ADMISSION

Admission

General Requirements for Admission

Northwestern University attracts and enrolls a student body of high ability that reflects a variety of talents, ideas, backgrounds, and experiences, thereby contributing to the diversity of the campus community.

Candidates for admission should demonstrate a level of performance in curricular and extracurricular areas that indicates they will be able to succeed in a competitive academic environment. In the selection of students, careful attention is given to the ability of each candidate as evidenced by academic records and the results of entrance tests as well as by character and personal qualities. The University attempts to select students who are committed to scholarship and who have shown a willingness to become involved in their expressed interest areas. In determining whether to accept a candidate, the University considers

- Secondary school record
- College record (required for transfer candidates)
- Recommendations from school officials and other persons who have information pertinent to the candidate’s probable success at Northwestern
- Results of required tests (All candidates must submit either SAT or ACT scores. The writing sections for these tests are optional. Candidates for certain special admission programs and home-schooled applicants must submit the SAT Subject Tests specified below. SAT Subject Tests are optional for other candidates.)
- Music audition (required of Bienen School of Music candidates)
- Candidate’s written statements
- Any other information received by the University that bears on the candidate’s readiness for study at Northwestern

English Proficiency for International Applicants

In addition to meeting all regular admission requirements, international students are required to present evidence of their ability to speak, read, and write the English language. International applicants whose first language is not English or whose schooling has not been in English are required to submit the results of either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

SAT Subject Tests

Required for Special Admission Programs and Home-Schooled Applicants

- Honors Program in Medical Education: Mathematics 2 and Chemistry
- Integrated Science Program: Mathematics Level 2, Chemistry or Physics, and an additional science
- Home-schooled applicants: Mathematics Level 1 or 2 and two other SAT Subject Tests of the applicant’s choice from different subject areas (i.e., not two science, two foreign language, or two history, etc.)
- All other applicants: SAT Subject Tests are optional.

Recommended Units

Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences; School of Communication; School of Education and Social Policy; Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications; and Bienen School of Music: 16 units, divided among the following academic areas:

- English: 4 units
- Foreign language: 2 to 4 units
- Mathematics: 3 to 4 units
- Laboratory science: 2 to 3 units
- History/social studies: 2 to 4 units
- Electives: 1 to 3 units in the above academic areas

Students preparing for college are strongly advised to take four years of work in English with as much emphasis on composition as the curriculum allows. Two units of the same foreign language should be taken; three or four years are strongly recommended.

The McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science requires a sound secondary school education as described above, with strong preparation in mathematics and science. Specifically recommended are

- Mathematics: 3½ to 4 units (the minimum requirements for mathematics include algebra [2 units], plane geometry [1 unit], and trigonometry [½ unit]; many entering McCormick first-year students will have taken calculus [1 unit])
- Science: 2 units (credit in both chemistry and physics is recommended)

Credit in other subjects should bring the total to 16 units or more, including 4 units of English and work in social studies and foreign languages.

Admission Notification

Northwestern offers incoming first-year candidates a choice of two notification plans, Early Decision and Regular Decision. Early Decision is a binding admission commitment. Candidates accepted to Northwestern under Early Decision must withdraw all other university applications.

The table below outlines these plans, the notification plans for transfer students, and the financial aid application procedure, including deadlines and the forms available through the College Scholarship Service.

Admission Procedure

To be considered for admission to Northwestern, candidates must complete the following steps:

- Complete the Common Application or the Coalition Application. You may apply online at commonapp.org or mycoalition.org.
Applications for admission may be submitted before candidates take the standardized tests required for college admission.

- Arrange with the officials of their high school to complete and forward the Secondary School Report to the Office of Undergraduate Admission. All candidates should have their records through the sixth semester sent to Northwestern as early in the senior year as possible. Regular Decision candidates should have seventh-semester grades sent as soon as they are available.
- Submit standardized tests as outlined in the General Requirements for Admission (p. 1) section and, if applicable, the English Proficiency for International Applicants (p. 1) and/or SAT Subject Tests (p. 1) sections in this chapter. Testing deadlines can be found in the Application and Testing Deadlines (p. 2) table. Applicants may self-report SAT and ACT scores, taking care to report their highest individual sections of the SAT and/or highest ACT composite score. Applicants are not obligated to report scores from all test dates, though are welcome to do so. Admitted students who choose to enroll will be required to submit official SAT or ACT test scores prior to matriculation. English proficiency scores may not be self-reported; these should be submitted officially via the testing company at the applicant stage.
- Present a music audition if applying for admission to the Bienen School of Music; follow the audition guidelines specified at https://music.northwestern.edu/admission/undergraduate/auditions.

