The study of networks is a thriving area of research at Northwestern, and it also provides an excellent means to analyze collaborations among researchers throughout the University. Increasing interdisciplinary collaboration is a goal of McCormick and Northwestern, as many of the most challenging issues facing society will need solutions drawn from many different fields.

Using data from the Thomson-Reuters ISI Web of Science, it is possible to visualize collaborations at Northwestern based on research publications. Analysis of the graphics shows trends in the types of research at Northwestern. For example, the increasingly active connections between the Department of Materials Science and Engineering and the Department of Chemistry is partially due to Northwestern’s strength in nanotechnology. Growth in the connections between McCormick departments and the Feinberg School of Medicine indicates increasing collaborations in the life sciences.

While research is one aspect of collaboration, the McCormick School has also built strong connections with other schools through innovative teaching initiatives. The Medill School of Journalism and McCormick teach joint classes on innovation in media, and NUvention courses bring together faculty from across campus to teach entrepreneurship and innovation.