

Dear Colleagues,

Happy February—love is in the air, but we'd trade FAFSA data for chocolates in a second this Valentine's Day. Unfortunately, that is not looking to be the case, so I'm writing with some reassurances around our Financial Aid process, as well as details about our Regular Decision release, a testing policy update, and resources for prospective Transfer applicants.

## FAFSA Delays and Northwestern Financial Aid

We realize FAFSA delays are creating hurdles and stress for folks on all sides of the financial aid process. Our hope is to ease that stress for our applicants and their families, and remove as many hurdles as possible.

As you know, the FAFSA is now available; however, due to delivery delays, students' FAFSA information is not likely to become available to colleges until March. **That said, FAFSA delays will not impact our ability to provide admitted students with financial aid awards.** Because we also require the CSS Profile, Northwestern applicants should submit their CSS Profile, along with required IDOC forms, by our [February deadlines](#) and submit the FAFSA as soon as they are able. If FAFSA information is delayed as long as we expect it will be, we will provide Financial Aid awards to students admitted in our Regular Decision round using the CSS Profile and IDOC tax information, and adjustments will be made only if information differs between the CSS Profile and the FAFSA.

We realize concerns about the May 1<sup>st</sup> deposit deadline are emerging given FAFSA delays. As of now we do not plan to move our May 1<sup>st</sup> deposit deadline, but we will keep a close watch on timelines as they continue to develop and, as always, work with students individually if an extension becomes necessary.

## Regular Decision Candidates: Decision Release & Pool-wide Context

We plan to release Regular Decision results on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Applicants will receive an email letting them know a decision is available in their applicant portal.

While we cannot share decision-related information with counselors prior to March 27<sup>th</sup>, we'll provide pool-wide context at that time to help guide your conversations with students and families. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, we'll make this contextual information available via our [online counselor hub](#) and email a link to counselors listed on an RD school report form. (Note: if your email is not listed on the school report form, you can still access the information online on our [counselor hub](#).)

We have recently launched [Slate.org](#), so high school counselors with a Slate.org account can view the status of their students' applications after a student has viewed their decision. Visit Slate.org for more information on signing up. As this is our first cycle using Slate.org, we appreciate your feedback and patience as we smooth out any wrinkles with this new tool.

While we cannot discuss individual decisions with counselors, we welcome connections after decision release should you need decision information or have any follow-up questions. Please refer to our [regional teams webpage](#) for the appropriate direct contact on our Admissions committee.

## Standardized Testing Policy, 2024 – 25 Cycle

Northwestern will remain test-optional for the 2024–25 admissions cycle. We will not require ACT or SAT scores from first-year or transfer candidates applying for Fall 2025 entry. Please [refer to our FAQs](#) for additional information and guidance.

## Resources for Transfer Applicants

If you are working with former students as they finalize a Transfer application, here are a few resources that may be helpful:

- Transfer student [deadlines](#)
- Upcoming virtual [Transfer Student Panel](#) on February 29<sup>th</sup>
- Archived [Transfer Student Panel](#) for those who can't make the coming live program
- [FAQs](#) on our new writing supplements
- Admissions staff [discuss new writing supplements](#) in our [Applied Learning series](#)
- Northwestern [Admissions publications](#) (viewbook, diversity & inclusion brochure, financial aid brochure, etc.)
- Information on [application fee waivers](#) (which now extend to first-gen college students)

As always, we're grateful for everything you do. Never hesitate to reach out, and for those weathering chilly winters like ours, hang in there—the days are getting longer!

Warmly,



Liz Kinsley, PhD  
Associate Dean & Director of Undergraduate Admission