**Application to Dual Bachelor's Degree Programs**

A student interested in taking advantage of the opportunity to receive bachelor's degrees from two different Northwestern undergraduate schools in five years must apply to both schools. It is possible to be admitted to only one or both schools since applicants are considered for each school separately.

Dual degree programs available include the following:

- BA/BMus in liberal arts and music
- BA/BS or BS/BS in communication and engineering
- BA/BMus, BS/BMus, BA/BAMus, or BS/BAMus in communication and music
- BSED/BMus or BSED/BAMus in education and music
- BS/BMus or BS/BAMus in engineering and music
- BSJ/BMus or BSJ/BAMus in journalism and music

For descriptions of these and other dual bachelor's degree programs, see the Dual Bachelor’s Degree Programs (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/dual-bachelors-degrees) chapter of this catalog.

**Special Admission Programs**

The following undergraduate programs at Northwestern have special application requirements.

**Honors Program in Medical Education**

The Honors Program in Medical Education (HPME) provides simultaneous admission to undergraduate study and the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern. Interested students must preapply by the due date. Those whose preapplications qualify receive the special HPME admission application to submit in addition to their regular Application for Admission to Weinberg College, the School of Communication (human communication sciences major only), or the McCormick School. For application deadlines, see the Application and Testing Deadlines (p. 2) table.

For information about HPME, see the Honors Program in Medical Education (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/dual-graduate-undergraduate-degrees/honors-program-medical-education) section in the Dual Graduate & Undergraduate Degrees (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/dual-graduate-undergraduate-degrees) chapter of this catalog.

**Integrated Science Program**

A student wishing to be considered for Weinberg College's Integrated Science Program, which provides a rigorous background in the major scientific disciplines and mathematics and can lead to a bachelor of arts degree in three years, must complete the special ISP application (available at isp.northwestern.edu/admissions/applying/). Applicants to the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Sciences may also submit an ISP application, but doing the additional major in ISP along with engineering does not accelerate completion of the bachelor of science degree. Either the Common Application or the Coalition Application is also required of applicants.

For more information on ISP, see the Integrated Science Program (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/integrated-science) section in the Weinberg College (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences) chapter of this catalog.

**Mathematical Methods in the Social Sciences**

A student interested in Weinberg College’s program in Mathematical Methods in the Social Sciences (MMSS), which is designed for students with high mathematical aptitude and strong interest in social problems and issues, must complete the special MMSS application (https://www.mmss.northwestern.edu/admission/first-year-application.html). Either the Common Application or the Coalition Application is also required. For more information on MMSS, visit this website (https://www.mmss.northwestern.edu).

**Application and Testing Deadlines: Notification Plans**

**Regular Programs for Fall Quarter Matriculation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Early Decision</th>
<th>Regular Decision</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apply by</td>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>January 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take SAT or ACT by</td>
<td>October test</td>
<td>December test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If taking SAT Subject Tests, take by</td>
<td>October test</td>
<td>December test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To apply for financial aid, file CSS PROFILE by</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>February 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>and file FAFSA by</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern releases its decision by</td>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>March 31</td>
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</table>
the same course of study even if mastery is demonstrated on multiple International Baccalaureate. Students will receive credit only once for Northwestern may award credit for distinguished performance on certain administered by Northwestern departments.

Can be earned through appropriate performance on examinations or the school adviser. In some fields advanced placement and/or credit placement policies should be addressed to the Office of the Registrar. In nearly all areas Northwestern awards credit for Advanced Placement Examination scores of 5; in some cases credit is also awarded for scores of 3 and 4. Specific questions concerning Northwestern’s advanced placement policies should be addressed to the Office of the Registrar or the school adviser. In some fields advanced placement and/or credit can be earned through appropriate performance on examinations administered by Northwestern departments.

Northwestern may award credit for distinguished performance on certain foreign national examinations, and the higher-level examinations of the International Baccalaureate. Students will receive credit only once for the same course of study even if mastery is demonstrated on multiple exams (e.g., mathematics AP and IB exams). Also, credit is awarded only for exams taken prior to matriculation at Northwestern.

