

Dear Colleagues,

I hope your academic year is off to a great start. I'm writing to share campus news, application and financial aid updates, and exciting ways to engage with our campus in the months to come. For those of you who prefer top-level takeaways, click [here](#) to skip to the highlights.

Campus News

Over [2,350 new first-year and transfer students](#) arrived in early September for a weeklong orientation, kicked off by our annual March through the Arch—a tradition where hundreds of supportive family members, faculty, and fellow administrators cheer on new students as they walk together onto campus through our historic Weber Arch. Our official class profile is not yet available, but your students can reference [last year's](#) in the meantime.

Earlier this month, Northwestern President Michael Schill [announced his resignation](#), and Henry Bienen—our University President from 1995–2009—[stepped into the role of Interim President](#). As President Schill shared in a letter to campus, “our community has made significant progress while simultaneously facing extraordinary challenges,” and we look ahead in that spirit as President Bienen leads us forward with a deep love and seasoned appreciation for all that makes Northwestern special.

Various major facilities enhancements are underway, including a [state-of-the-art football stadium](#), a [new hub for the social sciences and global affairs](#), and a redevelopment of the [Cohen Lawn](#) outside our Norris Student Center, which will turn this lakeside area into a gathering space with a performance pavilion, campus pub, firepits, and of course incredible views of Lake Michigan.

The University recently announced a [\\$20 million gift](#) to support the [Litowitz Center for Enlightened Disagreement](#), a University-wide research hub co-founded by faculty in psychology and management that convenes leading thinkers to conduct research, identify best practices, and train groups to promote constructive engagement and discourse in an increasingly polarized world.

A few newer academic programs to note among the 180 majors, minors, and certificates available across our six undergraduate schools: our engineering school now offers a minor in AI, and our new dual degree program in education and social policy and journalism is now in its third year. Our school of communication offers a certificate in Human-Computer Interaction in collaboration with our school of engineering, as well as a new Management in Creative Industries Certificate in partnership with our Kellogg School of Management.

Application and Aid Updates

Our application options and deadlines can be found [online](#). We remain test-optional and will not require the science section for any ACT test-takers. Students who want us to consider an ACT superscore across multiple test dates should self-report their official ACT superscore in our supplement (available in their MyACT account); given the staggered roll-out of the ACT's enhanced format and revised formula for calculating score composites, we will not automatically calculate an ACT superscore this cycle. See our [testing FAQs](#) for more information.

We are piloting a new Early Decision (ED) application pathway for transfer applicants this cycle. This early round will operate like first-year ED, where ED transfer applicants commit to enrolling if admitted. We will also be shifting from a “rolling” approach to transfer decision release (where we notify candidates weekly throughout April and May) to just two release dates. Visit our website for [dates and deadlines](#), as well as [more information for transfer applicants](#).

Northwestern remains committed to ensuring students from all backgrounds can afford Northwestern and fully access the University's remarkable support, resources, and opportunities. This commitment begins with an [undergraduate financial aid program](#) that meets all students' demonstrated need with loan-free scholarship packages. Most families earning a combined income of under \$150K pay no tuition, and most earning under \$70K attend at no cost.

Application fee waivers are available, and roughly 40% of applicants have qualified for fee waivers in recent years, including first-gen college students. Students can [visit our website](#) to explore fee-waiver eligibility and next steps.

Opportunities for Prospective Students

Although we no longer offer alumni interviews as an optional part of the application process, prospective applicants can connect with our incredible alumni through [Alumni Conversations](#), an opportunity to learn about Northwestern via a wide range of alumni perspectives. These Alumni Conversations are part of our 'Cat Chats program, which also gives prospective students the option to connect with [current undergraduates](#). All of these 'Cat Chats are one-on-one conversations held online, and students can indicate specific areas of interest when they register.

We've also recently launched a new [online engagement platform](#) as another way for prospective students to seek out connections with Northwestern community members who can speak to specific interests and experiences on campus. On the platform, undergrad and alumni ambassadors create profiles, post content, and message with prospective students directly.

For those who are able to visit campus, we'll offer [tours](#) along with 30-minute Admissions & Affordability Q&A's weekdays and select Saturdays. We also offer certain school [specific info sessions in person](#), along with a new Engineering & Design tour.

For those who can't travel to campus, we host regular information sessions and school-specific sessions online, with a [range of digital experiences](#) accessible on our website and [YouTube channel](#)—tours, student panels, video dialogues with admission directors, and more. We'll be holding monthly digital programs on topics like academic advising, pre-professional and career support, community engagement, and more.

As always, you can find your [regional team's contact information](#) on our website, as well as [resources for counselors](#). We look forward to being back on the road this fall while continuing to innovate in the digital space to connect with as many of you and your students as possible.

We're grateful for everything you do. Have a wonderful fall!

Warmly,



Liz Kinsley, PhD
Dean of Undergraduate Admission

Highlights:

- 2,350+ new first-year & transfer students
- President Schill resigns; President Bienen says “Hello again, Northwestern”
- \$20 million gift supports enlightened disagreement
- Remain test optional; see FAQs for new ACT guidelines
- Early Decision transfer pathway (new!)
- Online student connections platform (new!)
- Alumni 'Cat Chats (new-ish!)
- Explore all digital programming
- Binge our YouTube content