

# Feinberg School of Medicine Organization and Governance

Dean of the Feinberg School of Medicine  
Executive Committee of the Faculty  
Date Approved: November 19, 2025

## Mission & Vision Governance

The mission of the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine (Feinberg) is to impact the practice of medicine through discovery and education. Our vision is to achieve this mission through continuous quality improvement.

The pursuit of excellence requires a learning organization grounded in leadership, innovation, and compassionate care that can translate new knowledge into better human health. These attributes are interwoven by professionalism dedicated to teamwork, collegiality, and social and intellectual diversity. Such values promote the best interests of medicine and further strengthen our social contract with the community we serve.

## Shared Governance

Feinberg School of Medicine embraces the principles of shared governance, which includes participation of faculty, staff, and students.

## Responsibilities of the Faculty

In addition to the faculty responsibilities outlined in University Statutes, the Faculty Handbook, and the Feinberg School of Medicine Information Guide for Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, the following are specific responsibilities of the faculty of the Feinberg School of Medicine:

- To recommend to the Dean the standards for admission, courses of instruction, promotion and tenure, and requirements for graduation for candidates for MD degrees in the school
- To conduct various educational programs on behalf of the school
- To convey degree approval upon those students meeting the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Medicine and other professional degrees offered through the Feinberg School of Medicine
- To deliberate and advise the Dean regarding questions of general policy or other matters related to the school, accomplished via input to department and school leadership and elected members of the school's Standing Committees

## Responsibilities of the Dean

As codified in the Northwestern University Statutes, the Dean has the following responsibilities:

“The Dean of each College or School shall be the chief administrative officer and a member of

the faculty of that College or School. It shall be the duty of the Dean:

- a. To make recommendations to the President, to the Provost, and to the faculty of the College or School regarding the work and development of the College or School, and to report annually to the President.
- b. To preside at the meetings of the faculty of the School in the absence of the President.
- c. To exercise such other executive powers and perform other duties as are necessary for the interest and welfare of the College or School, including those specifically provided for in other sections of these Statutes.”

In addition, the Dean of Feinberg School of Medicine is also responsible for the following:

- Overall management of the School of Medicine. Including strategic leadership and oversight of finance and operations for the School’s academic programs
- Appointment of Department Chairs, Institute Directors, and Center Directors who report to and serve at the pleasure of the Dean
- Appointment of vice deans, associate deans, and assistant deans as needed to carry out the operations of the School, who report to and serve at the pleasure of the Dean
- Approval of faculty salaries
- Recommendation of faculty appointments, promotions, and tenure decisions to the Provost, President, and if applicable, to the Board of Trustees

- Recommendation of installation of faculty members to endowed chairs to the Provost and Board of Trustees
- To partner closely with the CEOs of Northwestern Memorial HealthCare, Lurie Children's Hospital, and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab to provide vision and leadership and to develop additional areas of clinical excellence.
- Upon the approval of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, from time to time to promulgate and implement policies and procedures to direct the various operations of the school of medicine and activities of its faculty, staff and students to ensure that the school's operations and activities are carried out in accordance with the policies of the university, the requirements of applicable laws and regulations, and the requirements of applicable accrediting bodies

## Responsibilities of a Department Chair

As codified in the Northwestern University Statutes, a Department Chair has the following responsibilities:

"The Chair of a Department or Division shall be responsible for organizing the work of the unit, for maintaining it on a satisfactory level, and for making recommendations to the faculty and the Dean of the College or School concerning the work and development of the Department or Division."

In addition, a Department Chair at Feinberg School of Medicine is also responsible for the following:

- To maintain and grow strong academic programs
- To recruit, develop, and retain high-quality faculty members and trainees
- Recommend faculty for promotion or tenure
- To ensure faculty receive informal and formal feedback on performance, their contributions to the School, career goals, and progress toward those goals
- To maintain financial solvency of the department
- To advise the Dean regarding the assignment of faculty salaries
- To ensure regulatory and research compliance in the department
- To serve as a member of the Feinberg Executive Committee of the Faculty
- To work with Feinberg and Northwestern leadership on philanthropic activities

Clinical Department Chairs have the following additional responsibilities:

- In coordination with clinical affiliate leadership, to oversee all clinical services offered by the department. Recruit, develop and retain outstanding clinicians and leaders ensuring that the necessary range of high-quality services is available to meet the clinical needs
- To work with the chairs of other departments to foster the growth and development of clinical service lines
- To maintain fully accredited, high-quality residency and fellowship programs with effective supervision of trainees
- Act as a representative of all department members in matters concerning the department within the clinical affiliates, and represents the clinical affiliate perspectives to the faculty and school as needed
- To serve on clinical affiliate committees, as requested

## School Policies

The Dean shall be responsible for assuring that all such policies are broadly disseminated and widely available to all members of the Feinberg School of Medicine community. In doing so, the Dean may make use of electronic means of dissemination of such policies and procedures, including posting on the School of Medicine website. All faculty, staff, and trainees are expected to check electronic communications regularly and to familiarize themselves with the school's policies.

