

Guidelines for Teaching Track Faculty Appointments in the McCormick School of Engineering

March 2023

Appointments for teaching track faculty in the McCormick School of Engineering vary considerably to accommodate for the nature of the appointment, which often includes a specific administrative component or particular teaching responsibilities. These guidelines provide details on how teaching track faculty appointments are implemented in McCormick.

1. **Teaching Track Faculty Appointments Versus Adjunct Teaching Appointments:** Both teaching track faculty and adjunct teaching faculty focus on teaching responsibilities. However, the two types of appointments differ substantially from one another.

Adjunct teaching appointments are made to teach specific classes with little responsibility beyond that of teaching one or two courses per year for which the instructor is paid on a per course basis. Adjunct teaching appointments are typically for one year only and are renewable. Persons with adjunct faculty appointments are not eligible for benefits. Adjunct teaching appointments may be terminated if circumstances make this necessary, such as under-enrollment in a course.

Teaching track faculty appointments, by contrast, are for persons teaching several classes each year along with usual advising and departmental and University service responsibilities. The appointment may also include administrative responsibilities. Teaching track faculty appointments are typically for 3-5 years, although in some cases the appointments can be as short as 1 year and are renewable. Teaching track faculty are regular University employees who receive benefits. Appointments may be part-time or full-time. Teaching track faculty may be released at the expiration of their appointment but only if given written notice of such intended release one year in advance of the expiration of the appointment, except in the case of one-year appointments. Teaching track faculty appointments are subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the Northwestern University Faculty Handbook. The Northwestern University Faculty Handbook and amendments can be found at:

https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/docs/faculty_handbook_aug2021.pdf

Further guidelines related to adjunct and teaching track faculty appointments include:

- Adjunct faculty may teach no more than 3.99 course units each academic year in McCormick.
- If an adjunct faculty member's teaching load is 4 quarter course units or greater during an academic year, that person's appointment should be converted to a benefits-eligible teaching track faculty appointment in that fiscal year with an appointment effort consistent with 12.5% academic year effort per quarter course.
- McCormick administrative staff may teach no more than 1 course unit each academic year as part of their normal staff responsibilities or for additional pay except with annual written approval by the Office of the Dean. Individuals with post-doctoral or research staff appointments are subject to different guidelines outlined elsewhere.

2. **Teaching Track Appointments:** Teaching track faculty appointment tracks and ranks as well as promotion procedures are governed by the “Policy on Appointment, Evaluation and Promotion Track for Continuing, Non-tenure Track McCormick Faculty,” dated June 3, 2016
<https://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/documents/faculty-staff-resources/faculty/mccormick--nte-faculty-practices.pdf>.

Further guidelines related to teaching track faculty appointments include:

- Teaching 4 or more course units makes a faculty member benefits eligible.
- Benefits eligible teaching track faculty appointments must be at the lecturer level or higher and require approval by the Office of the Dean. Approval from the Office of the Provost is required for appointments exceeding one year.
- A part-time teaching track faculty member’s appointment fraction when teaching 4 or more course units is based on 12.5% academic year effort per quarter course unit, unless otherwise approved by the Office of the Dean.
- Teaching track faculty appointments coincide with the start of the academic year and typically start on September 1. Teaching track faculty appointments that commence during the academic year are discouraged.
- Transition from staff to teaching track faculty appointments is strongly discouraged and permissible only upon advance approval of the Office of the Dean.
- Combined staff and teaching track faculty appointments are not allowed except as staff positions with a 0% lecturer appointment.

