in which the course is offered. Each school has available in the Office of the Dean a written statement of policy assuring fair consideration of students in cases of alleged academic dishonesty, specified hearing procedures, possible sanctions, and routes for appeal of decisions.

#### Advisory System

Northwestern faculty have a responsibility to advise undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty should make themselves available on a regular and publicized basis for consultation with students and inform themselves concerning academic and procedural matters that they may be asked to discuss with undergraduate or graduate students seeking their counsel. In addition to general advising duties, some faculty fulfill programmatic advising functions. Most new undergraduate students are assigned to faculty advisers, who are expected to assist them in planning their academic work and in dealing with problems related to that work. Students beyond their first year also have access to faculty advising. Often this takes the form of having a designated adviser in the student's chosen field of study. Advisers should acquaint themselves as fully as possible with their advisees' academic interests and achievements in order to give them appropriate guidance in planning their academic programs. Insofar as is practical, advisers are assigned to students within their particular discipline.

Departments (or degree programs, in the case of The Graduate School) are responsible for making arrangements for academic advising during registration and for posting faculty office

hours for advising during those periods.

### Students with Disabilities

It is University policy to ensure that no qualified student with a disability is denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any University program or activity. In response to a request made by a qualified student with a disability, the University will arrange, at no cost to the student, for the provision of educational auxiliary aids, determined by the University to be necessary to afford such student the opportunity for full participation in University programs. Faculty members should consult the [faculty information page](#) of AccessibleNU's website regarding the implementation of this policy.

### Recommendations and Confidentiality

Faculty members are frequently asked to provide recommendations for students. Faculty should honor any written third-party request for information or recommendation to which the affected student has consented in writing. In the absence of such written consent, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits faculty members to provide only very limited information such as is included in the published University directory (for further information see the University's [Privacy Policy \(FERPA\)](#)). Faculty who have questions about the propriety of providing information or recommendations or who receive any request for information in the form of a summons, subpoena, or other official document should immediately consult the Office of General Counsel.

### Personal Problems of Students

Students may come to faculty members when they are experiencing personal problems. Faculty members may be able to assist these students by referring them to offices that can assist them directly. However, faculty are required to report cases of [sexual misconduct](#) to the Title IX Coordinator and [suspected child abuse or neglect](#) to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as well as to notify the Office of Risk Management and the Office of Compliance, Audit, and Advisory Services in writing that a report has been made. If the faculty member is unsure where to refer a student or needs direct assistance in dealing with a student problem, that faculty member should contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs or the Associate Dean for Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Affairs at The Graduate School for assistance and advice. Alternatively, faculty can refer students directly to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Additional information on [identifying and referring at-risk students](#) is available online. Among students with personal problems, some may raise additional concerns that they represent a threat to themselves or others. Faculty who encounter such students should report their concerns promptly to the dean's office of the school to which they belong or to the Office of the Provost or, if the risk of danger appears imminent, to University Police by calling 911.

### Student Handbook

In addition to detailed information on academic and general regulations and a description of the University Hearing and Appeals System (UHAS), the [Northwestern Student Handbook](#) contains

complete texts of several documents, including the Policy Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Sexual Misconduct Complaint Resolution Process, and the University's Policy on Sexual Misconduct. Most schools also issue their own academic policies and procedures for students. Faculty members are urged to become familiar with the Student Handbook as well as other relevant academic policies and procedures available to faculty through school and department websites and offices.

### Postdoctoral Fellow Policies

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, housed in The Graduate School, advises faculty on [postdoctoral training policies and guidelines](#). Faculty should also consult the Postdoctoral Fellows section of the [Northwestern Staff Handbook](#) for additional information.

### Research Staff Policies

The Office of the Vice President for Research advises faculty on [research staff policies and guidance](#).

### Access to Scheduled Classes

Scheduled University classes normally are open only to students who have formally registered for the classes in the customary manner. The instructor responsible for a class may give permission to attend to a person not duly registered for the class and may require unauthorized persons to leave the classroom. The instructor may establish limits concerning the extent to which class proceedings may be electronically recorded and may permit or prohibit the use of electronic recording devices at their discretion.

### *Scholarly Activities of the Faculty*

#### Proposals to External Agencies

The University strongly urges faculty members to seek external support for their research, consistent with their disciplines. The Office for Sponsored Research (OSR) and Accounting Services for Research and Sponsored Programs (ASRSP) handle administrative details and provide assistance. OSR facilitates research by identifying funding sources, assisting in proposal development, reviewing and endorsing proposals, negotiating agreements, accepting and appropriating awards, interpreting guidelines, and promoting compliance with agency and University policies. ASRSP is responsible for effort reporting, invoicing, coordinating audits, and preparing financial reports.

Proposals originate with an individual faculty member or a group of investigators. Once completed, a proposal must be reviewed by the investigator's department chair and dean (or center director) for compliance with University policies and for availability of resources. Following endorsement by the department chair and dean (or center director), the proposal is forwarded to OSR, where it is recorded, reviewed for adherence to University and agency requirements and University budget regulations, signed on behalf of the University, and sent to the sponsor.

OSR provides pre-award and post-award service to investigators. Members of the staff are available for consultation on all matters concerning the external funding of sponsored programs.

The [policies and guidance page](#) of the Office for Research website provides links to policies, guidelines, procedures, and other resources relating to the conduct and administration of research at the University, including submission of proposals, administration of awards, and compliance with prevailing regulations. The [Authorship Guidelines](#), available on the Faculty Senate website, address standards for scientific and scholarly publications and are intended to promote a coherent approach to authorship across the University.

Faculty members may not approach foundations, corporations, or individual donors for support without prior review and approval of such contacts by the school dean.

### Human and Animal Subjects

All biomedical and behavioral research, clinical trials, teaching, and related activities involving human or animal subjects conducted at or sponsored by the University, regardless of the source of support, must be reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), as appropriate.

All research involving human subjects must either be reviewed and approved by IRB or be certified by IRB as exempt from review before any research is undertaken. IRB approval is required for research utilizing questionnaires, interviews, and other means of gathering attitudes, opinions, and views, as well as research involving direct biological or behavioral interventions. Studies involving retrospective chart review, database analysis, prospective collection of biological specimens, and collection of blood samples must also be reviewed by IRB before the study is conducted. The Office of the Institutional Review Board determines whether or not a specific study is exempt from IRB review; such a determination may not be made by the individual investigator.

Faculty members are reminded that surveys or questionnaires distributed to students in connection with faculty research or teaching activities may require IRB review; the IRB should be consulted before any such instruments are distributed. When students under faculty supervision are themselves engaged in research involving human subjects that requires IRB approval, the faculty member is responsible for ensuring that the students are informed of the need for IRB review.

In the case of animal subjects, IACUC determines that the animals are used in a humane manner, proper anesthesia procedures and euthanasia methods are observed, and the proposed projects are in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and laws. In addition, IACUC inspects animal facilities and investigator laboratories and reports its findings to the vice president for research (VPR). IACUC also makes recommendations to the VPR regarding any aspect of the institution's animal program, facilities, or personnel training.

Further information may be obtained from the [Institutional Review Board](#) and from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#).

## Research Safety

The Office of Research Safety (ORS) fosters safety awareness and assists faculty, staff (including postdoctoral fellows), and undergraduate and graduate students in achieving a safe workplace in which to pursue research, teaching, and clinical activities. The Office also educates the University community regarding compliance with regulations related to health, safety, and protection of the environment, as well as other federal, state, and local regulations. In carrying out this mission, ORS performs a basic risk management function in facilitating protection of University and individual interests against loss from accident, civil or criminal penalties, and litigation. ORS develops, implements, and coordinates the radiation, chemical and biological safety programs for all research laboratories and all other areas of the University where hazardous chemicals and human blood or other potentially infectious human materials are used. Additional information may be found on the [ORS website](#).

## Copyrights

Northwestern upholds the principle that our faculty retain copyright ownership for traditional works created by the faculty, such as books, films, musical scores, and other works of art. A group of faculty from throughout the University community created the copyright policy with that principle in mind. In addition to traditional works, the creators of the policy provided for the University to share in the benefits of copyrightable software when the University provides extraordinary resource support for the development of the software and when research sponsors assign the copyright to the University. University copyright policies are available from the [Innovation and New Ventures Office website](#).

## Patents and Inventions

Patentable discoveries or inventions may result from research or educational activities performed at the University. Northwestern wants to ensure that all ideas and discoveries are properly disclosed and used for the greatest possible public benefit. The University also wants to protect the patent rights of the University faculty, staff (including postdoctoral fellows), and undergraduate and graduate students, as well as those of the institution itself, and to abide by any patent regulations of agencies providing funds for sponsored programs. All faculty members are subject to Northwestern's policies on intellectual property, including the [Patent and Invention Policy](#), which gives the University rights in inventions and discoveries made under conditions of employment or from use of University facilities, resources, or support. If the University decides to protect the invention through patent, and it is subsequently licensed, a portion of the net proceeds will be made available to the inventor, as well as to the inventor's department and school or center, as described in the Patent and Invention Policy. Additional information is available from the [Innovation and New Ventures Office website](#).

## Integrity in Research

It is the policy of the University to require high ethical standards in research; to inquire into and, if necessary, investigate and resolve promptly and fairly all instances of alleged misconduct; and to comply in a timely manner with agency requirements for reporting on cases of possible



misconduct when sponsored project funds are involved. Further details are found in the Policy and Procedures for Reviewing Alleged Misconduct, available from the [policies and guidelines page](#) of the Office for Research Integrity website.

### Conflicts of Commitment and Conflicts of Interest

Faculty holding full-time appointments may not hold full-time appointments of any type in any other organization, nor may they hold faculty appointments at other educational institutions without written approval from their dean. Part-time and contributed-service faculty may hold multiple appointments but must disclose any other educational appointments at the time of their initial appointment or request approval from the dean prior to accepting such appointments.

Professional activities conducted by faculty members outside the University are a privilege, not a right, and must not interfere with a faculty member's University responsibilities. Faculty may be permitted up to 20 percent of professional effort for activities beyond the scope of their primary faculty duties involving teaching and research. However, faculty with substantial administrative responsibilities at the University may have less time available for extramural activities because effort devoted to administrative activities is not associated with any privilege to engage in outside activities. The extent of outside activities permitted for medical clinical faculty is determined by the entity (e.g., affiliated hospital) through which the faculty member carries out their clinical duties. Professional activities beyond the scope of a faculty member's primary duties may be subject to approval by his or her department chair and dean.

If a faculty member engages in professional activities outside of the institution, it should be remembered that University resources are to be used only in the interest of the University. It is not appropriate to use University resources, including staff, students (whether undergraduate or graduate), equipment, technology, facilities, etc. in those outside activities without appropriate approvals or agreements in place.

In no case may such activities be carried out either directly or by implication in the name of the University without the consent of the president of the University, who shall occasionally report such arrangements to the Board of Trustees. Consent should be requested through the appropriate dean's office. Faculty members must not use the name Northwestern in connection with outside activities in a manner that implies the University's sanction or support, unless the required consent has been obtained.

When responding to inquiries in their fields of professional competence or acting as private citizens on issues of general public interest, faculty members may use their academic titles for purposes of identification but should make it clear that they speak, write, and act for themselves and not for the institution. Under Internal Revenue Service regulations applying to tax-exempt organizations, faculty members may not use University facilities for activities connected with political campaigns.