## Feinberg School of Medicine Standing Committees:

Standing Committees of the Feinberg School of Medicine support the school's goals of excellence in the areas of education, research, and administration. All regular members of the Faculty of the School of Medicine are eligible for appointment to Committees.

### 1. Executive Committee of the Faculty

**Charge:** The Executive Committee of the Faculty will:

- Advise the Dean on various policies and procedures concerning the school and university

- Facilitate communication among leadership of the academic units of the school
- Determine certain policies and procedures pertaining to the school's academic programs, including specific authority to:
  - Recommend candidates to Northwestern University for receipt of those professional degrees awarded through the school
  - Approve major changes in educational program policy for these professional degree programs, including the nature of the degree awarded or other substantive changes in degree requirements
  - Approve all new degree programs to be sponsored in whole or in part by the school
  - Review and/or approve modifications to the faculty appointments and academic track system, and the process of review for faculty promotion and/or tenure

**Membership:** The Executive Committee of the Faculty will be chaired by the Dean of the Feinberg School of Medicine, and consist of:

- All academic Department Chairs
- The Vice Deans of the School of Medicine who serve in an Ex Officio capacity
- Other faculty as determined by the Dean in consultation with the Provost

**Term:** Individuals serve on the Executive Committee of the Faculty while holding their leadership position.

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum is defined as a majority of members

## 2. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee

**Charge:** The charge of the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Committee is the evaluation and recommendation for approval or deferral of all department applications for appointment, promotion, and tenure at the rank of Associate Professor and Professor

**Membership:** 18 tenured and non-tenured faculty members at the rank of Professor who typically have at least two years of University service

**Term:** Appointments are made by the Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs with the agreement of the appointee's Department Chair for a five-year term of service. The APT Committee Chair will be appointed by the Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs. APT Chairs are typically in their fourth or fifth year of Committee service.

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum is defined as a majority of members

### 3. Executive Committee on Admissions

**Charge:** The Executive Committee on Admissions will:

- Establish appropriate procedures relevant to admissions
- Assess and evaluate the credentials of applicants
- Admit suitable candidates aligned with the missions of the medical school
- Notify successful and unsuccessful applicants in a timely manner of the disposition of their application
- Employ practices and procedures which are appropriate to select candidates with recognizable potential to advance the cause of science and medicine
- Discuss and make recommendations regarding admissions policy
- Resolve questions and implement decisions regarding issues such as advanced placement of students, requests to transfer into the Feinberg School of Medicine at advanced levels and similar matters

**Membership:** The Executive Committee on Admissions (ECO) is comprised of seven Feinberg faculty members who have a variety of backgrounds and experiences. The ECO is chaired by the Associate Dean for Admissions, who is appointed to the role by the Dean

**Term:** ECO members are appointed by the Dean for a three-year renewable term

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum is defined as at least five ECO members

### 4. Student Promotions Committee

**Charge:** The Student Promotions Committee (SPC) is charged with the responsibility of reviewing student performance and enforcing academic and behavioral standards. The SPC meets monthly to review any academic or behavioral grievances, or leave of absence issues that have arisen since the last meeting

The SPC has the following specific responsibilities:

- Review and recommend to the Vice Dean for Education updates and changes to policies on academic and non-academic student performance standards
- Recommend the graduation of those students who have met the requirements defined by the medical faculty and documented in the Feinberg Policy Handbook
- Review evidence and make determinations when students appear before the committee

**Membership:** The SPC is composed of faculty members and medical students. Two committee members are elected at large by Feinberg faculty. The Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Associate Dean for Health Equity and Student Support, Associate Dean for Admissions, and the Assistant Dean for Learning and Academic Performance are ex officio members of the committee without voting privileges. All committee members sign confidentiality agreements that comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") regulations

Student members are appointed from nominees advanced by the Medical Student Senate and approved by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and the Faculty Chair of the SPC. The students selected must show evidence of a strong academic record and high personal behavior standards

The SPC reports to the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs acts as an advocate for students brought before the SPC. Student appeals are managed by the Vice Dean for Education and are ultimately determined by the Dean

**Term:** Faculty members are appointed to the SPC for three-year terms, renewable twice, by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. Second year students are appointed for a three-year term

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum is defined as a majority of members