3. **Teaching Load for Teaching Track Faculty:** The normal teaching load for full-time teaching track faculty is 6-8 quarter course units during the 9-month academic year. The normal teaching load for each individual is specified in their appointment letter. Teaching credit may be applied for administrative or other duties as specified in the appointment letter. Such credit is typically 1-3 quarter course units per academic year and subject to approval by the Office of the Dean. Other conditions include:

- Teaching track faculty may teach no more than one course unit within McCormick during the academic year for extra pay except upon prior approval of the Office of the Dean.
- Additional pay for McCormick activities other than teaching courses (e.g., bootcamps, training sessions, etc.) is limited to 10% of the base salary each year except upon prior approval by the Office of the Dean.
- With prior approval of the Office of the Dean, teaching track faculty may teach up to one course per year outside of McCormick, either at another school at Northwestern University or at another university, for additional pay.
- Many courses are co-taught to provide students with a broader academic experience. Unless a different arrangement is approved in advance by the Office of the Dean, teaching credit for co-taught courses is pro-rated according to the number of instructors co-teaching the course. For instance, co-teaching one-quarter course with one other instructor counts as one-half course unit.
- For purposes of effort reporting and University systems, teaching one quarter course accounts for approximately 12.5% of the 9-month academic year effort. Thus, the 6-8 quarter course teaching load accounts for 75%-100% effort, with the remaining effort, if any, directed toward service, advising, and other non-course related activities.
- Teaching track faculty may “buy out” teaching for up to one course per year by covering one-sixth of their 9-month salary from sponsored research grants.

- Teaching track faculty are typically permitted one day per calendar week for consulting, provided it does not interfere with their normal teaching responsibility or other Northwestern activities and responsibilities.
4. **Teaching Track Faculty Appointment Durations:** Nearly all teaching track faculty appointments are multiple-year 9-month appointments, where the nine months coincide with the academic year, nominally approximately September 15 to June 14. Salaries for 9-month appointments are apportioned to be paid over the 12-month fiscal year, September 1 to August 31. A limited number of teaching track faculty appointments are 12-month appointments. These include program director appointments. These 12-month appointments automatically revert to 9-month appointments at the pro-rated salary if the person steps down from the administrative role.
 5. **Vacations:** Unlike staff positions, faculty positions do not accrue vacation time and there are no specific rules on vacation time with the exception that vacations should not impinge in any way on teaching or administrative responsibilities. Teaching track faculty on 9-month appointments may take vacation during academic breaks between quarters in December and March. Persons on 12-month appointments are expected to take vacations at a time when the vacation will not adversely affect their teaching and administrative responsibilities (typically during academic breaks between quarters in December and March and during the summer).
 6. **Summer Salary:** Teaching track faculty on 9-month appointments may be paid summer salary for specific teaching, research, or administrative responsibilities. The monthly summer salary is calculated as one ninth of the person's 9-month appointment salary and is paid during the summer in addition to the 12-month pro-rated salary for the 9-month appointment. Specific conditions related to summer salary include:
 - Summer salary paid to teaching track faculty for administrative responsibilities by McCormick, any McCormick department, or any McCormick program may not exceed 1 month except for assistant department chairs, who may be paid up to 1.5 months of summer salary for administrative work.
 - Teaching track faculty who teach courses during the summer for McCormick courses may receive summer salary at a rate commensurate with that for courses they teach during the academic year. For example, a person teaching 6 course units during the 9-month academic year may earn up to 1.125 months of summer salary per summer course unit, consistent with 12.5% of academic year effort for one quarter course unit.
 - Summer session teaching through the School of Professional Studies should be factored into summer effort reporting at the rate of 1.125 months per course unit.
 - Teaching track faculty on 12-month appointments may not teach summer courses for additional pay without prior approval of the Office of the Dean.
 - Teaching track faculty may earn summer salary from sponsored research grants. The total summer compensation may not exceed 2.5 months of salary, consistent with guidelines for tenured faculty appointments, unless 3 months of summer salary is approved in advance by the Office of the Dean. In the case of 3 months of summer salary, a maximum of 2.5 months may be from sponsored grants.
 - Like tenured/tenure-track faculty, paid summer appointments do not carry vacation time. Thus, if a person chooses to earn 3 months of summer salary, no vacation should be taken during the summer quarter.