Further details are found in the University's [Policy on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment](#), available from the Conflict of Interest Office [website](#). Failure to comply with this policy or to disclose outside activities or interests may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of faculty appointment.

Faculty members are also expected to comply with the [University's Policy on Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships Between Faculty, Staff and Students](#) in order to ensure that Northwestern's academic and work environment remains free from real or apparent conflicts of interest when individuals in positions of unequal power at the university are involved in consensual romantic or sexual relationships. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of faculty appointment.

#### Trademark Licensing

Any use of University symbols and seals must follow Northwestern's [Trademark Licensing Policy](#), available from the Auxiliary Services [website](#).

#### *Responsibilities to the University Community*

Northwestern is an equal opportunity employer. The University is engaged in a program of affirmative action that seeks to ensure adequate representation of minorities, women, qualified veterans, and individuals with disabilities among both its academic and nonacademic employees. All members of the faculty and staff are expected to cooperate in ensuring the success of this effort.

#### Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates.

Harassment, whether verbal, physical, visual, or through any other medium, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. This includes harassing conduct affecting tangible job benefits, interfering unreasonably with an individual's academic or work performance, or creating what a reasonable person would perceive to be an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Further prohibited by law is discrimination against any employee and/or job applicant who chooses to inquire about, discuss, or disclose their own compensation or the compensation of another employee or applicant.

Prohibited discrimination based on sex includes sexual misconduct, including but not limited to, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and dating or domestic violence. Such conduct violates Northwestern's values and disrupts the living, learning, and working environment for students, faculty, staff, and other community members. The University strictly prohibits retaliation against any community member for reporting an incident of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct or for participating, in any manner, in an investigation or hearing related to a report of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct.

All members of the Northwestern community – faculty, staff (including postdoctoral fellows),

undergraduate and graduate students, and contracted vendors – share a collective responsibility for creating a discrimination-free and harassment-free environment.

The University is firmly committed to free expression and academic freedom. However, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, through speech or otherwise, are not protected expression nor the proper exercise of academic freedom.

### Relevant Policies

Northwestern's [Policy on Institutional Equity](#) contains the University's definitions of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. Pursuant to the Department of Education's 2020 regulations implementing Title IX, the University has adopted an [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#), which governs certain instances of sexual misconduct. The University's prohibitions on sexual misconduct go beyond the matters covered by Title IX. As such, allegations of sexual misconduct that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment may fall within the jurisdiction of the Policy on Institutional Equity.

If a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct is found to be substantiated, sanctions and/or corrective action may follow, imposed in accordance with relevant University policies and procedures (see "[Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#)").

Northwestern University complies with federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination based on the protected categories listed above, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX requires educational institutions, such as Northwestern, to prohibit discrimination based on sex (including sexual harassment) in the University's educational programs and activities, including in matters of employment and admissions. In addition, Northwestern provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants, students, and employees with disabilities and to individuals who are pregnant.

### Contact Information for Reporting Alleged Violations

The remaining paragraphs in this section reflect updated contact information for reporting alleged violations, including information for the U.S. Department of Education.

Information on Title IX Sexual Harassment, including information on how to file a report or complaint, how Northwestern will respond, and the complaint resolution procedures and process, can be found in the [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#). Information on other forms of sexual misconduct, discrimination or harassment, including information on how to file a report or complaint, how Northwestern will respond, and the complaint resolution procedures and process, can be found in the [Policy on Institutional Equity](#).

Anyone with questions or who wishes to file a complaint under the Policy on Institutional Equity or with respect to nondiscrimination or reasonable accommodations should contact Northwestern's Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [equity@northwestern.edu](mailto:equity@northwestern.edu).

Anyone with questions or who wishes to file a complaint specific to sex discrimination (including sexual misconduct and sexual harassment) should contact Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu).

A person may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html) or calling 800-421-3481. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to Northwestern may be referred to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator, the United States Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, or both.

Faculty who are unsure how to proceed with an allegation or who are seeking consultation on an issue or incident should contact the Office of Equity for further direction.

### Demonstration

Northwestern welcomes the expression of ideas, including viewpoints that may be considered unorthodox or unpopular. The University encourages freedom of speech, freedom of inquiry, freedom of dissent, and freedom to demonstrate in a peaceful fashion. Regardless of their own views, community members share a corresponding responsibility to welcome and promote this freedom for all. They also share a responsibility to maintain an atmosphere conducive to scholarly, creative, and educational pursuits and to respect the safety and rights of all individuals. No community member may obstruct (or attempt to prevent or obstruct) on-campus activities such as classes, research, learning, meetings, interviews, ceremonies, emergency services, or University business; co-curricular activities; University or public events; or medical center access or business. Similarly, no community member may use or occupy campus facilities so as to impede the carrying forward of such activities or events. For a full description of the policy and resources available to support peaceful demonstration, see [University Demonstration Policy](#).

### Drug-Free Workplace

Northwestern is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace in compliance with applicable laws. The unlawful possession, use, distribution, sale, or manufacture of controlled substances is prohibited on University premises.

### Minors Policy and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Northwestern is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for participants in its programs, including minors who participate in camps, clinics, workshops, conferences, research, and other programs and activities sponsored by or affiliated with the University. Community members who interact with minors in any capacity in connection with these activities are expected to foster and maintain a safe and secure environment for minors. Additionally, the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act requires all Northwestern personnel to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as well as to notify Northwestern's Office of Risk Management and its Office of Compliance, Audit, and Advisory Services in writing that a report has been made (see [Minors at](#)

[Northwestern Policy](#)).

## **Conditions of Faculty Service**

Faculty and staff are expected to be familiar with and act in accordance with the University's [Standards for Business Conduct](#). Faculty are expected to comply with the University's policies and procedures that are published and available to the faculty, as well as with federal and state regulatory requirements. Additional information on the University's policies is available on the [University Policy website](#).

The Office of Human Resources is responsible for the recruitment, hiring, promotion, salary adjustment, and termination of staff employees. Policies and procedures concerning staff are specified in the Northwestern Staff Handbook, available on the [policies and procedures page](#) of the office's website.

### *Appointments*

Written procedures and regulations governing appointments for each school are available from the Office of the Dean of the school. Letters offering appointment to the faculty are official only when written by the dean or associate dean of the school. All offers are subject to the prospective faculty member's demonstrating employment eligibility as required by state and federal law. When necessary, and without providing legal counsel, the International Office assists prospective faculty members in obtaining proper immigration status permitting work in the United States. It is in all cases the faculty member's responsibility to maintain proper immigration status and work authorization in the United States.

Unless the faculty member's letter of appointment specifies that the appointment is not tenure eligible, the ranks of professor, associate professor, and assistant professor, are considered to be tenure-line faculty ranks, and full-time service in these ranks is counted as part of the probationary period during which a decision about the granting of tenure is made.

The categories of clinical faculty, faculty in residence, teaching track faculty, or lecturer faculty with the ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, distinguished senior lecturer, senior lecturer, or instructor are non-tenure-eligible positions. Service in any of these ranks may not be counted as part of the probationary period. These non-tenure-eligible appointments in certain schools of the University perform various specialized functions and may be considered as annual appointments or as multi-year appointments. Such appointments are made in accordance with established procedures formulated by the school concerned.

### *Joint Budgetary Appointments*

Faculty appointments may be held simultaneously in more than one department. If both departments provide salary support, the appointment may be referred to as a joint budgetary appointment. The department providing the major portion of salary support is the primary department; if two departments contribute equally, one must still be designated as "primary."

The primary department takes responsibility in reviewing the faculty member for annual salary

changes, reappointment, promotion, or award of tenure; the second department plays an advisory role and submits its recommendations to the “primary” department in a timely manner. In circumstances in which a faculty member is shared equally by two departments, the faculty member may choose which department should serve as primary, a choice that may be changed subsequently with the approval of the respective chairs and deans. The initial selection, however, should be specified clearly in the faculty member’s letter of appointment. For faculty with joint budgetary appointments, faculty rank and tenure status must be the same in all participating departments.

### *Tenure*

Tenure signifies an appointment for an indefinite period. Service as full-time, tenure-line faculty in the ranks of instructor (except in Feinberg School of Medicine), assistant professor and associate professor is counted as part of the probationary period, by the end of which a decision about the granting of tenure is made according to the procedures described below. “Clinical” appointments, appointments on “the clinical track,” and appointments in Feinberg School of Medicine on the “clinical scholar” track are non-tenure-eligible appointments.

Except in Feinberg, where the probationary period may be as long as nine years, decisions regarding tenure at Northwestern are generally made in the sixth year of full-time paid service in a tenure line faculty rank. Following the review of the faculty member’s candidacy for tenure, the faculty member is notified either that tenure has been granted or that a decision has been made not to grant tenure. The academic year following the tenure review is either the faculty member’s first year with tenure or the terminal year (non-tenure-eligible) on the faculty. Neither service as a visiting faculty member at Northwestern nor service at another institution prior to appointment at Northwestern is counted as part of the probationary period; in some cases, however, the probationary period at Northwestern may be abbreviated in consideration of previous service at another institution.

Tenure-track faculty members with budgetary appointments in more than one school should be provided by the deans of those schools with written statements setting forth the process by which they will be evaluated for promotion and/or tenure.

### Extending the Probationary Period

Before taking leaves of absence during the pre-tenure, probationary period, faculty members may request that the leave time not count as part of the probationary period; this request may be made for such reasons as public or private service outside Northwestern, or for personal reasons such as childbearing, adoption, child rearing, personal or family emergencies, or illness. (See sections below on [“Leaves of Absence”](#) and [“Medical Leave.”](#))

Northwestern will permit faculty members to request extensions of their probationary period in cases where circumstances have arisen to interfere substantially with the research and/or other projects the faculty member intends to submit as part of their tenure review. Such circumstances may include parental responsibilities relating to the birth, adoption, or rearing of a child; personal or family emergencies, for example, chronic illness of the faculty member or a member of their immediate family; or problems beyond the faculty member’s control relating to their research or

scholarly activities. Approval of requests to extend the probationary period will be made without regard to whether a faculty member takes a leave related to the same circumstances presented for the extension. In cases of birth or adoption, approval of requests to extend the probationary period for one year is automatic. In cases of childrearing, requests to extend the probationary period for parents who are at least an equal partner in caring for a child will generally receive favorable consideration. Extensions for childbirth and/or adoption and/or childrearing are limited to a total of two years within a faculty member's pre-tenure probationary period, regardless of the number of children.

All requests for extension of the probationary period must be made by the faculty member in writing and submitted before the beginning of the final year of the probationary appointment. Procedures for requesting such an extension are set forth in the [Policy on Extending the Probationary Period for Tenure-Track Faculty](#), available from the Office of the Provost website.

Certain individuals in programs such as the Center for Public Safety, the Department of Athletics and Recreation, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps and certain administrators elsewhere in the University may be given courtesy faculty appointments that are coterminous with, and secondary to, their primary administrative appointments and do not lead to tenure. In most matters, administrators holding these coterminous appointments are covered by the provisions for exempt personnel in the Staff Handbook.