## 5. Curriculum Committee

**Charge:** The Curriculum Committee has the following responsibilities:

- Establish and approve the educational program objectives and review and reaffirm or alter them on an annual basis
- Establish a regular process for reviewing, evaluating and revising the medical education program to ensure that the curriculum is coherent and coordinated and that the education program objectives are met
- Serve as the final authority for the development and approval of all policies related to the MD educational program
- Review processes and outcomes of the curricular phases and the curriculum as a whole and recommend/approve action plans based on this review
- Create working groups, known as "subcommittees," which advise the Curriculum Committee on curriculum design, assessment, evaluation, and other topics as needed
- Approve new electives, elements, threads, or other curricular components after hearing the recommendation of the Phase Implementation Subcommittee and/or the Associate Dean for Curriculum Review, recommend, and approve modifications in

curriculum/assessments for current elements, threads, clerkships and courses, after hearing the recommendation of the Phase Implementation, Assessment of Student Performance, and Curriculum Review Subcommittees, or other working group or task force charged by the Curriculum Committee.

- Approve proposed modifications to module and clerkship learning objectives and required clinical experiences (“clerklogs”)
- Designate responsible parties for implementing recommended action plans and monitor implementation and effectiveness
- Hear concerns from the medical school community about gaps, opportunities, weaknesses in current curriculum/assessment and determine if/how concerns should be addressed (e.g. activating task force)
- Communicate with Senior Associate Dean and Vice Dean for Education when resources are required to achieve new or existing goals

**Membership:** The Curriculum Committee is composed of the following membership categories:

- 1) Faculty members: Nominated and elected by the faculty at large. Serve as voting members.
- 2) Medical students: Nominated and elected by the student body. Serve as voting members.
- 3) Ex-officio members: Administrators and staff of the medical school. Are not voting members.

The faculty include representation from clinical and basic or social sciences, and are:

- Educationally minded
- Student oriented
- Collaborative with the ability to think outside their own discipline
- Experience/familiarity with curricular design, implementation, or evaluation
- Innovative

**Term:** Term limit of 4 years with 1 renewal possible

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum is defined as a majority of voting members

## 6. Conflict of Interest Committee

**Charge:** The Feinberg Conflict of Interest Committee (COIC) makes conflict of interest or time (COI) and professional integrity policy recommendations to the Dean and Vice President for Medical Affairs and the NU Vice President for Research

**Membership:** The Feinberg COIC shall be chaired by the Vice Dean for Regulatory Affairs or the Associate Dean for Research Operations, who will serve as Vice Chair. The Chair and Vice Chair are responsible for identifying and approving committee members. The COIC Chair is appointed by the Dean. The Chair and Vice Chair will identify and appoint individuals based on the needs of the committee. The Chair and Vice Chair make efforts to ensure the composition of the committee is representative of the clinical and research enterprise, including disciplines, scientific background and familiarity with conflict of interest matters. Faculty members may be

invited to take part in committee meetings and discussions on an *ad hoc* basis when specific expertise or knowledge is required. The composition of the committee will be reviewed annually. Ex officio membership of the committee includes selected leadership from the Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University's Office for Research, and Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

**Term:** Members will serve for the duration of their role in Feinberg School of Medicine relative to their ongoing engagement and/or oversight of faculty COI issues, or as otherwise determined by the Chair and Vice Chair

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum consists of a majority of members

## 7. LCME Quality Improvement Committee

**Charge:** The LCME Quality Improvement Committee (LQIC) is a standing committee reporting to the Dean that is charged with monitoring relevant policies, procedures, and data to ensure ongoing compliance with all LCME accreditation standards. The LQIC makes recommendations regarding strategic educational priorities and other quality improvement measures to achieve program excellence.

Other standing committees with operational responsibility for various areas related to LCME standards (for example, the Curriculum Committee, Student Promotions Committee, and Executive Committee on Admissions) may provide annual reports. The committee may also commission and review the activities of various self-study groups, as exist from time to time.

**Membership:** Membership consists of Department Chairs, elected students, Medical Education leadership, Clerkship Directors, and elected faculty members.

**Term:** Members serve for two-year renewable terms.

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum consists of a majority of members

## 8. Medical Faculty Council

**Charge:** The Medical Faculty Council (MFC) has representation from all Feinberg departments. It serves as an advisory group on issues significant to Feinberg and the faculty and as a liaison between the faculty and administration of Feinberg.

**Membership:** Each department or its equivalent at Feinberg will have an MFC representative who will be selected by the faculty or Chair of the department. This responsibility can be shared by two individuals to ensure more consistent representation by the department. A representative of the Dean and the Medical Librarian will be ex-officio members.

**Term:** The length of service shall be determined by each department

**Quorum:** A meeting quorum consists of 30% of the MFC members

## Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees will be formed as deemed appropriate by the Dean

## Amendments

This document may be amended, as approved by the Executive Committee of the Faculty

Approved:

September 18, 2019 (Original)

April 14, 2020 (Revised)

September 18, 2024 (Revised)

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