

Faculty Handbook 2025

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A. History, Mission, and Vision of SoC

The School of Communication at Northwestern University, which dates its inception to 1878, is the oldest communication school in the United States. It currently offers instruction through five departments (Communication Sciences and Disorders, Communication Studies, Radio/Television/Film, Performance Studies, and Theatre) and four interdepartmental doctoral programs (Theatre and Drama; Media, Technology, and Society; Technology and Social Behavior; and Rhetoric, Media, and Publics, which will commence courses in Fall 2023). Each of its programs continues to be rated at or near the top of its field, reflecting the consistent excellence of its faculty and students.

The School was the second college to be established at Northwestern; only the arts and sciences college (now the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences) is older. From its earliest days the School chose to define itself, not in contrast to the arts and sciences college, but as its sibling. The core of the School's identity to this day are (1) its distinctive interpretation of liberal arts and communication education as a balance between theory and practice and (2) melding academic and professional interests. Reflecting the School's core values, each department in the School offers a liberal arts-oriented undergraduate major with rich co-curricular opportunities for students, one or more options for doctoral study, and some form of professional training. This balanced education is highly engaging and effective for students but requires an unusually dedicated, flexible, and gifted academic staff. The faculty of the School are expected to exemplify excellence in theory, research, and/or creative activities; in classroom teaching and out-of-class mentoring; and in service to the University, disciplines, professions, and society.

The programs within the School have also encouraged growth of an interdisciplinary spirit and excellent collaboration skills in its faculty and students. Building on these strengths, the School has shown leadership in creating and sustaining cross-disciplinary instructional and research initiatives, including innovative interdepartmental majors for graduate and undergraduate students. The School places a high value on interdisciplinary activities and encourages faculty to develop innovative projects in partnership with faculty from other units. The School is a laboratory for artistry, expression, and experimentation. Through a spirit of "serious play," it embraces rigor, critique, and training in research, artistic work, and scholarship. Our playful yet serious collaborations create profound impact in the real world.

As a result of its leadership in the disciplines and in interdisciplinary initiatives, the School of Communication has become a major international center for studies in the arts and sciences of communication. It has over 200 faculty, an undergraduate student body of over 1200, and more than 700 graduate and professional students. It is housed on the Evanston Campus: Annie May Swift Hall; Frances Searle Building; Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts; Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Center for the Musical Arts; Northwestern University Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning; Marjorie Ward Marshall Dance Center; John J. Louis Hall; Hardy House; and 1815 Chicago Avenue; and the Chicago campus: Abbott Hall; and the Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for Performing and Media Arts.

B. Office of the Dean

E. Patrick Johnson
Dean



Roderick Hawkins
Associate Dean for
External Affairs
Chief for Staff



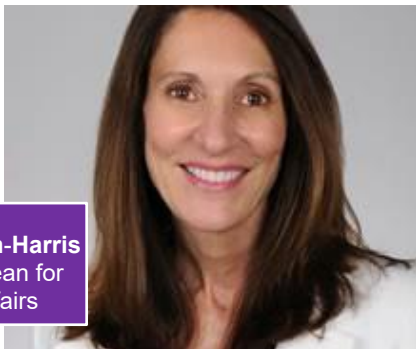
Daniel Noon
Director of
Development (OARD)



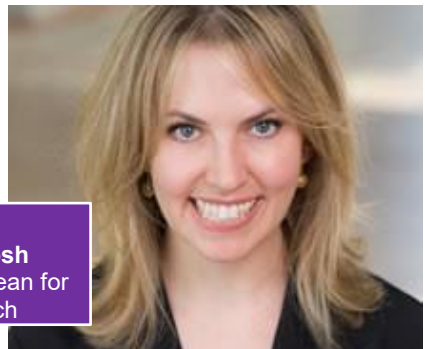
Jeff Brown
Associate Dean for
Finance &
Administration



Bonnie Martin-Harris
Associate Dean for
Faculty Affairs



Molly Losh
Associate Dean for
Research



Rayvon Fouche
Associate Dean for
Graduate Education



Lori Barcliff-Baptista
Associate Dean for
Undergraduate
Programs & Advising



C. School of Communication Departments

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 Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
 Frances Searle Building
 2240 Campus Drive
 Evanston, IL 60208
 Phone: 847-491-3066
 Fax: 847-491-4975
csd@northwestern.edu
 Chair: [Bharath Chandrasekaran](#)

Department of Performance Studies
 Ryan Center for the Musical Arts
 70 Arts Circle Drive, Room 5-160
 Evanston, IL 60208
 Phone: 847-491-3171
 Fax: 847-467-2389
ps@northwestern.edu
 Chair: [Joshua Chambers-Letson](#)

Department of Communication Studies
 Frances Searle Building
 2240 Campus Drive
 Evanston, IL 60208
 Phone: 847-491-7530
 Fax: 847-467-1036
commstudies@northwestern.edu
 Chair: [Jeremy Birnholtz](#)

Department of Radio/Television/Film
 Annie May Swift Hall
 1920 Campus Drive, 2nd Floor
 Evanston, IL 60208
 Phone: 847-491-7315
 Fax: 847-467-2389
rtf@northwestern.edu
 Int. Chair: [Jacob Smith](#)

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 Ryan Center for the Musical Arts
 70 Arts Circle Drive, Room 5-160
 Evanston, IL 60208
 Phone: 847-491-3170
 Fax: 847-467-2019
nutheatre@northwestern.edu
 Chair: [Henry Godinez](#)

NUCASLL
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 2315 Campus Drive
 Evanston, IL 60208
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 Director: [Nathan Waller](#)

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 30 Arts Circle Drive
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 Executive Artistic Director: [Tanya Palmer](#)

I. Policies and Procedures

This School of Communication (“SoC”) Faculty Handbook supplements the [Northwestern University Faculty Handbook](#) provisions that apply to all University faculty. Faculty in the School of Communication are expected to comply with procedures and practices outlined here. Policies or bylaws of the School’s departments must be coherent with both the School and University Handbooks.