### *Promotion and Tenure Procedures*

Although procedures concerning promotion and tenure vary somewhat from school to school, the University's goal is to ensure that faculty approved for promotion and/or tenure have met the highest standards with respect to professional achievement in the areas of scholarship/creative work and teaching. (See [Policy on Tenure and Promotion Standards and Procedures](#), on the Office of the Provost website). Procedures governing promotion and tenure review for each school are available in written form from the Office of the Dean of the school. In all cases, promotion and tenure procedures call for faculty committee evaluation and recommendation, followed (in cases where promotion or tenure is recommended) by a recommendation by the dean of the school to the provost, and thence to the Board of Trustees. The individual's record is carefully considered with regard to teaching, research accomplishments and potential, service, and the relative quality of the individual's academic and professional achievements as a whole. A negative decision at any level is subject to appeal within the procedures provided by the University. A faculty member may request to be considered for tenure at any time, but the consideration for tenure takes place no later than during the final year of the probationary period. Should a faculty member request review for tenure earlier than required and not be approved for the award of tenure, the faculty member may re-submit a request a second time, but no later than the final year of the probationary period.

### *Assistant Professors*

Though appointment lengths may vary, depending upon a faculty member's prior experience, tenure-line assistant professors are normally appointed for a three-year term. The appointment may be renewed for a second three-year term (and for a third three-year term at Feinberg School of Medicine). A decision regarding continued service as an assistant professor at the University

is made no later than before the end of the individual's third year of full-time service. Teaching records, publication records, creative activities, and service all factor into this decision.

### Associate Professors

Associate professors with less than six years of service at Northwestern may or may not be tenured. A decision regarding tenure is made before the expiration of six years of full-time service in all tenure-line faculty ranks, except at Feinberg School of Medicine where the decision on tenure must be made before the end of nine years of full-time service.

### Professors

Professors with tenure have appointments of indefinite duration. Professors without tenure are on term appointments specified at the time of the appointment.

### *Evaluation*

The substance of any evaluation initiated by a department chair or dean and conducted by a standing or ad hoc faculty committee, department chair, dean, or central administrator of a faculty member's performance in teaching, research, creative activities, or service will be made available to the faculty member upon request. This shall include evaluations for purposes of setting salaries, granting promotion and tenure, reassigning duties, including reassigning laboratory space or other research facilities. At the request of any faculty member, the dean or department chair will meet with the faculty member to discuss informally the content of such evaluations. Untenured faculty members and their department chairs are encouraged to meet together annually.

Should such an evaluation indicate that the faculty member is failing to meet minimum expectations with respect to teaching and/or research, the dean or department chair will meet with the faculty member to discuss corrective action. This may include, but is not limited to, academic leave to further career development (see "[Academic Leaves of Absence](#)" section below) or medical evaluation to identify remediable factors contributing to unsatisfactory performance (see "[Medical Leave](#)" section below).

Information about [University Disciplinary Procedures](#) is provided in the sections below.

### *Notice of Release*

A non-tenured tenure-eligible faculty member or a member of the non-tenure-eligible faculty may be released at the expiration of the faculty member's appointment but only if the administration gives the faculty member written notice of such intended release one year in advance of the expiration of the appointment, except in the case of one-year appointments. [Librarian](#) and [research faculty](#) are governed by their respective terms of appointment documents.

### *Appeal Procedures*



Faculty members will be notified of decisions on reappointment, promotion, or tenure. If the decision is negative, the faculty member may request reasons for the decision and a meeting with the chair or dean in a timely fashion. In cases of nonrenewal of appointment or denial of promotion or tenure, the dean (or the dean's designee) will supply written reasons. The faculty member denied reappointment or tenure may believe that there has been inadequate consideration of his/her/their case; a violation of academic freedom in the decision process; or discrimination on a basis not demonstrably related to the faculty member's performance, including but not limited to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship, or veteran status. In such a case, the faculty member may appeal the decision to the University Faculty Appeals Panel<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to as the Faculty Appeals Panel) by filing a written submission to the Associate Provost for Faculty within 60 calendar days from the date notification of the decision is given. The Associate Provost for Faculty will convey the written appeal to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel and the faculty member's dean. The grounds for the appeal should be stated with reasonable specificity. The Faculty Appeals Panel conducts its proceedings in accordance with [Faculty Appeals Panel Guidelines](#), available from the Office of the Provost website.

Upon receiving notification of an appeal, the provost or the dean will defer implementation of any decision on the matter until after receipt of the recommendation of the Faculty Appeals Panel. If, following review of the Faculty Appeals Panel recommendation, the administration affirms the original decision, the year specified as the terminal year of the appointment will remain the terminal year. Faculty denied promotion or the award of tenure following review of the appeal by the Faculty Appeals Panel may petition the Board of Trustees. The Board will consider whether or not the faculty member's appeal received due process, not whether the faculty member merits the promotion or award of tenure. Appointments to positions such as program head, department chair, etc., are administrative appointments, and decisions regarding such appointments are not appealable.

### *Faculty Grievances*

This section covers matters not explicitly subject to formal appeal through other policies described in this Handbook (including reappointment, promotion, tenure, and disciplinary actions). Any actions pursuant to the [Faculty Fitness Panel Policy](#) are not grievable under this section; see relevant section on "[Faculty Fitness for Duty](#)" below. If a grievance involves an allegation against a faculty member of discrimination or harassment in violation of the University's policies, please see relevant sections "[University Disciplinary Procedures](#)" and "[Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Disciplinary Procedures](#)" below.

Faculty members should raise grievances with their department chair or the administrator responsible for the relevant University unit. If informal discussion does not lead to a resolution, the faculty member may bring the grievance to the attention of the appropriate dean, associate dean, or other appropriate administrative officer, depending on the nature of the grievance. If the faculty member is still dissatisfied, the faculty member may raise the grievance with the Associate

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<sup>1</sup> The Faculty Appeals Panel is made up of tenure-eligible and non-tenure-eligible faculty with representatives from all of the schools.

Provost for Faculty, who may recommend resources to assist in the informal resolution of the matter.

Faculty members may also submit a formal written complaint to their chair, dean, or to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will respond to the faculty member and decide whether to take action. Any faculty member who mediates a faculty grievance may not later sit on a fact-finding, sanctioning, or appeals panel in connection with the same dispute.

#### *Petition or Report to the Board of Trustees*

A faculty or any member of a faculty may submit a report or petition to the Board of Trustees, or its Executive Committee, on any matter concerning the interests of any school of the University. A copy of the report or petition must be delivered to the provost and the president of the University.

#### *Accommodation of Disabilities and Pregnancy*

Northwestern reasonably accommodates faculty with disabilities and faculty who are pregnant. Faculty (and applicants for a faculty position) with a disability (as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008) may be eligible for a reasonable accommodation that allows him/her/them to perform the essential functions of the position or participate in the hiring process for an open position. Employees who are pregnant, as defined by the Illinois Pregnancy Accommodation Act, also may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Access to private, non-restroom areas for breastfeeding across campus can be found by visiting the [lactation room](#) page of the Office of Human Resources website. Additional information on the process for applying for accommodations can be found in the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#), available on the Office of Human Resources website.

#### *Faculty Records*

To the extent possible and consistent with applicable law, the University will protect the confidentiality of confidential documents relating to members of the faculty.

#### *Leaves of Absence*

Unless faculty members have been formally granted leaves of absence, or special arrangements have been made with the school dean, and apart from University holidays and brief absences required for professional or other reasons, faculty members are expected to be in residence and available to students and colleagues throughout the period of their appointment — in the case of faculty on nine-month appointments, from the arrival of students in the fall through Commencement.

Leaves of absence rather than sabbatical leaves are given at Northwestern. Northwestern is committed to the scholarly and professional development of the faculty. The University recognizes the need for its faculty to engage in research and professional development activities that will benefit both the scholar and the University. Active encouragement will be given to providing opportunities for professional and research leaves.

Leaves of absence may be granted for academic/professional reasons (academic leave) or personal reasons (personal leave). A leave of absence releases a faculty member from on-campus teaching and service responsibilities for a specified period of time. Academic leaves are granted to facilitate scholarship or faculty development. Scholarship may include development of original works or creative activities. Faculty development includes such activities as the preparation of grant proposals, efforts to develop expertise in a new field, or the acceptance of visiting positions at other institutions.

A faculty member is not considered to be on leave during a term in which the faculty member happens not to have any scheduled classroom responsibilities but maintains all educational and service responsibilities, such as advising, departmental administration, committee assignments, and other forms of service. Such a faculty member is considered to be “in residence.” However, if the faculty member desires to be absent from campus for any substantial period during the nonteaching quarter, i.e., a month or more, a formal leave of absence should be requested for that specific time period.

With the exception of faculty family leaves for childbearing, adoption, and childrearing (see “[Medical Leave](#)” section below for information on faculty family leaves), leaves of absence must be approved by the provost and the Board of Trustees, following recommendation by the school dean. Faculty members who seek a leave of absence (other than a faculty family leave for childbearing, adoption, or childrearing) should apply through the department chair and/or dean.

#### Personal Leaves of Absence

A faculty member may be granted a personal leave of absence of fixed duration for reasons such as personal or family emergencies, required military service, and illness. The [Policy on Faculty Family Leave](#) offers paid leaves for childbearing, adoption, and/or childrearing. Northwestern faculty are covered by the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Leaves provided under the FMLA are generally unpaid, while those taken due to the faculty member’s own illness or under the Policy on Faculty Family Leave are paid for a specified period. Leaves for childbearing, adoption, or childrearing taken under the Policy on Faculty Family Leave are counted towards the maximum entitlement of 12 weeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period. (See “[Medical Leave](#)” section below for additional information on medical and faculty family leaves.)

#### Academic Leaves of Absence

The University recognizes the need to provide academic leaves of absence in a manner that minimizes the disruption of educational, research and service activities. For this reason, the following general rules govern the awarding of leaves. A faculty member:

- (1) is encouraged to secure outside funding to at least partially recover school costs. Provision of financial support is the responsibility of the faculty member in concert with the school dean. In cases where funding for a warranted leave is not readily available, the applicant and the dean should seek support in a variety of ways, making full use of all University resources. On occasion, special circumstances may arise that warrant funding

from central administrative resources to promote professional development.

(2) will continue to meet certain responsibilities to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, e.g., directing research and thesis progress.

and

(3) will not be granted a leave of absence to accept a tenure-track or tenured faculty appointment or permanent full-time administrative position at another academic institution.

### Leaves of Absence Procedures

Each school publishes policies and procedures for faculty leaves of absence, including guidelines concerning the length and frequency of leaves. In evaluating the request for an academic leave of absence, the dean, with the advice of the chair of the faculty member's department, will consider:

- The faculty member's rationale and plan for the leave
- The faculty member's prior performance and achievements
- The faculty member's past leave history
- The impact on the department and/or school in meeting its educational mission
- The financial impact on the department and/or school

In making recommendations to the provost, the school dean may propose exceptions to the general standards stated above in order to meet the unique needs of particular scholars and disciplines. In any event, exceptions to these policies may only be made with the approval of the provost. All leaves must have final authorization from the Board of Trustees.

A faculty member interested in exploring a new career or entrepreneurial opportunity may be eligible for a renewable, non-salaried leave of absence. Interested faculty should consult the dean of the school or the Office of the Provost.

In authorizing a leave, the University determines the length of the leave, whether any portion of the faculty member's salary and benefits will be provided during the leave, and the conditions of the leave with respect to the retirement program, tenure, and other relevant matters. Individual and institutional obligations in connection with any leave of absence, including its relation to the timing of subsequent tenure decisions (where applicable), should be confirmed in writing to the faculty member prior to commencement of the leave. (See policies in "[Tenure](#)" section above and "[Medical Leave](#)" section below.)

Leave without pay is granted for qualified military service, as provided by law. According to policy established by the Board of Trustees, faculty members serving in the United States armed forces will be rehired at their former academic ranks upon returning from service.

