

Wirtz Center Rentals

Revised July 8, 2025



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TYPES OF RENTERS

1. **Student** – Undergraduate or Graduate Northwestern University student group or affiliation
 - for student groups and activities
 - Currently the only spaces eligible for student rentals are the Wirtz Center Chicago spaces and the Struble Theater.
2. **Northwestern Departments** – Northwestern University Departments
 - for university departments and activities; not intended for performance usage and restricted to Northwestern affiliates.
 - Public audiences are prohibited (unless specifically approved by Wirtz Center)
3. **Sponsored** – Wirtz Center semi-funded event
 - university events intended for the general public – may also require labor fees for crowd management and technical efforts.
4. **External** – Any non-Northwestern organizations
 - organizations with no affiliation with Northwestern University activities.

Reservation Procedures

1. For rental inquiries, please contact Production Manager Valerie Tu at valerie.tu@northwestern.edu.
2. Wirtz Staff will send a quote for the request and/or ask for more information if necessary.
3. Contract/Agreement drafted and shared with relevant parties. In some cases, the quote will act as the agreement.
4. Finalize contract and coordinate payment methods.
5. Additional charges may be applied if changes are made to the agreement.

Estimated Costs - <i>Subject to change. Actual amounts may vary.</i>	
Venue Rental	Varies by event type (hourly rate)
Administrative Fee	\$150
Technical Support	\$50/hr
Box Office/Front-of-House Support	\$25 - 40/hr
Additional fees may apply.	

Wirtz Rental Policies

Booking Timelines

- Theaters must be booked 6 weeks in advance of the planned event.
- Staffing needs must be communicated 4 weeks in advance.
- Technical needs, including lighting, sound, projection or other equipment, must be communicated in writing 4 weeks in advance.
- Front-of-House needs, including box office, ticketing and staffing, must be communicated 4 weeks in advance.
- Audience/ guest management plan for groups smaller than 50 persons must be communicated 2 weeks in advance.

Ticketing & Box Office

- Each rental which includes an audience or general public of more than 50 people must use Wirtz Center house management staff for their event OR receive approval from Audience Experience Supervisor to manage public independently.
- The cost for house management staff is \$25-40 per hour for a minimum of 4 hours.
- Rentals with fewer than 50 people must provide a plan for crowd control and audience safety.
- If renter provides labor, they must schedule a time to meet with the Audience Experience Supervisor to review emergency protocols and FOH policies.
 - This process may incur an additional fee.
- Wirtz reserves the right to make staffing decisions and adjustments as necessary.

Technical Personnel

- Wirtz staff may be available at an additional cost for run-of-show duties, including programming cues during tech, running lights and sound for tech and performances, etc. However, users are strongly encouraged to secure their own lighting designers and/or light board operators, sound operators, projection operators, and/or stage managers.
- Hourly rates apply for work completed outside of event time (e.g. setup, training).

Equipment Rental

- Rental equipment may be available at an additional cost. Contact Production Manager to discuss availability and pricing.

External Rentals & Load-In

- Additional charges may apply if external vendor requires access to space outside of reservation.
- Please contact Production Manager for information on loading locations and procedures.

CATERING POLICY

- Outside vendors allowed in either Wirtz Center Evanston or Chicago campus.
 - *If Serving Alcohol, a certified bartender must provide the following documentation:*
 - Certificate of Insurance
- Internal Caterer:
 - Northwestern University has a preferred vendor that is familiar with the campus. If interested in using the vendor, please reach out to:
 - Compass Catering:
 - Evanston Campus 224.234.8110, northwesterncatering@compass-usa.com

Alcohol is strictly prohibited in all spaces without a certified bartender.

Events serving food will incur a cleaning fee (see Cleaning).

Cleaning

It is the expectation that *all* individuals using the space at the Wirtz Center will clean up after themselves and leave the space as they entered it.

A cleaning fee may be assessed and added to your final invoice pending the state of the space.

A \$120 cleaning fee will be incurred if any of the following applies to your rental:

- Expected attendance is more than 50.
- Rental includes reception.
- Food is served or eaten during rental.

Contract

- All external affiliates will receive an agreement including details of the rental.
- External affiliates will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance.
 - Office of Risk Management must be consulted to determine whether there are insurance requirements.
- The sponsoring organization is responsible for meeting all insurance requirements.
- In some cases, the quote will act as the contract.

Access

- Once event is confirmed, renter must schedule a time with Production Manager to collect a guest wildcard, if applicable.
 - Note that during business hours (8:00am-5:00pm), a wildcard is not required for front entrances.
 - (*Northwestern only*) Wirtz staff may instead grant access to existing wildcards.
- If a wildcard is lost or damaged, renter will incur a \$25 replacement fee.