Northwestern’s central Compliance Office helps the University promote a culture of honest and ethical behavior as well as identify and manage risk. The Office’s responsibilities include coordinating, encouraging, and monitoring the operational compliance activities that occur throughout the University, and advising senior administration and the Board of Trustees on the effectiveness of the University’s compliance efforts. Additional information on compliance and ethics is available through [Risk Management](#). Faculty are expected to familiarize themselves with the University’s policies on conduct as an employee, teacher, or researcher, and fully comply with them.

Faculty in SoC are expected to comply with all University procedures and practices, including those not outlined in this handbook. Other essential University and SoC policies are listed below for quick reference:

[General University Policies](#)
[Travel & Entertainment Policy](#)
[University Faculty Leaves](#)
[University Faculty Promotion & Tenure](#)
[SoC Academic Leave Policy](#)
[SoC NTE Faculty Appointment/Promotion Policy](#)
[SoC Reappointment/Promotion/Tenure Policies](#)

II. General SoC Policies

a) Non-Discrimination.

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 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 or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination.

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, which prohibits discrimination based on sex (including sexual misconduct) in the University’s educational programs and activities. In addition, Northwestern provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants, students, and employees with disabilities and to individuals who are pregnant.

b) Consensual Relations & Sexual Misconduct.

Northwestern community members are expected to treat each other with respect and consideration. To protect all of our community members from conflicts arising from unequal power relationships and from all forms of sexual misconduct, the University has established the following policies:

- [Employment or Evaluation of Relatives](#)
- [Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships Between Faculty, Staff, and Students](#)

Northwestern is committed to fostering an environment in which all members of our community are safe, secure, and free from sexual misconduct of any form, including, but not limited to, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating and domestic violence. This policy, which incorporates Northwestern's [Policy on Sexual Harassment](#), exemplifies best practices under Title IX and the new Violence Against Women Act Amendments and is applicable to students, faculty, staff, and others in the Northwestern community. Information on available counseling, medical, and advocacy services for all Northwestern community members is also contained in this policy, which can be viewed on the [Office of Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance website](#).

c) New Faculty Orientation.

Each year the School of Communication organizes an orientation program for new faculty. It is generally held during Wildcat Welcome Week. All full-time faculty (tenure-eligible and non-tenure eligible) beginning their service at Northwestern are required to attend.

d) Absence from Campus.

In general, full-time faculty are expected to be at work, in-residence continuously during each term of their appointment.

Unless faculty members have been formally granted leaves of absence, or special arrangements have been made with the School Dean and chair, 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. 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.

When faculty have scholarly reasons for travel and can show that their instructional and service responsibilities will not suffer, it is common to grant them permission to travel away for brief periods during times when they are in residence. However, it is very important that a faculty member seek and receive approval from the Dean's Office before undertaking such travel, especially when it will occur during the regular period of instruction rather than a break between quarters. If travel will require a faculty member to miss class, it is incumbent on them to make alternative arrangements for the classes missed. The School will not provide funding for substitute teaching or activities.

If a faculty member in-residence needs to be away from campus for more than three (3) working days, they should discuss this matter with their Chair. The Office of the Provost provides detailed guidelines on all [Faculty Leave](#) options including medical and family leaves.

e) Office Hours.

Unless a full-time faculty member has been granted a leave of absence or the Dean's permission to be away from campus, they are expected to maintain on-campus office hours during any week in which they are in-residence. Office hours should be scheduled in advance and made known to students and colleagues. During announced office hours, faculty members are expected to be accessible to students and colleagues for face-to-face meetings.

f) Conflict of Interest; Administration of COI.

Please see Northwestern University's [Faculty Handbook](#) for information, policies, and reporting guidelines.

Each year, all members of the faculty must complete [online disclosures](#) detailing outside commitments (employment, consultancies, and other activities) and economic interests. Potential conflicts identified on these forms will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Research. The Associate Dean for Research may contact the department chair to shed light on the nature or seriousness of the conflict. Chairs should also advise faculty that when a new situation arises over the year or when a potential conflict is declared in a grant application, etc., an amendment to the annual report should be filed promptly. Visit [University Conflict of Interest](#) online to find detailed policies and guidelines.

g) Outside Activity; Appointments at other Institutions.

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 the 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 their department chair and the Dean. A fuller statement of [policy](#) and requests for exceptions may be found in the Northwestern University's Faculty Handbook.

h) Summer Teaching.

The School of Professional Studies ("SPS") organizes a program of instruction for the summer quarter which typically includes courses from the School of Communication curriculum. Department chairs will work with faculty to staff these summer courses, and faculty are paid summer salary at prevailing SPS rates for their efforts. For details on the SPS programs and resources for faculty teaching in this program, visit the [School of Professional Studies](#).

i) Leaves of Absence.

For any personal/medical leaves of absence, faculty should consult the Northwestern University Faculty Handbook for information on eligibility, timing and duration, and work with the Provost's Office to submit a request for [Faculty Leave](#).

Leaves of absence may be granted for academic/professional reasons (academic leave), medical (FMLA) 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. The University details the various leave types in the [University Faculty Handbook](#).