### *Summer Medical Leaves for Untenured Tenure-Track Faculty*

Tenure-track faculty members on nine-month appointments who receive medical leave as described in the section of this handbook on "[Medical Leave](#)" for six weeks or longer during a summer of the tenure probationary period may request release from teaching responsibilities for one academic term in the subsequent academic year.

### *Release from Teaching for Tenure-Track Faculty*

Faculty members appointed as untenured, tenure-track assistant professors in the schools educating undergraduate students may request a total of three academic quarters free from formal course teaching during their first four years in that rank. Such requests will generally be granted, provided that neither a recommendation for promotion and tenure nor a decision not to reappoint has been made regarding the faculty member. Generally no more than one such quarter will be granted in a single academic year. In most cases the teaching load for the year will remain the same, with courses redistributed throughout that academic year. Faculty members with probationary periods of fewer than six years will be granted fewer than three such quarters.

### *Notice of Resignation*

In order to ensure appropriate staffing and continuity for the University's educational and research programs, a faculty member who desires to resign his/her/their faculty appointment is expected to notify the dean of the school no later than May 1 of the academic year prior to the academic year in which the resignation would take effect or 30 days after receiving notification of the terms of continued appointment for the academic year in which the resignation will occur, whichever is later. Northwestern follows the widely recognized practice that offers of appointment made or pending on May 1 or thereafter are effective only after the intervention of an academic year, unless special release has been granted to permit an earlier departure.

### *Retirement and Other Benefit Programs*

Retirement intentions of current faculty members figure importantly in planning for faculty hiring. University policy regarding retirement arrangements is governed by two considerations: the faculty member's judgment on what is best for him/her/them personally and the University's responsibility to maintain superior programs of teaching and research. The goal is both to maximize flexibility for faculty and to maintain the quality of the University's programs. Faculty members who are contemplating retirement should consult with the dean of their school or the Office of the Provost.

Upon agreement between a faculty member and the faculty member's dean, a phased retirement of up to three years' duration is available to faculty members 55 years of age or over who have at least 15 years of service at Northwestern. Faculty members who enter into a phased retirement agreement typically are assigned 50 percent of their normal academic responsibilities (as defined by the dean of the school) and receive 60 percent of their normal academic year salary. University contributions to benefits treat the faculty member as full-time but are based on the reduced salary. Upon receiving phased retirement, a faculty member enters into an agreement with the University that specifies financial arrangements and an agreed-upon retirement date; all other protections of tenure continue to apply. During phased retirement, faculty members may supplement their income by withdrawals from a retirement account; such withdrawals while

faculty remain in service to the University can occur only if the faculty member is 59 and one-half years of age or older. Faculty members who are considering [phased retirement](#) should consult the dean of their school or the Office of the Provost.

Provided that they do not take other employment where they would be eligible for such coverage, faculty members with at least 10 years of continuous full-time service who participate in a University health or dental plan as of the date of retirement are eligible to continue such coverage through Northwestern retiree health and/or dental insurance programs — including family coverage — beginning at age 55. Faculty members with fewer than 10 years of full-time service may qualify according to a schedule available on the Benefits Division website. Participants in retiree health and/or dental plans must pay the full premium for Northwestern coverage, without any University contribution. Should a retired faculty member's Northwestern retiree health and/or dental insurance coverage be discontinued for any reason as permitted by the plan, such coverage may not be reinstated. Persons may not be added to the retiree's coverage following enrollment in the retiree health or dental insurance plan. Should a faculty member die while actively employed by the University, that faculty member's surviving spouse or domestic partner may continue health and/or dental coverage under the retiree plan even if the faculty member did not qualify for retiree coverage at the time of death (in terms of age or service). See additional retirement planning information on the Office of Human Resources [website](#).

### *Indemnification*

All members of the faculty are indemnified by the University against liability for acts within the scope of their duties for the University, including service for another organization undertaken at the University's request. Excluded from indemnity are acts involving a breach of duty of loyalty to the University, acts involving intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law, or transactions from which the individual derives an improper personal benefit.

### *Eligibility for and Privileges of Emeritus Faculty*

Any faculty member who resigns from his or her academic position and retires after reaching the age of 55 following a minimum of 10 years of continuous service to Northwestern is eligible for emeritus status, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees. An eligible faculty member who desires emeritus status asks the school dean to make such a recommendation to the provost. In considering such requests, the provost weighs the faculty member's contributions to the University's teaching and/or research activities and service to the University community. Service to one's discipline outside the University or to an institution affiliated with the University is not considered.

If a faculty member who would be eligible for emeritus status under the conditions described above accepts a full-time academic appointment at another institution, the conferral of emeritus status would be delayed until the faculty member actually retires from full-time faculty service.

Because they typically have significant professional responsibilities beyond the University, part-time and adjunct faculty will generally not have achieved the record of service specifically to Northwestern necessary to merit appointment to emeritus status. Emerita/us standing is not

granted to persons whose faculty status has been largely nominal and who have not carried the independent instructional and/or research responsibilities generally associated with a faculty position in the field (e.g., administrators who hold coterminous faculty titles).

The names of emeriti are listed in the University directory. Emeriti may use Northwestern stationery for scholarly activities. They are given University identification cards. They have access to routine University computer networks and computer services as well as faculty discounts on software purchased through Northwestern. They are invited to attend University functions usually open to faculty members, including faculty meetings, although they are not eligible to vote. When applicable, they retain membership in the Graduate Faculty. They receive pertinent University, school, and departmental mailings, including minutes of faculty meetings. They may receive free campus parking permits and may obtain tickets to athletic and cultural events and access to recreational facilities at faculty rates. They and their spouses or domestic partners are invited to University functions. They have library privileges.

Although it is ordinarily not possible to provide office and laboratory space for an emerita/us faculty member, such space will be made available where possible, and school and department offices will do their best to be helpful in recording and relaying telephone messages. Proposals for research by emeriti will be considered and forwarded to funding agencies in the same manner as for faculty members. Department chair approval for submission of a research proposal by an emerita/us faculty member does represent a departmental commitment to provide appropriate laboratory or other required space should the proposal be successful.

Because of their long and distinguished service in support of the teaching and research missions of the University, emeriti may be asked to serve in a paid capacity for teaching or administrative duties following retirement. Those who obtain salary from extramural research funding may also be paid by the University. With respect to benefits, however, emeriti are considered retirees, not paid employees.

### *Travel*

All tenured, tenure-eligible, and non-tenure-eligible faculty members are encouraged to participate in the activities of learned societies, and when they take a significant part in the meetings of such groups, the University makes an effort to help defray their travel expenses.

### *Travel Allowances: Dependent Care Expenditures*

The University offers all full-time faculty (permanent status but excluding research faculty) a taxable grant for qualified short-term dependent care expenses incurred when traveling to attend professional meetings, conferences, workshops, and professional development opportunities. The grant is intended to provide compensation for approved incremental expenses for either child or adult dependent care. Grants may be used for additional dependent care at home while the recipient is traveling, for on-site dependent care at a conference or meeting, or for the cost of transporting the dependent and/or caregiver to a conference or meeting location. Information regarding the [travel grant policy](#) and how to apply is available on the Office of the Provost website.

The University also offers a backup childcare reimbursement program that can be used for childcare costs incurred to attend an on-campus meeting, conference, lecture, or other event outside of a faculty member's regular childcare hours. Information on this resource and the [application form](#) is available on the Office of Human Resources website.

### *Salary Payments*

The University's fiscal year begins September 1 and ends August 31. All faculty members (whether on 9-, 10-, 11-, or 12-month appointments) receive their salaries in 12 monthly installments during the fiscal year. Salary payments are distributed on the last business day of each month. Salary payments must be deposited directly to faculty members' bank accounts; the Office of Human Resources will furnish information on this [direct deposit program](#).

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures**

### *Applicability*

Pursuant to the Department of Education's 2020 regulations implementing Title IX, the University has adopted an [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#). Specific conduct covered by the Title IX Regulations on Sexual Harassment is addressed through the University's Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment. The policies and procedures outlined in that policy apply to matters alleging Title IX Sexual Harassment and supersede those described below which apply to non-Title IX sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating violence or domestic violence not constituting Title IX Sexual Harassment) and other discrimination and harassment matters.

The University's prohibitions on sexual misconduct go beyond the matters covered by Title IX. As such, allegations of sexual misconduct that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment may fall within the jurisdiction of the Policy on Institutional Equity. For all non-Title IX sexual misconduct and other discrimination and harassment conduct that falls outside of the Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment, the process described in the University's Policy on Institutional Equity and this section shall apply.

The following procedures apply in cases where the University's Office of Equity has determined, by a preponderance of the evidence gathered through an investigation, that a faculty member has violated the [Policy on Institutional Equity](#).

These procedures supersede those described in the "[University Disciplinary Procedures for Matters Other than Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment or Research Misconduct](#)" section below. If a case involves multiple findings, including at least one finding that a faculty member has violated one or more of the policies listed above, then these procedures apply instead of those described in the "[University Disciplinary Procedures for Matters Other than Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment or Research Misconduct](#)" section below.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> However, any allegations or findings of research misconduct are to be handled separately under the University Policy for Reviewing Alleged Research Misconduct and related procedures notwithstanding any findings of sexual misconduct in the same case.



Any questions with respect to applications of the [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#) or the [Policy on Institutional Equity](#) should be directed to Northwestern's Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [equity@northwestern.edu](mailto:equity@northwestern.edu).

### *Investigation and Sanctioning Recommendations*

The Office of Equity investigates and resolves complaints of non-Title IX sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating violence or domestic violence not constituting Title IX Sexual Harassment), discrimination, and harassment pursuant to the University's [Policy on Institutional Equity](#).

The procedures for investigations are set forth in the University's Policy on Institutional Equity.

If the Office of Equity determines that this policy was violated by a faculty member, the Office of Equity will make a recommendation regarding whether the policy violation warrants considering termination or suspension.

### The Investigation

Each party has the opportunity to meet with investigators, identify witnesses, and suggest questions. The investigators complete witness interviews and the gathering of evidence, and the investigators prepare a preliminary report. The preliminary report will include the information provided by the complainant, the respondent, and each witness, and either a copy or written summary of all relevant evidence collected during the investigation. The preliminary report will not contain any findings.

The parties will be provided with an opportunity to review the preliminary report and respond. Typically, the report will be provided to each party electronically. Parties are expected to maintain the privacy of this document and may not distribute this document. Unauthorized distribution of this document may result in referral to the appropriate office for disciplinary action.

The parties may each submit comments, feedback, additional evidence, requests for additional steps in the investigation, suggest written relevant questions for any party or witness, names of additional witnesses, or any other information they deem relevant to the investigators, up to twenty (20) pages, within ten (10) calendar days after it is made available for review. The Director, Equal Opportunity and Access and/or the Director, Sexual Misconduct Response and Resources or designee may, at their discretion, waive or adjust the page or time limit for the feedback.

If new, relevant information is provided or identified by one of the parties, the information will be incorporated into the preliminary report and the parties will be provided a second and final opportunity to review and provide feedback regarding the new information before the investigators proceed with finalizing the report. The parties may each submit up to ten (10) pages of feedback regarding the new information within ten (10) calendar days after it is made

available for review. The Director, Equal Opportunity and Access and/or the Director, Sexual Misconduct Response and Resources or designee may, at their discretion, waive or adjust the page or time limit for the feedback.