Restrictions

- Communication of Policies: User is responsible for informing all patrons, guests, caterers, etc. about all relevant Wirtz or University policies.
- Front doors may not be propped open.
- Alteration to the permanent structure of any Wirtz Center space, including walls, ceilings, seating, floors, drapes, fixtures, screens, and electricity is not permitted. This includes fastening items to walls, floors, and ceiling. Any damage to the Wirtz Center will be charged to the group at the replacement/repair cost.
- The seating areas and lobbies may not be used for storage or for production work (construction, painting, sewing, etc.).
- Open flame of any kind (candles, incense, pyrotechnics, etc.) is not permitted.
- Special effects of any kind must be approved in advance by the Wirtz Center. Atmospherics (haze/fog) will incur an additional charge.
- The use of particulates (confetti, glitter, dirt, powders, etc.) is prohibited. Any exception must be approved by the Wirtz Center.

Adjustments and Cancellations

- Adjustments to rentals affecting fee amount must be communicated at least two business days before event start date.
- Cancellations within one week of event are required to pay 50% of the total fee.

Wirtz Center Evanston

The Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts is a fully equipped, four-theater complex on Northwestern University's lakeshore Evanston campus. Available spaces include a traditional proscenium, a thrust and three black-box theaters.

The Wirtz Center theaters are equipped and suitable for theatre productions, operas, concerts, speeches, convocation ceremonies, and other events. The Wirtz Center theaters do not have pre-function space beyond the lobbies. Small receptions are possible in the lobbies, but meals cannot be accommodated.

The Wirtz Center theaters are available to be booked year-round for events when not currently in production. Reservations outside of these hours must be approved by the Wirtz Staff. The Wirtz is primarily a center for Northwestern students and productions. We cannot guarantee availability in our spaces.

Base Prices - Subject to change, additional rates may apply				
Room	Student	Department	Sponsored	External
Struble	\$8.00/hr	\$17.00/hr	\$36.00/hr	\$49.00/hr
Wallis	\$8.00/hr	\$17.00/hr	\$36.00/hr	\$49.00/hr
Barber	\$35.12/hr	\$74.63/hr	\$158.04/hr	\$215.11/hr
Louis	\$23.04/hr	\$48.96/hr	\$103.68/hr	\$141.12/hr
Clare, Lu, 'n Em (201)	\$8.00/hr	\$17.00/hr	\$36.00/hr	\$49.00/hr

Mussetter-Struble Theater - 1949 Campus Dr. Evanston, IL 60201
Wirtz's Struble Theater is a 75-seat purpose-built proscenium stage black-box with an enclosed booth, a pipe grid, basic lighting/sound inventory and control.

The Wirtz Center Administration Office
 10 Arts Circle Drive Evanston, IL 60208
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Style:	Proscenium-configured Black Box	
Capacity:	Standard: 75 seats / Maximum: 95 seats	
Accessible Seating:	Flexible seating for placement for wheelchairs.	
Dressing Rooms:	No designated dressing room, private actor restroom, or shower facilities. Dressing Room space can be configured in a nearby studio space.	
Technical Specifications		
Sound	Rep PA Configuration	Left and Right Main Speakers
Sound	8-channel analog mixing console	1/8” aux and USB inputs
Sound	Basic Stage Wash	Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for Rep Plot. Rep Plot may not be altered in any way.
Lighting	ETC Colorsource 20 Console	DMX input in light booth. Renters may bring in a console.
A/V	There is no permanent AV or projection system in the Struble Theatre	

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Hal and Martha Hyer Wallis Theater - 1949 Campus Dr. Evanston, IL 60201

Wirtz's Wallis Theater is a 100-seat purpose-built thrust stage black-box with an enclosed booth, pipe grid, basic lighting/sound inventory and control.

Style:	Thrust-configured Black Box
Capacity:	100 Seats
Accessible Seating:	Flexible seating for placement for wheelchairs.
Dressing Rooms:	Dressing room is available within the space. There is no dedicated bathroom for the Wallis Theater.

Technical Specifications

Sound	Rep PA Configuration	Mains speakers at center stage for each seating bank. Upstage L and R, Surround L and R speakers. Subwoofer upstage on floor.
Sound	Yamaha 01Vi digital mixing console	Patched with rep PA inputs and outputs
Sound	Macintosh Computer with Qlab Sound License	Includes 8-channel interface connected to mixer
Sound	Wired "VOG" announcement mic in Sound Booth	
Sound	Clearcom Wired intercom system with headset drops in Light and Sound Booths	
Sound	Clearcom Wireless intercom system with two headsets	
Lighting	Basic Stage Wash	Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for Rep Plot. Rep Plot may not be altered in any way.
Lighting	ETC Element Console in Light Booth	1024 Channels

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Lighting	Wireless Access Point	Allows connection of ETC RFR apps. Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for more information.
A/V	There is no permanent AV or projection system in the Wallis Theatre	