A faculty member seeking approval for an academic leave of absence should communicate first with their department chair. Academic leave requests must be reviewed and approved by the department Chair, the Dean, the Provost, and the Board of Trustees. Even if the school has made a commitment to support the faculty member's request for a leave, the faculty member must still go through the formal process of securing approval of the leave for a specific quarter or quarters. A faculty member may never simply decide to be on leave. Applications for academic leave open in January preceding the academic year with which the leave is requested. For additional information on academic/research leaves, including eligibility, timing and duration of leaves, faculty should review the [SoC Academic Leave Policy for Research, Creative Work and Faculty Development](#).

j) **Conflict Resolution.**

A variety of conflicts can arise as faculty interact with students, colleagues, staff, administrators, and others. In general, unless there is good reason not to do so, a faculty member who encounters a conflict and feels the need for assistance in resolving it should speak immediately to their department chair. The department chair is the best guide to resolve most issues, but the list below is also available to support you in a variety of topics:

- Compliance & Regulatory Issues (not related to research):
Jeff Brown, Associate Dean for Administration & Finance
- Faculty-faculty Conduct, Faculty-student Conduct, Disciplinary Issues, or any Conflict related to faculty matters:
Bonnie Martin-Harris, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs
- Student Conduct, Academic Dishonesty (undergraduate):
Lori Barcliff-Baptista, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs & Advising
- Student Conduct, Academic Dishonesty (graduate):
Rayvon Fouche, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs
- Other issues and concerns:
Northwestern's ombudsperson plays a key role in resolving concerns and working through issues. She provides confidential and informal assistance for resolving university-related concerns, is independent of the university's formal administrative structure, and considers all sides of an issue in a neutral manner. More information about the Office of the Ombudsperson can be found [online](#). The Northwestern Ombudsperson is [Sarah Klaper](#).

III. **Faculty Appointments**

SoC employs a variety of faculty. Faculty Appointments often fall into two categories: tenure-eligible (TE) or non-tenure eligible (NTE). The ranking for each category is as follows:

Tenure-Eligible

- Professor
- Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor

Non-Tenure Eligible

- Professor of Instruction/Clinical Professor
- Associate Professor of Instruction/ Clinical Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor of Instruction/Clinical Assistant Professor
- Adjunct Assistant Professor of Instruction
- Research Assistant/Associate/Full Professor
- Visiting Professor
- Lecturer
- Coterminous Lecturer

IV. Tenure-Eligible Faculty

Tenure-eligible faculty are those who have either earned tenure or are in their probationary period prior to earning tenure (on the tenure-eligible track). The definition of tenure, and the conditions for awarding or withdrawing tenure, are specified by the University's [Faculty Handbook](#).

The ranks of the tenure-eligible faculty are assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. The award of tenure is, in principle, independent of rank—although, in practice, most assistant professors are untenured and most associate and full professors have earned tenure.

a) Tenure-Eligible Faculty Responsibilities

A faculty member teaches courses and advises students as assigned by the Dean or department chair, does research and/or creative activity, and, as a responsible member of the community, participates in the conduct of its affairs, including assigned administrative tasks. A faculty member's teaching responsibilities entail curricular development including, but not limited to, creation of new courses and periodic revision of existing offerings. Service in these areas, as outlined in the University Statutes, helps to form the basis on which performance is evaluated.

The context of this service is described by the principles of academic freedom and responsibility as stated by the American Association of University Professors, and can be found under Academic Freedom in the University's Faculty Handbook.

i) Teaching.

For tenured and tenure-track faculty, our standard model assigns 40% time to teaching. The standard teaching load is four courses per year plus associated out-of-class preparation and supervision of students. This rule of thumb applies primarily to cases where the courses to be taught are of a standard size and format. For example, a large lecture class supported by discussion sections, a smaller lecture-discussion class taught by a single instructor, or a graduate course taught to five or more students. If a faculty member teaches in a format with unusually small class sizes or an unconventional pattern of student contact, they may be asked to teach more or less than the standard number of sections to reach an expected level of instructional activity.

All faculty are expected to participate in undergraduate education. Except in unusual circumstances, every faculty member should teach 50-75% of their courses at the undergraduate level.

Most faculty also participate in graduate education and mentoring of graduate students. Tenure-track faculty, even those who are in the probationary period should teach and mentor graduate students where possible. Mentoring of graduate students (and postdoctoral fellows) is a significant part of teaching, as it involves nothing less than the preparation of the next generation's intellectual leaders, both within and beyond the academy. Tenure-track faculty who do not participate in graduate education may be asked to teach more than four courses per year.

In recognition of the value of interdisciplinarity in our pedagogy, the Dean's Office encourages opportunities to team-teach a course. In most cases, the first time a course is team-taught by two faculty members, each will receive one full teaching credit for the course. Insofar as a team-taught class reduces by one the number of courses taught for the year, any proposed course must have strong (intellectual, pedagogical, or logistical) justification for the team approach. Proposals are directed first to the department chair(s) and thence to the Associate Dean for Faculty. Proposals to extend full teaching credit beyond the first offering of the course, must meet further criteria of enrollment and need and be approved by the Dean's office.

ii) Research/Creative Activity.

Tenure-track faculty are expected to conduct substantial programs of research and/or creative activity. For tenured faculty and tenure-track faculty, our standard model assigns 40% time to research/creative activity, although in individual cases a faculty member may spend more or less time on research/creative activity.

In general, faculty are expected to organize, and sometimes secure external funding for their programs of research and creative activity. Faculty who feel they need assistance in targeting and developing their research or creative activities are urged to consult with the department chair, the SoC Associate Dean for Research, or the Dean of SoC. For faculty who need startup or subvention funds for projects, a number of different sources of support are available through departments, schools, and the office of the Vice-President for Research. These funds are generally awarded on the basis of competitively judged proposals.

Tenure-track faculty who do not sustain active programs of research/creative activity may be asked to teach up to two additional courses per year. Even in such circumstances, we expect faculty to stay current in their disciplines by participating actively in their scholarly or creative communities.

iii) Service.

Faculty are expected to participate in School/University administration and governance, in service to their disciplines, in mentoring and assisting their colleagues and students, and in the supervision of research and creative activities. Depending on background and talent, faculty may also find ways of serving the larger society through the application of their disciplinary knowledge and practice. Service is an area in which individual contributions may differ widely and so is assigned and credited through arrangement with the department chair and Dean. As a rule of thumb, our standard model assigns 20% to service/administrative activities of tenured and tenure-track faculty in regular faculty (non-administrative) roles. Tenure-track faculty who are in

the probationary period are expected to contribute service as a part of their professional development but will typically not be given more than two assignments per year.

As part of their obligation to participate in governance, all full-time faculty are required to attend department and School faculty meetings. The Dean and the department chair may also assign committee or administrative work to faculty, consistent with the faculty member's overall workload and percentage of effort assigned to service.

