

Guidelines for Courtesy Faculty Appointments in the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science

Overview

Courtesy appointments for faculty are an important component of the connections within the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science and with other schools at Northwestern. Courtesy appointments carry no salary and have a fixed term. Courtesy faculty are invited and expected to contribute meaningfully to the intellectual life and reputation of the department to which they are appointed. Common activities in which courtesy faculty participate include:

- Supervising research of graduate students in the department; in some departments, only co-advising with a core faculty member is permitted
- Serving on the thesis committees of students in the department
- Attending department seminars and meeting with visitors when interests align
- Participating in graduate student recruiting activities by meeting with prospective students
- Assisting in faculty recruiting by meeting with and evaluating candidates when interests align
- Teaching departmental courses or co-listed courses
- Other service activities

Each department defines the activities in which they expect courtesy faculty members to participate. Voting rights are not typically granted for courtesy faculty members.

Guidelines

The guidelines below provide details on how courtesy faculty appointments are implemented in McCormick.

1. Appointment process: Courtesy faculty members can be appointed at any time, although appointments on an academic year basis (commencing September 1) are most desirable for consistency and tracking. A best practice is to engage all core faculty (i.e., >0% salaried appointment with voting rights) in suggesting new potential courtesy faculty members on an annual basis, with an open discussion on how the inclusion of the courtesy faculty members will enrich the department. Potential new courtesy faculty members should provide their CV, articulate how they will engage with the department, and, in some cases, deliver a departmental seminar. Potential new courtesy faculty members should be discussed at a faculty meeting preceding a binding vote by all core faculty members in the department.

Upon a positive vote of the faculty, the department chair or their delegate makes a request for the appointment to the office of the McCormick dean using the online Smartsheet request form. This requires a letter from the department chair summarizing the departmental vote and the rationale for the appointment and the CV of the proposed courtesy faculty member. For proposed courtesy faculty members with core appointments in schools outside of McCormick, it is imperative that any courtesy appointment be approved in advance and in writing by their core department (and, by extension, the other school). This approval should be uploaded along with the appointment request. For proposed courtesy faculty members with core appointments in McCormick, it is best practice for the home department(s) to be informed prior to submission of the appointment request. At a minimum, it is imperative that the appointing department send the department chair of the faculty member's home department(s) a copy of the courtesy appointment request. To ensure appointment by September 1,

the request from the department chair and all supporting documentation should be received by June 1. All courtesy appointments are subject to approval by the Office of the Dean.

Upon approval of the appointment, the courtesy faculty member will be directly notified by the Office of Faculty Affairs via email with an official appointment letter, and it will include those on the cc: list. In addition, the McCormick Payroll Office will submit the official paperwork to myHR for inclusion into the system.

2. Characteristics of courtesy faculty member: A courtesy faculty member in McCormick can be from any school at Northwestern University. The faculty member may be at any rank, although it is typically advisable to consider those that are at the rank of associate professor or professor. Tenure-track, teaching-track, and research faculty are all eligible for courtesy appointments. It is rare that a courtesy faculty appointment is part of a recruitment effort, as the large majority of courtesy faculty member appointments are made after the faculty member has been at Northwestern two years or longer so that commitment to and fit with the sponsoring department can be demonstrated.
3. Number of courtesy faculty members in a given department: There is no limit on the number of courtesy faculty members a given department may appoint, but the needs of the core faculty must be balanced with the inclusion of courtesy faculty members, given departmental resources.
4. Number of courtesy appointments for a faculty member: There is no limit on the number of departments to which a faculty member can be appointed as a courtesy faculty member, but the faculty member must balance their commitments to their home department(s) and the expectations of the department providing the courtesy appointment.
5. Appointment duration: Courtesy faculty appointments can be for as short as a one-year term up to a five-year term and are renewable. However, it is strongly encouraged that the initial appointment be for a three-year term, providing a sufficient ramp-up period for the courtesy faculty member to demonstrate their commitment to the department. Note, however, that if the courtesy faculty member is pre-tenure, the duration of the courtesy faculty appointment cannot extend beyond the core appointment end date.
6. Appointment renewal: Courtesy faculty appointments can be renewed for up to five years and according to a process that is specific to the granting department. However, it is strongly suggested that appointment renewals be for a three-year term, as this encourages regular review. While departments can implement their preferred approach to appointment renewal, a best practice is for candidates for reappointments to provide their latest CV and statements on their engagement with the department over the past appointment term and plans for the next term. These documents are then distributed to the core faculty for a straw poll. If the straw poll is strongly favorable, then the reappointment is recommended to the Dean. If the straw poll is not strongly favorable, then the case should be discussed at a faculty meeting after which a binding vote is taken.
7. Teaching credit: In some cases, a courtesy faculty member agrees to teach a course offered by the host department as a main element of the service expected for their courtesy appointment. If this is the case, then they are not eligible for add pay for teaching the course. Furthermore, they must fulfill their teaching obligation to their home department(s), as teaching a course as a courtesy faculty member does not reduce the number of courses they are required to teach for their home department(s), unless approved by the department chair of the home department(s).