Once the investigator has incorporated all feedback to the second investigative report, the Office of Equity will review the report and determine whether the preponderance of the evidence shows the Respondent has violated the [Policy on Institutional Equity](#), or other identified policies. The Complainant and the Respondent will both be notified simultaneously in writing of the outcome of the investigation. The notifications will include findings related to violations of policy and the rationale for all findings. In the event a policy violation is found, the Office of Equity will make a recommendation regarding whether the policy violation warrants considering termination or suspension. This recommendation will be included with the report.

This report and recommendation will be sent by the Office of Equity to the faculty member's department chair, the dean, and the Associate Provost for Faculty. The Office of Equity will also share the recommendation with the complainant and the respondent.

### Sanctioning Recommendations

If the Office of Equity, upon completing the investigation, concludes that a policy violation does *not* warrant considering termination or suspension, the faculty member's dean will determine the nature and timing of the sanctions or corrective actions, if any. If the Office of Equity, upon completing the investigation, concludes that a policy violation does warrant considering termination or suspension, the Associate Provost for Faculty, or their designee, in consultation with the faculty member's dean, will then form the Sanctioning Panel, which will determine the appropriate sanctions.

Sanctions and other corrective actions for violations of these policies may include, but are not limited to, those listed in the University's [Policy on Institutional Equity](#).

In most cases, the University investigates complaints of sexual misconduct, discrimination, or harassment within 90 days. This time period may vary depending on the availability of the parties and witnesses, the scope of the investigation and/or the sanctioning process, or unforeseen circumstances. Nothing in this policy shall limit or interfere with the Office of Equity's ability to take interim measures before the outcome of an investigation or the sanctioning process, as set forth in Section I.F.4 of the University [Policy on Institutional Equity](#).

### *Sanctioning Panel*

The Sanctioning Panel shall be composed of the faculty member's dean,<sup>3</sup> the Associate Provost for Faculty,<sup>4</sup> and two faculty representatives selected from the Faculty Appeals Panel. In matters involving a member of the non-tenure-eligible faculty, one of the two faculty representatives on the Sanctioning Panel shall be a non-tenure-eligible faculty member. The Associate Vice President for Equity (or designee), the Faculty Wellness Program Director, and the Vice

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<sup>3</sup> Any reference to the dean in this section also includes the dean's designee.

<sup>4</sup> Any reference to the Associate Provost for Faculty in this section also includes the Associate Provost's designee.

President and Chief Human Resource Officer will be present as a resource to the Panel but will not vote, except that in the event of a tie, the Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer will be called upon to vote to break the tie. A representative from the Office of General Counsel will be available to provide legal advice to the Sanctioning Panel.

The role of the Sanctioning Panel shall not be to gather new evidence, re-investigate the allegations, or make findings of fact, but to determine what, if any, sanctions should be imposed for the violation found in the investigation. In determining the appropriate sanctions and other corrective actions, the Sanctioning Panel shall consider the investigation report and findings, including any materials submitted on appeal to the Associate Provost for Faculty (see earlier section on “[Investigation and Sanctioning Recommendations](#)”), any prior relevant disciplinary or other conduct matters involving the faculty member, any evidence of a pattern of behavior by the faculty member that has been established in the course of the proceeding, any risk to the safety of university community members, and sanctions or other corrective actions assessed in comparable situations at the University. The Office of Equity shall advise the faculty member, in writing, of the Sanctioning Panel’s decision regarding the outcome of the panel’s deliberations. The Office of Equity will simultaneously inform the complainant of whether the Sanctioning Panel recommended imposing sanctions or other corrective actions and the nature of any recommended sanctions/corrective actions that directly affect the complainant.

### *Appeal*

If either party wishes to appeal the decision issued by the Sanctioning Panel, that party must file an appeal in writing with the Associate Provost for Faculty within 10 calendar days of the receipt of the decision of the Sanctioning Panel. It shall be at the discretion of the Sanctioning Panel whether to implement or stay the sanctions and/or other corrective actions pending the resolution of the appeal.

If a timely appeal is received, the Associate Provost for Faculty shall convene the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel to consider the appeal. The work of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel should generally be completed within a 30-calendar day time frame from the date that the Panel received the appeal. The party not filing the appeal will be provided with a copy of the written appeal and shall be permitted to file a statement in response to the appeal within 10 calendar days of receiving a copy of the appeal. The role of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel shall not be to gather new evidence, re-investigate the allegations, or make findings of fact, but to determine whether the grounds for appeal specified below have been met and to make a recommendation to the provost by means of written report. The original finding and sanction are presumed to have been decided reasonably and appropriately by a preponderance of the evidence, and the only grounds for appeal are as follows:

- (1) A procedural or substantive error significantly affected the outcome of the investigation or the sanctioning process;
- (2) New evidence, unavailable during the original investigation, is now available and could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. The person filing the appeal must include a description of this new evidence, why it was not available during the

investigation, and how it could impact the outcome of the investigation;

- (3) The sanctions imposed are reasonably viewed as substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation.

In considering an appeal, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel may review all documentation from the investigation and sanctioning process and any appeal statements received from the parties, and it may pose questions of the Office of Equity and the Sanctioning Panel if needed. The Committee may, at its discretion, call individual meetings with the faculty member and complainant or any other individual with firsthand information.

The Executive Committee shall deliver its written report and recommendations to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will provide the report to the provost, the faculty member, the faculty member's dean and department chair, and the Office of Equity. The Associate Provost for Faculty will also inform the parties, with copy to the Office of Equity, of the recommendations of the Executive Committee.

Upon receipt of the recommendations of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel, the provost will reach a determination whether or not to uphold the recommendations. The provost will, generally within 15 calendar days of receiving the report, inform the Associate Provost for Faculty of their decision, who will then notify the Chair of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel, the faculty member, the faculty member's department chair and dean, the Office of Equity, and other administrators where appropriate. The Associate Provost for Faculty will also inform the parties, with copy to the Office of Equity, whether the provost implemented the actions recommended by the Executive Committee. The Chair of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel may request written reasons for the provost's decision and/or a meeting with the provost. The provost's decision is final.

If the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel determines that there was a procedural or substantive error that significantly affected the outcome of the investigation or sanctioning process, it will recommend to the provost that the complaint be returned to the Office of Equity for reconsideration in light of the errors found.

If the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel determines that new evidence should be considered, it will recommend to the provost that the case be returned to the Office of Equity for reconsideration in light of the new evidence.

If the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel determines that the sanctions imposed are substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation, it will recommend to the provost that the matter be returned to the Sanctioning Panel for reconsideration.

If, under one of the grounds described above, the provost returns the matter to the Office of Equity, the Office of Equity will reconsider the matter and issue a decision in writing to both parties simultaneously within 30 calendar days of the case being returned to it, unless it determines that additional time is required. If the Office of Equity's finding as to whether a policy violation occurred changes, or new information that may impact the sanction is included in the Office of Equity's revised findings, the Sanctioning Panel will be reconvened and will

receive the revised findings of the Office of Equity. The Sanctioning Panel may then leave unchanged, increase, decrease, or otherwise modify the sanctions. Upon reconvening, the work of the Sanctioning Panel will generally be completed within 30 calendar days. The Sanctioning Panel's decision and recommended sanctions shall be delivered to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will provide the report to the provost. The provost will then make a decision whether to uphold the Sanctioning Panel's decision and what sanctions to impose. The provost's decision is final. If the Office of Equity's finding as to whether a policy violation occurred does not change and there is no new information that may impact the sanction, the provost will make a decision based on the original recommendations of the Sanctioning Panel. The provost's decision is final.

If, under one of the grounds described above, the provost returns the matter to the Sanctioning Panel, the Sanctioning Panel will be reconvened to reconsider the matter and may then leave unchanged, increase, decrease, or otherwise modify the sanctions. Upon reconvening, the work of the Sanctioning Panel will generally be completed within 30 calendar days. The Sanctioning Panel's decision and recommended sanctions shall be delivered to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will provide the report to the provost. The provost will then make a decision whether to uphold the Sanctioning Panel's decision and what sanctions to impose. The provost's decision is final.

The Associate Provost for Faculty will inform the faculty member, the faculty member's dean and department chair, the Office of Equity, and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Appeals Panel, of the provost's final decision. The Associate Provost for Faculty will also inform the parties, with copy to the Office of Equity, of the provost's final decision.

## **University Disciplinary Procedures for Matters Other than Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct or Research Misconduct**

### *Applicability*

The University Disciplinary Procedures outlined in this section apply to all tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-eligible faculty members.

The procedures in this section do not apply to cases involving allegations or findings that a faculty member has either

- (1) violated one or more of the following University Policies: the [Interim Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment](#); or the [Policy on Institutional Equity](#). In these cases, the "[Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Disciplinary Procedures](#)" section above applies instead of the procedures outlined in this section. If a case involves multiple findings, including at least one finding that the faculty member violated one or more of the policies listed above, then the "[Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Disciplinary Procedures](#)" will apply instead of the procedures in this section;<sup>5</sup> or

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<sup>5</sup> However, any allegations or findings of research misconduct are to be handled separately under the University Policy for Reviewing Alleged Research Misconduct and related procedures notwithstanding any findings of sexual misconduct in the same case.

- (2) engaged in research misconduct, in which case the University [Policy for Reviewing Alleged Research Misconduct](#) and related procedures will apply instead of the procedures in this section, provided, however, that any sanction of termination for research misconduct may be appealed to the Board of Trustees pursuant to the procedures in the section below, “[Appeals of Termination Sanctions to the Board of Trustees](#).”

Determinations of a faculty member’s fitness for duty (in particular, determinations of whether to mandate a fitness evaluation, the results of an evaluation, and any intervention plan adopted in response to an evaluation) are governed by the “[Fitness for Duty](#)” section below and the [Faculty Fitness Panel Policy](#) and not the procedures in this section.

#### *Grounds for Disciplinary Action*

After following the procedures outlined below the University may subject a faculty member to disciplinary action if the faculty member has demonstrated conduct inconsistent with expectations of a member of the University community or the general community at large.

Adequate cause for disciplinary action under this section may be based on either (1) incompetent performance or neglect of professional duty; or (2) personal misconduct. The severity of discipline will not exceed a level that is reasonably commensurate with the severity of the cause. Adequate cause for disciplinary action may arise out of or relate to any activity relating to a faculty member’s professional life, including but not limited to teaching, departmental activities, service, creative activities, or research. However, disciplinary action will not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom.

Except in cases of temporary suspension (as defined in the “[Temporary Suspension](#)” section below), a faculty member will not be terminated or suspended under this section (or assigned to other duties in lieu of suspension) unless and until the procedures in this section have been followed and any available appeals have been exhausted.

#### *Adviser*

At any meeting with the faculty member held during the initiation, attempted settlement, fact finding, sanctioning, or appeal of an allegation of misconduct or other grounds for discipline under this section, the faculty member will be permitted to have present a non-attorney adviser of the faculty member’s choice. Although attorneys may not appear with the faculty member at these meetings, as these meetings are not considered to be legal proceedings, it is understood that the faculty member may rely on legal representation in the preparation of materials.

#### *Confidentiality*

Any individuals accused of misconduct will be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond to them. Otherwise, except as is reasonably necessary to resolve a case, the parties, fact-finding committee members, members of appeals panels, advisers, support people, and any other individuals with knowledge of a disciplinary proceeding are expected to preserve the confidentiality of the case.