Implicit in the fact that service is an integral part of a full-time faculty member's responsibility is the expectation that, unless they have been formally granted a leave of absence and apart from brief absences, faculty members are expected to be in residence and available to students and colleagues. Faculty who need to be away from campus for longer periods must seek and receive approval from the Dean before traveling.

Faculty who fail to contribute to service, for whatever reason, are generally asked to teach a larger course load.

iv) Reporting.

Each year faculty are required to provide a report of their activities in [Interfolio](#). Annual reports cover the previous calendar year and are due in the Winter quarter. The SoC Faculty Affairs website provides specific deadlines for annual reporting and other deadlines related to faculty management. A faculty member who fails to submit an annual merit report will receive a 0% raise.

b) Evaluation of Efficacy.

In all activities, tenure-eligible faculty are expected to meet the highest standards of excellence. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to accumulate evidence of productivity, effectiveness, and impact in their activities and produce this evidence when requested.

Whether the decision is about hiring, merit review/salary increase, reappointment, promotion, or tenure, three general criteria are applied in evaluating faculty: quality of teaching, quality of research or creative activity, and quality of service.

A central criterion for advancement in the School of Communication has always been the ability of the faculty member to share knowledge, insights, perspectives, and skills with students. The student body is the sine qua non of the school, and the school aspires to a standard of excellence in education that demands the very best performance from the faculty.

i) Teaching.

In the School of Communication, teaching takes place in many different settings, including classrooms, theatres, studios, research laboratories, and clinics. The School's common pedagogy emphasizes the dynamic of theory and practice and so demands that faculty interact with students outside the classroom as well as in it. Faculty are therefore expected to excel not simply as classroom performers, but also as guides, coaches, advisors, and mentors to their students.

No matter how diverse the activities or settings for instruction, a set of common characteristics defines effective teaching across the School's disciplines. These include:

- [Inclusive teaching](#) that strives to serve the needs of all students, regardless of their backgrounds or identities, and to support their engagement with subject material.
- Dedication to and enthusiasm for the subject being taught
- Demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the subject
- Communicating effectively with students
- Challenging students to do original, creative work
- Creating a sense of purpose, order, rigor, and movement in the learning process
- Creating an atmosphere where ideas can be exchanged freely and easily
- Involving and interesting students in the subject
- Classes are met, grading is fair and meticulous, respect is shown to students and colleagues

All faculty are required to provide information about the effectiveness of their teaching. Most maintain a teaching portfolio that includes evidence of teaching effectiveness such as student evaluations and testimonials, student achievements, peer or chair evaluations, instructional materials, teaching awards or honors, advising experience, and co-curricular teaching.

ii) **Research/Creative Activity.**

The second criterion used in evaluating faculty is quality of research or creative activity. Our faculty are engaged in many kinds of creative and scholarly work, ranging from life science investigations to social scientific and humanistic inquiries to innovative work in the arts. Despite this, there is a set of common characteristics to work that meets the highest standards of excellence. Ask yourself, is your creative or scholarly work:

- *Sustained & Programmatic?*
The work addresses a set of themes or problems and builds a viewpoint, method, or theory through a series of projects. Evidence for this is available in the work itself and the creator's ability to articulate the themes or viewpoints and connect them to the work.
- *Innovative & Distinctive?*
The work sets a new course within the field and is not simply derivative. Evidence of this is available in the work as it contrasts with related work as well as in reviews and other evaluations offered by experts.
- *Well-Crafted?*
The work meets the highest standards of craftsmanship for the kind of enterprise it represents. Evidence of this is available in the work itself as well as in reviews and other evaluations offered by experts.
- *Significant?*
The work appears in venues known for their selectivity and reach. Evidence of the importance of a venue is provided via information about the history of the venue, its processes and patterns of selection, its selection committees or boards, its pattern of influence in the field, and the like.
- *Influential?*

The work becomes the inspiration, model, backdrop, and/or starting point for outstanding work by others; ideally, it defines an area of activity. Evidence for this is available in patterns of citation or quotation, critical exegesis or reviews of the work, testimonials of other creators, and the like.

- *A Recognized Achievement?*

The work earns accolades and other positive evaluations by peers and other recognized authorities in the field. Evidence of this is found in honors and awards, peer reviews, and other explicit evaluations.

A faculty member should work with their faculty mentor(s), mentor champion and department chair to make sure that evidence about the quality of their research or creative activity is properly assembled. For example, faculty working in the performing arts may need to arrange for peer review of productions or performances.

Note that performance venues at Northwestern University including the Wirtz Center and Abbot Hall, and other campus venues would not *ordinarily* be considered significant venues in evaluating the quality of creative activity. However, when faculty members work with students in productions and performances, they make a substantial contribution to students' growth and outcomes. Consequently, we would not *ordinarily* place a high value on on-campus creative activities from the standpoint of evaluating a faculty member's research program, but we do place a high value on these activities from the standpoint of evaluating their contributions to teaching and service.

iii) Service.

The third criterion used in evaluating faculty is quality of service to the department, school, university, profession, or broader community. Service can take a variety of forms and be contributed to in a wide range of enterprises. Some service contributions will involve leading among peers as committee, program, or department chairs; but other less visible contributions (e.g., serving on editorial or advisory boards, representing the school on committees and task forces, writing promotion and tenure reviews) are also important. In evaluating service contributions, there is a set of common criteria that define excellence. Ask yourself, is your service:

- *Relevant?*

The service is grounded in and informed by the faculty member's professional expertise. A blood donation may be important to the community, but it has little connection to the arts and sciences represented in the school; by contrast, serving as an adviser to a political campaign would be a direct application of professional expertise for many of the school's faculty.

- *Significant?*

Either because of its organizational placement or function, the service has special importance for the community. For example: leading a university-wide task force might be of greater significance than leading the calendar committee; heading a major international professional organization is more significant than leading a regional organization; leading a whole organization is more significant than leading a part of the organization.