Northwestern also may award credit for college courses taken by incoming first-year students before they enter the University. To qualify for such recognition, the courses must be similar to courses offered at Northwestern, must have been completed at a college or university whose accreditation is recognized by Northwestern, must not have been submitted in partial fulfillment of the normal secondary school graduation requirement, and must have been taken primarily by bona fide college students (i.e., high school graduates pursuing a college degree).

**Transfer Candidates**

Students may be considered for admission as transfers from another college or university provided they have completed one full year of university studies by the application deadline, are in good standing at any institution except Northwestern, they cannot be considered for admission as first-year candidates and must meet the criteria to apply as transfer candidates. Undergraduate schools at Northwestern enroll transfer students in the fall quarter only, and admitted transfer students may not defer their enrollment to any subsequent fall. Transfer students must meet the relevant provisions of the Undergraduate Registration Requirement (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/requirements-policies/undergraduate-registration-requirement).

**Transfer Admission Procedure**

To be considered for admission, transfer students must complete the following steps:

- Complete the Common Application or the Coalition Application. Submit online at commonapp.org or mycoalition.org.
- Arrange with the officials of the high school to forward the complete high school report to the Office of Undergraduate Admission.
- Submit results of the SAT or the ACT. Writing sections are optional. Applicants may self-report SAT and ACT scores, taking care to report their highest individual sections of the SAT and/or highest ACT composite score. Applicants are not obligated to report scores from all test dates, though are welcome to do so. Admitted students who choose to enroll will be required to submit official SAT or ACT test scores prior to matriculation. English proficiency scores may not be self-reported; these should be submitted officially via the testing company at the applicant stage.
- Arrange with the registrar of each college previously attended to forward transcripts of record to the Office of Undergraduate Admission.
- Request a statement of good academic and social standing from the dean of students at the college from which the student is transferring.
- Present a music audition if applying for admission to the Bienen School of Music (for audition guidelines, see https://music.northwestern.edu/admission/undergraduate/auditions/programs).
- Submit application for admission before the March 15 deadline.

**Evaluation of Credits**

Transfer candidates who are accepted by Northwestern will receive a preliminary evaluation of the credits they have earned to date before matriculation, assuming all pertinent transcripts have been received. Northwestern may award credit for exams taken prior to matriculation at Northwestern.

An official evaluation of credits earned will be made by the Office of the Registrar when an admitted student matriculates. To read the
transfer credit policy, go to www.registrar.northwestern.edu/graduation/transfer_and_test_credit.html.

**Professional Education Students**

The Northwestern University School of Professional Studies, the University’s continuing education division, offers an extensive range of programs and courses in Chicago, Evanston, and online for adult students seeking personal enrichment or professional mobility, preparation for graduate study, or pursuit of a degree or a certificate.

The school allows adults with a college degree, or some college credit and good standing, or a high school diploma but no prior college work to enroll in courses as students at large. Students who wish to earn a degree or a certificate should speak with an academic adviser about admission.

More information about the school is available on its website, sps.northwestern.edu.

**Special Students**

Properly qualified persons who demonstrate a need for certain courses required for their academic or professional advancement may apply to the University as special nondegree-seeking students. Applicants must present official transcripts of previous study and show evidence of successful academic achievement. Persons who do not meet these requirements should not apply.

Enrollment as a special student does not constitute admission to any degree program at the University, and credits earned as a special student may not be counted toward a degree at Northwestern. (Exception: Special students who subsequently become eligible for admission into the School of Professional Studies may apply these credits toward a degree.) Special students are granted academic credit for coursework satisfactorily completed, and these credits may be transferred to another institution.

Special students are admitted with the understanding that they may register only after students working toward Northwestern degrees have registered. Some classes will be closed, and some schools or departments may not accept nondegree students. These restrictions do not apply to Summer Session.

Special students are not permitted to enroll in 399 or 499 Independent Study courses.

All tuition and fees for special students are charged at the undergraduate rate. Complete instructions and application forms may be obtained from the:

Office of Special Students
Northwestern University
405 Church Street
Evanston, Illinois 60208

For more information see sps.northwestern.edu/main/nondegree-special-students.

**Admission Withdrawal**

In cases where an admitted student’s academic performance falters seriously, as indicated by a final transcript, an offer of admission may be withdrawn. Northwestern also reserves the right to rescind an admission offer if we receive information that, in our judgment, reflects negatively on a student’s character or fitness for study and/or participation in the Northwestern community.