### *Initiation of Disciplinary Proceedings*

When a complaint from any source is made against a faculty member, the faculty member's dean<sup>6</sup> may conduct an initial inquiry to determine whether additional fact finding is warranted. Such inquiry will be completed as expeditiously as possible.

Regardless of whether an initial inquiry is undertaken, the dean will notify the faculty member in writing of any allegations brought, the factual evidence supporting the allegations or other grounds for discipline, and any applicable policies or other standards of professional conduct.

The dean will give the faculty member an opportunity to respond to the allegations or other grounds for discipline. The dean and the faculty member may seek to resolve the matter by mutual resolution, either at the initiation of, or at any other time during, the proceedings. If the issue is resolved, the process terminates.

If efforts at informal resolution are not successful and the dean determines, in the dean's judgment, that termination or suspension is not warranted, the dean will provide the faculty member with a written summary of the findings, if applicable, and notice of sanctions, if any, with a copy to the Associate Provost for Faculty. Any sanctions imposed may be appealed using the procedures outlined in the "[Appeal of Sanctions Other than Termination or Suspension](#)" section below.

### *Fact Finding and Sanctioning for Potential Termination or Suspension*

If efforts at informal resolution are not successful and the dean determines, in the dean's judgment, that the allegations or other grounds for discipline could lead to the faculty member's termination or suspension, then a three-member *ad hoc* faculty committee will be appointed to conduct fact finding and prepare a report with recommendations, as described below. The Associate Provost for Faculty<sup>7</sup> will appoint the *ad hoc* committee members from the Faculty Appeals Panel pool, in consultation with the dean and the Chair of the Faculty Appeals Panel Executive Committee. The faculty member will have a reasonable opportunity to disqualify potential committee members for reasons of possible bias or prior involvement in the case. When the faculty member is non-tenure-eligible, a majority of the *ad hoc* committee should be non-tenure-eligible faculty. Once the *ad hoc* committee has been appointed, generally within 15 calendar days, the Associate Provost for Faculty will notify the faculty member.

The role of the *ad hoc* committee is to (1) conduct fact finding to make recommendations regarding whether adequate cause for suspension or termination has been established by a preponderance of the evidence; (2) determine the sanctions (if any) to be recommended in light of the committee's findings; and (3) prepare a written report with (a) factual findings and conclusions with respect to each allegation of misconduct or other ground for discipline raised as well as (b) any sanctions the committee recommends to be imposed in light of the factual findings and conclusions.

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<sup>6</sup>Any references to a faculty member's dean in this section also includes the dean's designee. In any case where allegations of misconduct are brought against a dean, references to the dean are instead to the provost.

<sup>7</sup>Any reference to the Associate Provost for Faculty in this section also includes the Associate Provost's designee.

The *ad hoc* committee will speak with witnesses as it determines necessary, review documentary evidence, and evaluate the relevant evidence. In carrying out its work, the committee will give each side equal opportunity to share information and to have its information considered. The faculty member will have access to available evidence that may form the basis for discipline with sufficient time to allow the faculty member to respond, if possible. The committee will consult any additional witnesses reasonably believed to have direct knowledge or information about the activity that may form the basis for discipline. The committee will arrange for complete summaries of its witness interviews to be prepared, provided to the interviewed party for comment or revision, and included as part of the committee's file.

The written report will summarize the evidence reviewed and set forth all factual findings relating to the *ad hoc* committee's conclusions. The report will specify the nature of any finding that the faculty member violated expected standards of conduct or performance and assess the seriousness of the violation. In determining recommended sanctions, the committee will consider its findings of fact, any prior relevant disciplinary or other conduct matters involving the faculty member, any evidence of a pattern of behavior by the faculty member, any risk to the safety of University community members, and sanctions or other corrective actions assessed in comparable situations at the University. Within 60 calendar days after the committee's appointment (unless the committee determines at its discretion that additional time is required), the committee will submit its recommendations via written report to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will forward the report to the dean and the faculty member.

After reviewing the *ad hoc* committee's recommendations, the dean, in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty, will determine the appropriate sanction to be imposed (if any). The dean will provide a written summary and notice of any sanctions to be imposed to the faculty member, with a copy to the Associate Provost for Faculty, generally within 21 calendar days of receipt of the *ad hoc* committee's report.

If the dean does not impose a sanction of suspension or termination, any other sanctions or other measures imposed may be appealed using the procedures outlined in the "[Appeal of Sanctions Other than Termination or Suspension](#)" section below.

If the dean imposes a sanction of suspension or termination, the faculty member may appeal the sanction to the Committee on Cause by submitting an appeal in writing to the Associate Provost for Faculty within 21 calendar days of receiving notice of the proposed sanction.

#### *Appeals of Termination or Suspension Sanctions to the Committee on Cause*

The Committee on Cause reviews appeals in connection with faculty disciplinary proceedings. Each fall, pursuant to procedures set forth in the [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#), the Faculty Senate's Executive Committee will nominate members of the Faculty Senate to serve on the Committee on Cause. A sufficient number of faculty will be nominated such that five members of the Committee on Cause are available to be empaneled to hear each case. When the appellant is a non-tenure-eligible faculty member, at least two of the five panel members will be non-tenure-eligible faculty.



No faculty member may serve on the Committee on Cause during the same year(s) that the faculty member is a member of the Faculty Appeals Panel.

If a timely written appeal is received, the Associate Provost for Faculty will forward it to Committee on Cause and the faculty member's dean. The Committee on Cause will convene a five-member panel to hear the appeal, in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty. The faculty member's dean will be permitted to file a statement in response within 21 calendar days of receipt of the appeal; provided, however, that if the appeal is received between June 1 and September 1, the response will be due on the third Friday of the month of September. If requested, the Associate Provost for Faculty may grant the dean additional time to submit a response.

The Committee on Cause panel will be appointed pursuant to established procedures of the Faculty Senate and in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty. Panel members may be disqualified for bias or prior involvement in the case, either at the request of a party or on their own initiative.

The role of the Committee on Cause panel will be to determine whether one of the following grounds for appeal is present and make a recommendation to the provost based on that determination:

- (1) a procedural or substantive error significantly affected the outcome of the investigation or the sanctioning process;
- (2) new evidence, unavailable during the investigation, is now available and could substantially affect the findings or sanctions imposed (the faculty member filing the appeal should describe this new evidence, explain why it was not available during the investigation, and explain how it could have affected the findings or sanctions imposed);  
or
- (3) the sanctions imposed are reasonably viewed to be substantially disproportionate to the severity of the cause for discipline.

In considering an appeal, the Committee on Cause is not mandated to engage in additional fact finding or investigation, but may do so if the materials submitted to it as grounds for appeal contain discrepancies or ambiguities. The panel may review the *ad hoc* committee report; any other documentation from the *ad hoc* committee's case file; and the appeal and response with any supporting documentation. Additionally, the panel may ask either party or others to produce any relevant documents not previously submitted. If requested, the panel will allow each party to submit evidence or appear before the panel to add to or explain the written record in the case. Additionally, the panel may on its own initiative request that either party appear to answer questions or request meetings with any other individual with relevant information. To the extent possible, the panel will provide each party against whom adverse information has been submitted an opportunity to respond to this information. Once the panel's review is complete, it will convene to deliberate and prepare its written report and recommendations.

The Committee on Cause panel may recommend that the provost uphold the sanction or, if it

determines one of the grounds for appeal is present, it may recommend that the provost overturn the sanction or return the case to the dean for reconsideration.

If requested by the provost, the dean will review the matter and, in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty, issue a written decision on reconsideration within 30 calendar days of the request, unless at their discretion the dean and the Associate Provost for Faculty determine additional time is required. The written decision on reconsideration will be submitted to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will forward the decision to the provost, the Chair of the Committee on Cause, the faculty member, and other administrators where appropriate.

The Committee on Cause panel will deliver its written report and recommendations to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will forward the report to the provost, the dean, the faculty member, and other administrators where appropriate. The work of the Committee on Cause panel, including submission of its written report, should be completed within a 60 calendar day time frame from the date that the panel received the appeal.

#### *Provost's Determination*

The provost will reach a determination based on the recommendations of the Committee on Cause panel. The provost will also consider the report of the *ad hoc* committee and such other evidence that the provost chooses to consider. Once a decision is reached, the provost will inform the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will then notify the dean, the Chair of the Committee on Cause, the faculty member, and other administrators where appropriate. The provost will provide written reasons for their decision to the Chair of the Committee on Cause and, if requested, meet with the Committee on Cause to discuss their decision. The provost's decision will generally be made within 15 calendar days of receipt of recommendations from the Committee on Cause panel.

A sanction of termination may be appealed to the Board of Trustees; otherwise, the decision of the provost to uphold or overturn a sanction is final.

#### *Appeals of Termination Sanctions to the Board of Trustees*

If a faculty member appeals a sanction of termination to the Board committee, it will be reviewed by a Board committee assigned by the Chair of the Board. The Board committee will base its review on the written reasons for the provost's decision; the reports of the *ad hoc* committee and the Committee on Cause panel (except in research misconduct cases, when review will be based on the Report of the Investigation Committee); and such other evidence that the Board committee chooses to consider. The provost's decision either will be sustained or returned to the provost with specific objections. The provost will then reconsider, taking into account the stated objections and receiving new evidence if necessary. The Board of Trustees will make a final decision only after study of the provost's reconsideration.

#### *Appeals of Sanctions Other than Termination or Suspension*

#### Applicability

The appeal procedures outlined in this section provide for the review of faculty disciplinary sanctions other than termination or suspension to determine whether the sanctions violate University policies, University procedures, or principles of academic freedom.

### Informal Resolution

A faculty member who has received a written notice of a sanction other than termination or suspension and wishes to appeal it (“appellant”) should first make a good faith effort to resolve the appeal with the faculty member’s dean. The dean and the faculty member should seek to resolve the matter by mutual resolution at any time during the proceedings, either through discussions or through the intervention of a professional mediator or other individual mutually agreed upon by the parties.

### Appeals to the Committee on Cause

Appellants are expected to make a good faith effort to exhaust the informal resolution step outlined in the “[Informal Resolution](#)” section above. If efforts at informal resolution do not result in a mutual settlement, the faculty member may file a formal appeal by providing written notice to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will convey the notice and any supporting documents to the dean and the Chair of the Committee on Cause. The notice of appeal must be submitted within 60 calendar days after receiving written notice of the sanction or the appeal will be untimely. However, the appellant may petition the Associate Provost for Faculty for additional time to submit a formal appeal if the dean has not responded to the appellant’s request for informal resolution within a reasonable time frame.

The dean will submit a written response to the notice of appeal to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will convey the response and any supporting documents to the Committee on Cause Chair and the appellant. The response will be due 15 calendar days after receipt of the notice of appeal, provided, however, that if the notice of appeal is received between June 1 and September 1, the response will be due on the second Friday of the month of September. If requested, the Associate Provost for Faculty may grant the dean additional time to submit a response.

The Chair of the Committee on Cause oversees the appeals process and serves as a point of contact to parties regarding the appeals procedure. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair works in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty.

A five-member panel of the Committee on Cause will be established to handle each formal appeal filed by a faculty member. The panel will be appointed pursuant to established [procedures](#) of the Faculty Senate and in consultation with the Associate Provost for Faculty. To the extent possible, a majority of the panel should be selected from units or schools other than the appellant’s unit or school. When the appellant is a non-tenure-eligible faculty member, at least two of the panel members will be non-tenure-eligible faculty. Each party will have a reasonable opportunity to disqualify potential panel members for reasons of possible bias or prior involvement in the case. One of the appointed panel members will serve as chair of the panel. The panel will be appointed within 15 days after the Committee on Cause Chair receives notice of the formal appeal and the response.