- *Impactful?*
The service makes a sizable and enduring positive change in the community.
- *Recognized?*
The service is recognized with awards or other honors, ideally from organizations and communities of great stature and discrimination.

c) Annual Merit Reviews (AMR) of Faculty.

As described above, annual reviews of faculty are conducted in the spring of each year. Faculty submit their annual reports through [Interfolio](#), and for each faculty member, the chair provides the Dean with a ranking of merit within the faculty member's peer cohort, along with written comments about that year's achievements or challenges. The Chair and Dean collaborate on the department's evaluation of its faculty and determine the content of the annual merit letter generated by the Dean.

At the time of appointment, all faculty members should be clearly informed about the department's expectations as to the nature and quality of their work. The faculty member is assigned a mentor(s) based on their content area of expertise and level of faculty development. [SoC's Faculty Mentorship & Career Development Guidelines](#) are a set of best practices and recommendations to guide the faculty mentor/mentee relationship. The assigned mentor(s) may change based on the course of the faculty member's interests and outcomes. The faculty member should meet frequently with the mentor(s), but no less than once per quarter. Then, at least once per year, the Chair should meet with each faculty member to review progress. The review should include discussion of such matters as:

- The faculty member's research and teaching goals and progress toward meeting them
- The quality of teaching during the previous year, with any problems identified and remedies suggested
- The nature, quantity and quality of the faculty member's research or creative activity, with modifications suggested, if appropriate
- The faculty member's service to the department, school, university, discipline, and broader community

d) Merit Increases in Salaries.

During their annual meetings to discuss merit evaluations of faculty activities for that year, the Dean and department chairs evaluate several factors when issuing merit, including equity across peers of similar rank. The categories reflect relative standing given the overall pattern of achievements within the department in that particular year, with special merit being awarded to those achieving successful third-year reviews or promotions, being retained, or being recognized for very significant achievements. These categories are then translated into salary increases based on the raise pool made available to the school by Central Administration. Note that no across-the-board or cost-of-living increases are made at Northwestern: all adjustments are made to recognize merit. Merit increases assigned to faculty through this process are effective the following September 1. As stated above, faculty who fail to participate in the AMR process will not receive a salary increase.

e) Joint Appointments.

Many faculty will hold appointments in multiple units, including departments, centers, and administrative units. Joint appointments are handled differently depending on whether they are budgetary or non-budgetary.

i) Non-Budgetary [Courtesy] Appointments.

Non-budgetary joint appointments, often referred to as “courtesy appointments,” are made in cases where a faculty member desires an affiliation with a department, but their salary will remain entirely within the budget of another department. Courtesy appointments are extended to a faculty member by the Dean on the recommendation of the faculty of the department in which the non-budgetary appointment will be held and with the approval of the chair (and if relevant, the Dean) of the home department. Faculty holding non-budgetary appointments in the school are not entitled to vote in the School or department meetings and are not entitled to support under the School’s faculty development programs (e.g., travel funding, research grants).

Note that in some circumstances, some portion of the faculty member’s effort may be committed to a unit even when the appointment in that unit is non-budgetary and the home department pays the entire salary. This effort will be documented in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) crafted by the department chair, the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, the Associate Dean for Finance and Administration and the Dean. In these cases, the appointment is still treated as a courtesy appointment from the standpoint of allocating voting rights and School resources.

ii) Budgetary Joint Appointments.

Budgetary joint appointments are made in cases where a faculty member will contribute effort to two or more departments, and their salary will be paid by more than one department. Budgetary joint appointments generally assign a percentage of effort and salary to each unit participating in the appointment. A tenure home department will be specified by the offer letter, and the tenure home department takes the lead in conducting annual merit evaluations, setting merit increases in salary, and conducting reviews for promotion and tenure. If a budgetary joint appointment is made after the original hire, a detailed MOU must be drawn to specify how the participating units will conduct reviews for reappointment, promotion, and tenure for the jointly appointed faculty member.

In the School of Communication, any faculty member holding a budgetary professorial appointment of at least 30% is eligible to participate as a full member of the tenure-eligible faculty and may request funding from the School’s faculty development programs (e.g., research grants, travel funds, etc.) or departmental programs as specified in departmental bylaws. Faculty holding budgetary appointments in the school of less than 30% have the same rights as faculty on non-budgetary appointments.

f) Reappointment.

Untenured faculty are appointed for a probationary period. A faculty member who has no time in-rank at another institution will generally be appointed on a six-year tenure clock—i.e., they will have a probationary period of up to six years. A faculty member who has earned time in-rank at another institution, or who has substantial professional experience, may be appointed with a probationary period of fewer than six years. If the probationary period will be shorter than six years, this is negotiated between the Dean and the candidate prior to extending an offer and approved by the Provost.

As a general rule, if a faculty member will have four or more years on the tenure clock, the probationary period will be divided into two contracts: an initial contract for 50% of the tenure-clock, and a subsequent contract for the remainder of the probationary period. These two contracts will be as equal in length as is practical given that contracts are written for whole years only. In the final year of the initial contract, the

faculty member undergoes a mid-term (conventionally, a “third-year”) review. A packet [dossier] is prepared and submitted for review by the department, after which there is a vote for or against recommending reappointment. The vote and the evaluation by the department are detailed in a letter of recommendation forwarded to the School Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) Committee, which has members elected from each of the five departments. Details on the RPT Committee and the review process can be found in the [SoC RPT Guidelines](#).

The RPT committee reviews the dossier and votes for or against recommending reappointment. The vote and evaluation are detailed in a letter to the Dean along with the dossier and department report. The Dean reviews all of these materials and decides whether to reappoint the faculty member for a second contract. If the decision is to reappoint, the candidate is issued a second contract that covers the remainder of the probationary period. If the decision is not to reappoint, the candidate is given notice of non-renewal and a one-year terminal contract. These procedures are detailed in the [SoC RPT Guidelines](#).

g) Extending the Probationary Period.

Untenured faculty sometimes experience life-changing events during their probationary periods, such as the birth of a child, a serious illness, or the need to care for a family member. When this happens, they may request that the probationary period be extended. It is always advisable for the faculty member to discuss the potential extension with the department chair. To make such a request, faculty should write to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, asking for the extension and providing a brief explanation of the circumstances that make it necessary. The extension request is reviewed by the Associate Dean and a decision will be made by the Dean and Provost.

h) Promotion & Tenure.

A tenure-eligible faculty member may, at any time, request consideration for promotion and/or tenure (if tenure has not yet been awarded) from their department. This is accomplished by sending a request to the department chair. Faculty who wish to be considered for promotion and/or tenure are encouraged to seek advice from the department chair and senior faculty mentors before sending such a request. They will be in the best position to know whether the candidate’s case for promotion and/or tenure is ready for consideration. The promotion and tenure review process is described in detail in the [SoC RPT Guidelines](#).

An untenured faculty member who reaches the end of their probationary period without earning tenure will be terminated. The faculty member may choose not to be considered for tenure and promotion; in which case the Dean will negotiate with the faculty member regarding an appropriate terminal contract. If the faculty member undergoes review for promotion and tenure in the final year of the probationary period and the decision is negative, the faculty member is notified and given a one-year terminal contract.

The standards for evaluating tenure-eligible faculty for tenure or promotion to full professor can be found in the [SoC RPT Guidelines](#). The guidelines include resources for developing a dossier, the expectations of a successful tenure case, and many other tools to help faculty on their path to tenure at Northwestern. Additional resources are available online through the [Office of the Provost](#).

V. Non-Tenure Eligible Faculty (“NTE”)

The school includes within its faculty many who are not eligible for tenure. Of these non-tenure-eligible faculty, there is an important distinction between full-time and part-time faculty.

a) Full-Time Appointments.

The ranks of the full-time, non-tenure eligible faculty are faculty of instruction, clinical faculty, and research faculty. The activities expected of non-tenure eligible faculty are detailed below.

i) Faculty of Instruction/Clinical Faculty.

Faculty of Instruction are expected to contribute outstanding teaching, clinical practice and teaching, and service to their departments. It is valued, but not required, that they exert leadership through their research or creative activities. They may, with department approval, enjoy many of the privileges of tenure-eligible faculty, including voting in faculty meetings. Faculty of Instruction and Clinical faculty may vote in school-wide elections and meetings after their first year on the faculty.

Appointments to the rank of Associate Professor of Instruction/Associate Clinical Professor, and Professor of Instruction/Clinical Professor are made through the NTE reappointment and promotion process. The [SoC NTE Appointment and Promotion Policy](#) details the process for promotion, including the development of review materials and the review timeline. All promotions for NTE faculty are reviewed by the department, the school's NTE Promotion Committee, the Dean and the Provost's office. Decisions are shared with the candidate from the Dean.

(1) Clinical Faculty Responsibilities.

Faculty working as full-time supervisors in the Speech/Language Pathology and Audiology clinics are not expected to teach courses or perform research. Their standard workload is 90% supervision of students and 10% service. With permission from the clinic director and department chair, full-time clinical faculty may spend up to 12.5% of their time in a given year collaborating with tenure stream faculty in applied research activity OR in carrying a one-course teaching load, creating a pattern of effort that is 80% supervision, 12.5% research OR teaching, and 7.5% service. The opportunity to teach or conduct research is granted on an annual basis and subject to review by the clinic director and department chair.

(2) Faculty of Instruction Responsibilities.

For our Faculty of Instruction, and/or Clinical Faculty not acting as clinical supervisors, the standard teaching load is six courses per year plus out of class preparation and supervision of students. This rule of thumb applies primarily to cases where the courses to be taught are of a standard size and format—for example, a large lecture class supported by discussion sections, a smaller lecture-discussion class taught by a single instructor, or a graduate course taught to five or more students. If a faculty member teaches in a format with unusually small class sizes or an unconventional pattern of student contact, he/she may be asked to teach more or less than the standard number of sections to reach an expected level of instructional activity.

(3) Reporting.

Faculty of Instruction/Clinical Faculty are expected to complete and submit annual reports through [Interfolio](#). Each Spring the department conducts an evaluation similar to that of tenured faculty, and the chair works with the Dean to complete the merit review of department faculty. As specified in the SoC Workload policies, Faculty of Instruction split their time between teaching and service, and their evaluation focuses on those activities. Faculty who do not participate in the AMR process by submitting a report will not receive a salary increase.

ii) Research Faculty.

The [Research Faculty Policy](#) set by the Office of Research and the Office of the Provost, detail how to manage research faculty appointments at the University. Generally, research faculty are hired at the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor. Research faculty appointments offer a career pathway to individuals with experience and scholarly credentials comparable to tenure-eligible faculty members at the same rank, but without the same obligations to contribute teaching and service. Research faculty may not participate in the governance of the University, or any academic unit and may not be assigned regular teaching responsibilities. Research faculty may serve as principal investigators or project directors on research awards and are expected to seek independent external funding for their activities.

Annual reviews of research faculty are conducted by their supervisors in conjunction with the department chair.

Research faculty are required to complete training, and more information can be found at the NU [Office for Research](#) and their [Research Training](#) page.

b) Short-term Appointments.

A variety of other types of appointments, including visitors, adjuncts, and coterminous appointments, are used to hire faculty on a short-term basis. Criteria for any of these appointments are the same as those for tenure-eligible faculty, and review of all faculty appointments is based on a dossier presented by the candidate, which at a minimum should include an up-to-date curriculum vita and samples of recent publications or creative work. These appointments are made at the request of the department chair. External letters of recommendation may be requested. The credentials of appointees are reviewed by the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, and the appointments are approved by the Dean.

- **Visiting Faculty** teach one or more courses or participate in research, clinical or creative activities, or co-curricular programs for a set fee.
- **Adjunct Faculty** are short-term appointments that typically have a continuing association with a department and provide regular input to teaching, research, creative activities, or clinical work. Recommendations for adjunct appointments are made by the department chair.
- **Coterminous Faculty** are short-term appointments in which an individual is hired to the full-time professional staff and due to involvement in instruction, is awarded a concurrent faculty appointment that terminates with the staff position.