The Associate Provost for Faculty handles communications regarding appeals, assists in coordinating the training of panel members, and generally supports the work of the Committee on Cause but does not participate in any aspect of the substance of the appeals.

Once the five-member panel of the Committee on Cause has been established, the panel will promptly convene to determine whether the appeal presents a timely, appealable, and well-founded claim of breach of obligation by the University or its representatives. The appeal may be dismissed at this stage if the panel determines, on the basis of the notice of appeal, the response, and any supporting documentation, that (1) the notice of appeal is not timely, (2) the notice of appeal does not sufficiently allege a ground for appeal, or (3) even assuming all facts stated in the notice of appeal are true, there are no grounds for deciding the case in appellant's favor. Within 15 calendar days after the panel's initial meeting, the chair of the panel will inform the Associate Provost for Faculty in writing whether the panel will dismiss the appeal or establish a process for further investigation; the Associate Provost for Faculty will forward the communication to the appellant, the dean, and the Committee on Cause Chair. If the panel decides to dismiss the appeal, it will state its reasons in writing. If the panel decides to proceed with the appeal, it will outline the panel's plan of action for additional investigation.

If the panel proceeds with the appeal, it will allow each party to submit evidence or appear before the panel to add to or explain the written record in the case. Additionally, the panel may on its own initiative request that either party appear to answer questions or request meetings with any other individual with relevant information. To the extent possible, the panel will provide each party against whom adverse information has been submitted an opportunity to respond to this information. The panel may ask the appellant, the dean, or others to produce any relevant documents not previously submitted with the notice of appeal or the response. Once the panel's investigation is complete, it will convene to deliberate and prepare its written report and recommendations.

At any meeting the panel holds with the appellant, the appellant will be permitted to have present a non-attorney adviser of his or her choice. Although attorneys may not appear with or on behalf of the appellant, the dean, or any individuals requested to meet with the panel, as these meetings are not considered legal proceedings, it is understood that parties may rely on legal representation in the preparation of their materials.

The panel's report should include a statement of agreed facts, the panel's resolution of disputed facts, the panel's conclusions on the issues raised by the appeal, and the panel's recommendations as to whether the sanction should be upheld, overturned, or reconsidered. The panel's work generally should be completed within 60 calendar days after the panel has been appointed. The chair of the panel will submit the written report and recommendations to the Associate Provost for Faculty, who will forward it to the appellant, the dean, and the Committee on Cause Chair.

On the basis of the Committee on Cause panel's report, the Associate Provost for Faculty may either uphold the sanction, overturn the sanction, or determine procedures for reconsidering the sanction. The decision of the Associate Provost for Faculty should generally be made within 15 calendar days of receipt of the Committee on Cause panel report. If the findings, conclusions, or

recommendations of the panel are rejected, the Associate Provost for Faculty will state the reasons for the rejection in writing. Once a decision has been made, the Associate Provost for Faculty who will notify the appellant and the dean. The decision of the Associate Provost for Faculty on the appeal is final.

## **Fitness for Duty**

The [Faculty Fitness Panel Policy](#) addresses issues of significant impairment, disruptive behavior, or inability to perform essential functions of a faculty member's professional role. If concerns arise about a faculty member's ability to fulfill his/her/their professional obligations, this policy is intended to be used as a last resort once all other means of resolution have been exhausted. The faculty member's dean, school administrators, and the Associate Provost for Faculty should first seek to resolve potential issues informally before recommending or referring cases to the Faculty Fitness Panel.

Determinations of whether to mandate a fitness evaluation, the review process, the fitness evaluation, and the follow up to the fitness evaluation will be conducted pursuant to the [Faculty Fitness Panel Policy](#).

Other issues of faculty performance or discipline should be addressed through the disciplinary processes as outlined in this Faculty Handbook. Threats of violence to self or others should be referred first to the Behavioral Consultation Team (see "[Temporary Suspension](#)" section below) and then to the Faculty Fitness Panel.

## **Temporary Suspension**

If, in the judgment of the provost<sup>8</sup> and the faculty member's dean,<sup>9</sup> after consulting with the chair (or chair's designee) of the University's [Behavioral Consultation Team](#), a faculty member poses an immediate threat of harm to his or her own safety, to the safety of others, and/or to Northwestern, the faculty member may be temporarily suspended from service pending ultimate determination of the faculty member's case (a "temporary suspension").

Situations calling for temporary suspension are exceptional, and the scope and duration of any temporary suspension must be narrowly tailored to the nature of the potential harm posed so that the faculty member's rights and privileges are not summarily abrogated more broadly than reasonably necessary. The faculty member's dean will consult with the provost and the Chair of the Committee on Cause concerning the length and other conditions of any temporary suspension. Salary and faculty privileges unrelated to the alleged behavior will continue through the period of the temporary suspension.

## **Faculty Benefits**

The University offers a variety of employee benefits, described briefly below. This description is not a full explanation of University-sponsored benefits. A summary and detailed information on

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<sup>8</sup> Any reference to the provost in this section also refers to the provost's designee.

<sup>9</sup> Any references to the dean in this section also refer to the dean's designee.

benefits for full-time or half-time benefits eligible faculty is available from the [Benefits Division](#) of the Office of Human Resources. The University intends to continue these plans indefinitely, but reserves the right to change, modify, or terminate any plan.

Insurance and retirement benefits are provided for faculty members appointed to one of the faculty instruction ranks (see “Officers of Instruction” section) on a half-time or greater basis for the entire academic year or on a full-time basis for half the academic year or more. Additional information for faculty members who are eligible for benefits, but are employed less than full time, is also available on the [benefits page](#) of the Office of Human Resources website. Provided they are paid exclusively by the University or an affiliated institution, research faculty members are eligible for benefits similar to full-time, non-tenure-eligible faculty members (with the exception of faculty family leaves for childbearing, adoption, and childrearing; a description of [research faculty parental leave of absence benefits](#) is available on the Office of the Provost website). Visiting faculty members are generally assumed to retain benefit status in their home institution. However, visitors may participate in selected University-sponsored health insurance plans if they meet benefits eligibility requirements. Otherwise, visitors may purchase the health insurance plan offered through the Office of Risk Management.

New faculty members must complete their online benefits enrollment through [myHR Self Service](#) within 31 days of the beginning of the appointment.

To qualify a same gender or opposite gender civil union partner for coverage under University-sponsored benefit plans, an employee and his/her/their civil union partner must submit to the Benefits Division of the Office of Human Resources a civil union certificate prior to enrolling in any Northwestern plans.

### *Retirement and Other Benefit Programs*

#### Retirement Savings Plan

The University provides faculty with a contributory retirement program through the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) and the investment funds offered by Fidelity Investments. TIAA and Fidelity offer four tiers of investment choices. Tiers 1 through 3 offer a wide array of investment options. Tier 4 includes access to a self-directed brokerage account.

Faculty members may elect to invest the full contribution in TIAA or Fidelity or they may elect to apportion the contribution between TIAA and Fidelity. Under certain conditions, participants may transfer accumulated assets between TIAA and Fidelity Investments funds.

The 403(b) retirement plan consists of three parts: a matched retirement plan, an unmatched plan and a voluntary plan. The matched retirement program is funded by contributions from both the faculty member and Northwestern, once the faculty member is eligible. The unmatched plan is funded by contributions only from Northwestern (five percent of salary once the faculty member is eligible), while the voluntary plan is funded solely by faculty members’ contributions. All deductions, including both University and faculty members’ contributions cease when contributions reach the relevant annual federal maxima. Detailed information regarding these plans is available from the Benefits Division of the Office of Human Resources. Faculty

members, upon termination or retirement, may receive certain accumulated retirement plan assets in cash. Otherwise, a faculty member may elect from a number of annuity or systematic withdrawal options. Withdrawal of retirement plan monies should be undertaken with the advice of a tax counselor unless the monies are transferred by direct rollover to another investment company.

### Flexible Spending Account

Under this plan, participants may transfer income to the health- and dependent-care accounts to pay for eligible (tax-deductible) expenses not otherwise covered by insurance or other benefit plans. Payments made to these accounts are excluded from federal and state income taxes and from Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes (i.e., Social Security and Medicare). Maximum annual contributions are set each year, and further details are available on the [Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account page](#) of the Office for Human Resources website. IRS regulations specify that any plan year-end account balances are forfeited. Faculty members wishing to continue their participation in these plans must re-enroll each year during the annual Open Enrollment period.

The University provides nontaxable matching funds directly to eligible full-time faculty to assist in meeting a portion of their annual dependent care expenses; the matching amount is based on total household income. Faculty members must re-enroll each year during the annual Open Enrollment period.

### Social Security

Under FICA, which authorizes Social Security and Medicare taxes to be deducted from employee paychecks, the University matches Social Security and Medicare taxes paid by faculty. These taxes finance a program that includes retirement and survivor income, disability income, and medical expense coverage during retirement or disability.

### *Medical Leave*

Faculty members with benefits eligible, half-time or greater appointments who are unable to work as a result of a medically certified disability become eligible for paid sick leave. Such faculty members may receive up to six consecutive months (including summer) at budgeted salary. Faculty members who are also enrolled in benefits through additional employers, such as those provided by Northwestern Medical Group or other affiliated hospitals, may have different medical leave benefits and should contact those employers directly for additional information. The University reserves the right to determine a faculty member's ability to resume normal duties upon returning from sick leave. (See "[Accommodation of Disabilities and Pregnancy](#)" section above for information on accommodations for faculty with disabilities and faculty who are pregnant.) Expected medical-disability absences that will interrupt scheduled teaching duties need special prior planning and consideration and should be discussed with the department chair and/or dean's office before the beginning of the affected term.

Additional protection against loss of income due to disability is available to eligible faculty members who enroll in the long-term disability plan.

## Faculty Family Leaves for Childbearing, Adoption, and Childrearing

Paid leave is available to full-time, benefits eligible, tenure-line faculty for childbirth, adoption, or childrearing within the first 12 months following birth or adoption. Full-time, benefits eligible, instructional faculty who have completed three years of continuous, full-time service (or have an appointment at the end of which they will have three years of continuous, full-time service) or who hold an academic appointment of three years or longer at the time of the leave are also eligible for paid leave. Childrearing leave is available to eligible faculty in addition to childbearing or adoption leaves. For faculty members whose primary academic appointment is in Weinberg College, School of Education and Social Policy, School of Communication, Medill, McCormick, Bienen, or Kellogg, paid leave is provided for one academic term to faculty who give birth to or adopt a child, and one academic term for childrearing. For faculty in Feinberg School of Medicine, Pritzker School of Law, or Northwestern University in Qatar, paid leave is provided for ten weeks to faculty who give birth or adopt a child, and ten weeks for childrearing. Research faculty leaves are addressed in their [terms of appointment](#). Childbearing and adoption leaves will be automatically approved upon providing timely notification and documentation as specified in the Policy on Faculty Family Leave. Approvals for childrearing leaves will generally be granted to eligible faculty members who are equal partners in caring for a child. Procedures for requesting family leave are set forth in the [Policy on Faculty Family Leave](#), available from the Office of the Provost website.