Faculty with short-term appointments including visiting, adjunct, or coterminous are not permitted to vote in school or department meetings.

c) Emeritus Faculty.

Any full-time faculty member who resigns from their academic position and retires after reaching the age of 55 following a minimum of 10 years of continuous service to Northwestern University is **eligible** for Emeritus Faculty status. Department Chairs and tenured department faculty must vote and submit a letter

of support for emeritus ranking to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs. The Associate Dean and School Dean make a recommendation to the Provost, who reviews the candidate's dossier and decides whether to grant emeritus status. Emeritus faculty may participate in the [Northwestern Emeriti Organization](#).

Emeritus faculty who are appointed full or part-time to teach or conduct research are referred to as emeritus-in-service. Regardless of whether they are appointed to teach, emeritus faculty are not eligible to vote in school or department meetings.

VI. Research - Overview and Contact Information.

SoC supports faculty research through administrative assistance, leaves of absence to pursue research or creative goals, funding, and other resources as available. SoC research administrators support the complete life cycle of the award from proposal submission to ensuring compliant award management. Faculty members working to develop and sustain successful programs of research should consult with their Chair, the Associate Dean for Research in SoC, and the [Office for Research](#) for guidance and resources to begin their work.

VII. Faculty Development & Mentorship.

The SoC Mentorship & Faculty Development developed a set of best practices and guidelines to support faculty development within the school. New faculty are assigned a mentor(s) based on their content area of expertise and level of faculty development. [SoC's Faculty Mentorship and Career Development Guidelines](#) are a set of best practices and recommendations to guide the faculty mentor/mentee relationship. The assigned mentor(s) may change based on the course of the faculty member's interests and outcomes. The faculty member should meet frequently with the mentor(s), but no less than once per quarter. Then, at least once per year, the chair should meet with each faculty member to review progress. The review should include discussion of such matters as:

- The faculty member's research and teaching goals and progress toward meeting them
- The quality of teaching during the previous year, with any problems identified and remedies suggested
- The nature, quantity and quality of the faculty member's research or creative activity, with modifications suggested, if appropriate
- The faculty member's service to the department, school, university, discipline, and broader community

Each department has a *Mentor Champion* who in collaboration with the chair, maintains a faculty mentoring plan for the department based on the department's resources and needs of the faculty. Please contact your department chair for the current mentor champion. **All pre-tenure faculty must have registered mentor(s) recorded in the Faculty Affairs Office.**

VIII. School Administration and Governance

Faculty are encouraged to participate actively in department and school governance, and if offered the opportunity, to serve in leadership roles as administrators of school programs. In this section, the management and governance of the school is outlined.

a) School Administration.

The chief academic officer of the school is its Dean. The Dean is responsible for faculty development (recruiting, retaining, evaluating, and advancing the faculty), management of the school's infrastructure (business processes, internal and external communications, media and information technologies and other equipment, and facilities), academic programs, and undergraduate affairs. In partnership with the Graduate School, the Dean supervises the school's graduate and professional programs. In partnership with the Office of Alumni Relations and Development, the Dean builds connections to the alumni community and engages in fundraising. In partnership with the Office of Research, the Dean oversees the research enterprise of the school and monitors compliance with policies governing research.

Assisting the Dean in these tasks are the various Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, and directors appointed to service in SoC administration. A complete list of staff to the [Office of the Dean](#) can be found [online](#).

b) Standing Committees.

There are many standing committees in the School of Communication. Unless otherwise indicated, committee members are appointed by the Dean, and there is no set term of service. Here are some that should be noted by faculty:

i) SoC Leadership Council.

The SoC Leadership Council (SLC) functions as the executive committee of the school. It consists of the Dean, Associate Deans, and the five department chairs, meeting monthly during the regular academic year. All issues regarding curriculum, academic programs, and school-wide policy are referred to this committee for discussion and management as well as queries about SoC resources, infrastructure, and services. The Dean, the Dean's staff, the department chairs, and the faculty submit items for consideration by SLC. After discussion of the issue, SLC decides how the matter should be routed—tabled, returned to its originator for further consideration, placed on the agenda for the next faculty meeting, or forwarded to an appropriate administrative unit for action.

ii) Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (RPT).

The RPT committee reviews all cases for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure coming out of the departments and provides the Dean with its recommendation regarding the disposition of each case. Committee members are elected from among the tenured full and associate professors on appointments of at least 30% time within SoC. Selection is by a vote of the tenure-eligible faculty, whose home department lies within the division. The divisions of SoC are as follows:

<p>Division 1 Department of Theatre -and- Department of Performance Studies (2 Representatives)</p>	<p>Division 2 Department of Radio/Television/Film -and- Department of Communication Studies (2 Representatives)</p>	<p>Division 3 Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (1 Representative)</p>
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The committee is comprised of five members: two members from divisions 1 and 2, and one member from division 3, all elected on staggered terms. Members must be elected in such a way that every year all five departments be represented on the committee. As they are required to present cases to the RPT committee on behalf of the department, sitting department chairs are **not eligible** to serve on RPT. Faculty members are **not eligible** to serve on RPT while they are on leave; and a faculty member who plans to be on leave during the upcoming term of office should not stand for election to RPT.

Elections are held in the Spring via electronic ballot. For election results to be certified as valid, at least 40% of eligible voters must submit their ballots.

iii) Student Leadership Advisory Council (SLAC).

This committee of students advises the Dean about school programs and policies and helps allocate funds to support student groups and projects. Members are appointed to one-year terms.

iv) Board of Advisors.

This committee of prominent friends and alumni of the school assists the Dean and faculty in their efforts to advance the school. Members are appointed to three-year terms.

v) Academic Integrity Appeals Committee.