Instructional faculty members who do not meet the eligibility requirements described above may be eligible for paid medical leave for the period of time medically necessary for a faculty member to recover from childbirth. Additionally, faculty who meet the eligibility requirements of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) may have 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave for the birth and care of a newborn child or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Faculty family leaves for childbirth, adoption, or childrearing are counted towards the maximum entitlement of 12 weeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period.

If a medically-certified disability arises as a result of pregnancy or childbearing that renders the faculty member unable to work before or after the academic term in which the faculty member takes childbearing leave, the faculty member may be eligible for additional paid medical leave.

### *Insurance*

The University offers a variety of insurance plans, described briefly below. Faculty members are urged to review the provisions of each plan and, if any questions remain, to consult the Benefits Division of the Office of Human Resources. In the following paragraphs, retirement refers to a faculty member's departure from the University at age 55 or later following 10 years of consecutive service; the service requirement is reduced year-for-year when a faculty member leaves the University after age 57.

### University-Financed Plans

#### *Group Term Life Insurance*



Faculty members are provided with coverage under a group term life insurance program paid for by the University. The amount of coverage is calculated by a factor of 2.5 times a faculty member's academic year salary, up to a maximum salary of \$100,000 and maximum benefit of \$250,000. This coverage factor is reduced by 35 percent starting the calendar year in which the faculty member reaches age 65. A faculty member's group term life insurance coverage expires when the individual leaves Northwestern's employ unless an application for conversion is submitted to the insurance company within 31 days of the termination date.

#### *Travel Accident Life Insurance*

Faculty members are covered under the University's travel accident life insurance plan when on University business. The amount of coverage is three times the employee's annual earnings, with a maximum coverage of \$500,000. Coverage ends upon termination or retirement.

#### *Workers' Compensation*

Workers' compensation insurance, provided by the University for all employees, covers injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment. Coverage includes authorized medical costs and additional compensation for temporary total or permanent disability resulting from such injury or illness; it ends upon termination or retirement.

#### *Contributory Plans*

The University offers several optional programs through which faculty members may obtain coverage by paying at least part of the premiums. All faculty contributions toward premiums are deducted from the participating faculty member's paycheck. Faculty members who, at the initial opportunity, do not elect to participate in optional insurance programs must present evidence of a qualifying change in family or employment status within 31 days of the event if coverage is desired at a later date.

Family members and their dependent children through age 25 are eligible for coverage under the Health, Dental, Vision and Life Insurance plans. Dependent status requires individuals to be an eligible tax dependent on the faculty member's federal and state income tax returns. Dependent children include natural, step-, and legally adopted children, and any children who are in the faculty member's legal custody under an interim court order prior to finalization of adoption proceedings. No individual may be covered more than once under University-sponsored benefit plans.

At retirement, a faculty member who meets specified age and service requirements may elect to continue health, dental and vision coverage for the faculty member as well as for a spouse or civil union partner and any eligible dependent children. Participants pay 100 percent of total premium costs. A faculty member otherwise leaving the University may elect to continue health, dental and vision coverage subject to COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) provisions. Upon the death of a faculty member, the surviving spouse or civil union partner may elect coverage under the retiree health, dental, and vision insurance plans for the spouse/partner and any dependent children.

### *Health Insurance*

Faculty members may enroll at the time of employment in one of the health insurance plans offered by the University. Enrollment occurs at the time of employment via online enrollment using myHR Self Service or within 31 days of a qualifying change in family or employment status using myHR Self Service. For full-time participants, the University contributes a portion of the premium for the type of coverage selected (e.g., you only, you+spouse). For benefits-eligible part-time faculty (i.e., faculty who hold appointments that are designated half-time or more but less than full-time), the University pays a smaller portion of the total cost. The faculty member pays the remainder of the premium through payroll deductions taken from income prior to the calculation of federal, state, and FICA taxes. The faculty member has a choice of an HMO and three PPO plans. Premium contributions to the PPO and HMO plans are based on the faculty member's salary. For Feinberg faculty, premium contributions are based upon the faculty member's total professional (academic full-time) salary. There is an annual open enrollment during which the faculty member may elect to change plans.

### *Dental Insurance*

Faculty members are eligible to participate in the University's group dental plans. Enrollment occurs at the time of employment via online enrollment using myHR Self Service or within 31 days of a qualifying change in family or employment status using myHR Self Service. The faculty member's contribution is taken from income prior to the calculation of federal, state, and FICA (Social Security) taxes.

### *Supplemental Term Life Insurance*

Faculty members who desire additional term life insurance may apply for such coverage under the University's supplemental term life insurance plan upon hire. The amount that may be purchased is a multiple of a faculty member's academic year salary, up to a maximum of \$2,000,000 (for basic and supplemental combined). Three- to five-times coverage may be available, based upon evidence of insurability if the amount exceeds \$1,000,000. If the application for three- or more- times coverage is not approved, the faculty member is guaranteed a maximum of three-times coverage not to exceed \$1,000,000. A faculty member's supplemental term life insurance coverage ends when the individual leaves Northwestern's employ unless arrangements are made to continue the coverage. Term life insurance is also available for a faculty member's spouse, civil union partner and/or dependent children.

### *Long-Term Disability*

The University's long-term disability (LTD) plan is an important supplement to the sick leave policy. Under this plan, a faculty member disabled due to injury or illness for a period of more than six consecutive months is entitled to the continuation of up to 60 percent of their last working University salary, or up to 70 percent with all sources, including Social Security Disability Income. The University pays the full cost of the core plan, which provides 50 percent of the faculty member's last working salary, up to a maximum benefit of \$11,500 per month. A buy-up plan, which provides 60 percent of the faculty member's last working University salary, up to a maximum benefit of \$13,800 per month, is available at time of hire or during the annual

enrollment period, with the full cost paid by the faculty member. Evidence of insurability is required if the buy-up plan is not elected at time of hire.

### *Other Benefits*

#### Educational Assistance Plans

Provided they meet specified eligibility requirements, benefits-eligible, full-time faculty members may participate in Northwestern's Educational Assistance Plan for Employees. The Employee Reduced (ER) Tuition Plan and Enhanced Employee Reduced (EER) Tuition Plan provide faculty with the opportunity for academic enrichment through enrollment in the University's educational programs at reduced tuition rates.

The ER Tuition Plan is for 90 percent reduced tuition up to a set maximum per calendar year. Employees must complete the ER Tuition application (plan ID: ER) via their myHR Self Service Portal once per calendar year.

Eligible faculty may choose to apply for the new EER Tuition Plan for 90 percent reduced tuition with no annual limit. Employees must complete the EER Tuition application (plan ID: EER) online via their myHR Self Service Portal once per calendar year. If a faculty member qualifies for the EER Tuition benefit mid-year, they will need to submit a new EER application to receive the enhanced benefit. Individuals are subject to the rules and prerequisites of their school of attendance.

The Employee Portable Tuition Plan is also available for faculty who wish to attend another university. This benefit is for undergraduate and graduate education for job-related courses outside of Northwestern and is limited to tuition and eligible fees only. Reimbursement will be at 100 percent of mandatory tuition and fees up to a set maximum per calendar year.

The Employee NU Certificate Tuition Plan is available for eligible faculty to take certificate courses at Northwestern. The benefit is limited to tuition and eligible fees, and allows a set maximum reimbursement per calendar year.

Any employee educational assistance received in excess of \$5,250 in a calendar year is considered taxable income per IRS rules.

Eligible faculty may benefit from reduced tuition for a spouse or civil union partner or an eligible dependent child taking undergraduate courses at Northwestern (Dependent Reduced Tuition Plan) or an eligible dependent child taking undergraduate courses at schools other than Northwestern (Dependent Portable Tuition Plan).

The Dependent Reduced Tuition Plan provides reduced tuition for specified undergraduate courses taken within the University by a spouse, civil union partner, and dependent children of eligible faculty. For dependent children only, a Dependent Portable Tuition benefit is available for undergraduate study at other institutions. Service requirements and benefit levels for these plans vary with the service date of the faculty member, with changes in the plan taking effect January 1, 2000. Dependent children are eligible up to age 26. Students must be enrolled in a

degree program or working toward a teaching certificate. Dependent children's tuition benefits are limited to a total of eight academic full-time semesters or 12 full-time quarters.

Faculty members who retire at age 55 or older and have 10 years or more of continuous, full-time service are eligible for educational assistance. To benefit from reduced tuition for a spouse, domestic partner, or dependent child, a retiree must be age 55 or older and have contributed 10 or more years of continuous, full-time service. A faculty member who retires at age 55 or older with fewer than 10 years of qualifying service may continue any benefit being applied to a spouse, domestic partner, or a dependent child's enrollment through the completion of that term of study only. (As stated above in the "[Retirement](#)" section, retirement is the point at which a faculty member ceases to work full-time, not merely ends his or her employment at Northwestern.)

A spouse, civil union partner, or dependent child of a deceased faculty member is eligible for tuition benefits as determined by the faculty member's years of qualified service at the time of death. This eligibility ceases upon remarriage of the spouse/civil union partner or adoption of the child.

Please refer to the [Educational Assistance Plans](#) page of the Office of Human Resources website for eligibility and other information on educational assistance plans.

### Childcare Services

Through the Office of Work/Life & Family Resources, part of the Office of Human Resources, many resources are offered to assist faculty with their childcare search, including: a childcare referral specialist, information about day care and nursery school options, fee assistance, special needs, in-home care, [self-search options](#), back-up care, [lactation spaces](#) and [adoption assistance](#). Personalized consultations are available by phone or in person. Additional information is available on the [Office of Work/Life & Family Resources website](#), or email [worklife@northwestern.edu](mailto:worklife@northwestern.edu).

The University provides faculty with [childcare referral services](#), including individual consultation, parenting educational materials, a guidebook with detailed information on choosing and evaluating childcare, and up-to-date information on childcare credits and related tax laws. Based on selection criteria specified by the faculty member, the childcare referral specialist provides the names of at least three childcare providers with vacancies. The specialist can also provide information about childcare centers that offer a discount and priority enrollment to Northwestern faculty.

The University offers faculty members access through myHR to a University-paid membership with Care.com. The Care.com website provides detailed childcare provider profiles, access to background check options, and reviews of caregivers.

### School Tuition Discounts

There are a number of private schools in Evanston and Chicago that offer discounted tuition to children of Northwestern faculty; a list of schools is available on the [Childcare page](#) of the Office of Human Resources website.

## Senior/Adult Care Services

Through a relationship with a firm specializing in senior care, the University offers faculty members expert assistance with senior and adult care planning. The service includes access to master's-level social workers experienced in senior care. These senior care advisers provide in-depth individual and family consultations, customized care/action plans and referrals to local, vetted providers across the United States. In addition, on-site caregiver support groups meet monthly and adult back-up care is available. For additional information, visit the [Senior and Adult Care page](#) of the Office of Human Resources website or email Work/Life & Family Resources at [worklife@northwestern.edu](mailto:worklife@northwestern.edu).

## Faculty Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs

Northwestern's [Faculty Wellness Program](#), offered through the Office of the Provost, provides assistance to full-time faculty members who are experiencing difficulties in their professional and personal lives.

The Employee Assistance Program makes confidential, short-term counseling services available to faculty and their household family members to assist with a variety of everyday concerns. Professional counselors located close to either campus and throughout the Chicago area are available; these counselors are affiliated with a provider and vetted and selected by Northwestern. For additional information and contact information, visit the [Employee Assistance Program page](#) of the Office of Human Resources website.