This committee hears cases brought by students wishing to appeal the decision that they have violated policies regarding academic integrity. This committee is comprised of all the current Directors of Undergraduate Studies.

vi) CommStaff Council.

CommStaff Council is an advisory group of staff members from all departments/units of the SoC who advise the school on staff morale, professional development, and social cultivation opportunities. Created in 2021, the council meets monthly during the academic year with a charge to help create a more transparent and collaborative SoC staff community. The subcommittees of the CommStaff Council focus on community building, professional development, and technology. Membership on the CommStaff Council is open annually to all full-time SoC staff members. An electronic application is sent out to the staff annually. A selection committee of current CommStaff council members, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of External Affairs/Chief of Staff, makes the final recommendations on membership depending on the vacancies on the council. Final recommendations are shared with the dean. One of the key intentions of the council is to reflect our staff community (department/unit, discipline, experience at SoC, etc.).

vii) Access and Accountability (AAC) Committee.

This joint faculty-staff-student committee focuses on shared insights, support, challenges, and growth opportunities across SoC populations and processes. From onboarding and organizational structures to leadership training and professional development opportunities, the committee is committed to positive change via dialogue and collaboration. The committee meets monthly during the academic year, with subcommittees devoted to special topics of interest for the year and beyond.

c) Department Advisory Committees.

Each department should have an advisory committee to the department chair that includes in its membership faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, and staff. In smaller departments where the committee of the whole includes students and staff, there is no need for a separate advisory committee.

d) Meetings of the Faculty.

Regular meetings of the SoC faculty are held four times during the academic year. The agenda for each faculty meeting consists of a set of standard reports, items forwarded by SLC for consideration by the faculty, elections as required, and matters arising. Individuals wishing to place items on the agenda should forward them to any member of SLC for discussion at the next SLC meeting. Materials to be distributed along with the agenda must be sent to the [Dean's Office](#) via email, at least three days in advance of the meeting.

Special meetings of the faculty may be called by the Dean, by a majority vote of SLC, or at the request of 30 voting members of the faculty. Except in emergency situations, the faculty will receive two weeks' notice of any special meeting.

i) Procedures.

The following procedures govern school faculty meetings:

- Thirty voting members constitute a quorum.
- Faculty members receive a call for meetings including an agenda and information about the date, place, and starting time.
- Any agenda item the Dean deems necessary to consider under Robert's Rules of Order abbreviated ranking of motions is marked with an asterisk on the agenda. Before, at the beginning of, or during the meeting, any faculty member may request that other items also be considered in this manner. The Dean may appoint a parliamentarian for advice on procedure during the deliberation on items considered under this provision.
- When a verbal or show-of-hands vote is taken, the Dean or another presiding officer shall first call for the ayes and then the nays; and only then declare the motion to have been passed or defeated. Votes may also be conducted by anonymous ballot, if needed. A motion will carry if it receives at least two-thirds of the vote of those present and voting. An abstention is a refusal to vote and therefore not counted as a vote.
- These procedures do not supersede the powers of the faculty as described in Article III and IV of the [University Statutes](#).

ii) Voting in School Meetings.

As noted above, all tenure-eligible faculty and professors of instruction are entitled to vote in faculty meetings, as are all faculty of instruction who have more than one year of service in the school. Part-time, adjunct, visiting, and coterminous faculty are not eligible to vote. However, any faculty member hired before 2022 who was eligible to vote under the rules outlined in the 2008 School of Communication Faculty Handbook will continue to hold the same voting rights regardless of our revised policies.

iii) Voting in Department Affairs.

All faculty who hold at least a 30% budgetary appointment in a department may participate in a vote for all matters **not related to appointments, tenure, and promotion**. By majority vote, the voting faculty may extend the privilege of voting rights to faculty who would not otherwise qualify.

Any such extension of privilege is valid for one academic year and is renewable at the request of the department. Adjunct, part-time, visiting, coterminous, courtesy, and emeritus faculty are not eligible to vote. For election results to be certified as valid, at least 40% of eligible voters must return their ballots. Each department should have written rules for voting available to faculty as requested. Voting policy related to appointment, tenure and promotion can be found in the SoC General Voting Policy.

iv) Absentee Voting.

It is possible for a faculty member who cannot be present for the discussion to provide an absentee vote before the department discussion, although we discourage this practice. Participation in the review is expected to contribute to the analysis of the case, not just the overall vote. For this reason, most people who cannot be present do not submit an absentee vote.

v) Recusal.

- (1) *Recruiting Discussions* - A department member enjoying a close relationship with the candidate (familial, best friend, collaborator, former advisor, etc.) or with another candidate in the search should recuse themselves from the review, discussion, and vote.
- (2) *Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Discussions* - A department member enjoying a close relationship (familial, best friend, collaborator, former advisor, etc.) with the faculty member under review should recuse themselves from the review, discussion, and vote.

e) Policy on Faculty Private Tutoring, Consulting, Voice, or Other Services.

No faculty member may receive any direct compensation from a currently matriculating Northwestern University student for teaching, coaching, consulting, voice lessons, or other services. No faculty member may use university spaces, email, or listservs for operation, recruitment, or promotion of private businesses, i.e. no faculty member may run a private business in any way within the School of Communication or Northwestern University more broadly.

Only SoC (or another appropriate agency within Northwestern University) may organize instructional activities of its faculty and collect tuition and fees from students (including undergraduate, graduate, and nontraditional). If a group of faculty wish to offer a program on a fee basis, they must first seek approval by the School and set it up within the regular curricular and business processes of the School.

Reminder that private businesses must be disclosed by faculty, per the [University's Standards for Business Conduct](#). These standards also state that "faculty and staff are expected to use University resources prudently and only for their intended purposes, consistent with the tax-exempt status of the University. They should avoid waste and improper use, including not using University funds, property, or facilities for their personal benefit or, without proper approval, the benefit of a non-University organization." The [Student Code of Conduct](#) is explicit in stating that students cannot use Northwestern University facilities or resources to run a private business. Therefore, the SoC policy is consistent with central policies for both students and faculty alike.