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Ethel M. Barber Theater - 30 Arts Circle Dr. Evanston, IL 60201		
Wirtz’s Barber Theater is a 451-seat purpose-built thrust stage auditorium with an enclosed booth, 2 dressing rooms, a pipe grid, basic lighting/sound inventory and control.		
Style:	Thrust	
Capacity:	451 Seats	
Accessible Seating:	Twelve (12) Wheelchairs in Row K in the 200 and 400 sections. Accessible seating without stairs: Four (4) dedicated seats in Row K in 200 and 400.	
Dressing Rooms:	Two (2) chorus-style dressing rooms and a separate makeup room. Each dressing room can accommodate approximately 15 people. All dressing rooms have lighted mirrors, sinks, and showers. Rolling clothing racks may be available by request. No food or drink other than water is allowed in the dressing rooms.	
Technical Specifications		
Sound	Rep PA Configuration	Mono System: Main speaker mounted under center catwalk for each seating bank. Delay speaker mounted under house catwalk for each seating bank. Subwoofers L and R. Surround speakers on rear catwalk L and R.
Sound	Yamaha CL3 or Midas M32R Live Digital Mixing console	Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for current configuration
Sound	2x Shure ULX Wireless Handheld Microphones	
Sound	Macintosh Computer with Qlab Sound License	Includes Dante connection to mixer
Sound	Wired "VOG" announcement mic in Sound Booth	
Sound	Clearcom Wired intercom system with headset drops in Light and Sound Booths	

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Sound	Clearcom Wireless intercom system with four headsets	
Lighting	Basic Stage Wash	Stage Wash will vary depending on prior productions in space. Only a full-stage front light wash is guaranteed.
Lighting	ETC ION Console in Light Booth	6144 channels, includes fader wing
Lighting	Wireless Access Point	Allows connection of ETC RFR apps. Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for more information.
A/V	There is no permanent AV or projection system in the Barber Theatre	

Josephine Louis Theater - 20 Arts Circle Dr. Evanston, IL 60201		
Wirtz’s Louis Theater is a 291-seat purpose-built thrust stage auditorium with an enclosed booth, 2 dressing rooms, a pipe grid, basic lighting/sound inventory and control.		
Style:	Proscenium Theater	
Capacity:	291 Seats	
Accessible Seating:	Three (3) wheelchairs in Row H with two (2) adjacent stationary companion seats. Additional seating is available at the back of the house for approximately four (4) more wheelchairs. Accessible seating without stairs: 40 seats.	
Dressing Rooms:	One dressing room with enclosed changing areas and a separate makeup room. Each dressing room can accommodate approximately 15 people. Green Room. All dressing rooms have lighted mirrors, sinks, and showers. Rolling clothing racks may be available by request. No food or drink other than water is allowed in the dressing rooms.	
Technical Specifications		
Sound	Rep PA Configuration	L/C/R System: Main speakers mounted on proscenium arch. Mid and Rear surround speakers hung on sides of house. Subwoofer on near catwalk.
Sound	Midas M32R Live digital mixing console	Patched with rep PA inputs and outputs
Sound	2x Shure ULX Wireless Handheld Microphones	
Sound	Macintosh Computer with Qlab Sound License	Includes Dante connection to mixer
Sound	Wired “VOG” announcement mic in Sound Booth	
Sound	Clearcom Wired intercom system with headset drops in Light and Sound Booths	
Sound	Clearcom Wireless intercom system with four headsets	

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Lighting	Basic Stage Wash	Stage Wash will vary depending on prior productions in space. Only a full-stage front light wash is guaranteed.
Lighting	ETC ION Console in Light Booth	6144 channels, including fader wing
Lighting	Wireless Access Point	Allows connection of ETC RFR apps. Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for more information.
A/V	There is no permanent AV or projection system in the Louis Theatre	

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Clare, Lu, ‘n Em Theater - 1949 Campus Dr. Evanston, IL 60201		
Wirtz’s Clare, Lu, ‘n Em Theater is a 73-seat purpose-built proscenium stage black-box with large windows, a pipe grid, basic lighting/sound inventory and control.		
Style:	Proscenium-configured Black Box	
Capacity:	73 Seats	
Accessible Seating:	Flexible seating for placement for wheelchairs.	
Dressing Rooms:	No designated dressing room, private actor restroom, or shower facilities. Dressing Room space can be configured in a nearby studio space.	
Technical Specifications		
Sound	Rep PA Configuration	Left and Right Main Speakers
Sound	Pre-Sonus StudioLive RM32 Digital Mixer with StudioLive CS18AI control surface	Patched with rep PA inputs and outputs
Sound	Clearcom Wired intercom system with headset drops in Tech Booth.	
Lighting	Basic Stage Wash	Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for Rep Plot. Rep Plot may not be altered in any way.
Lighting	Console installed as needed	Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor to discuss lighting control needs.
A/V	Crestron A/V system with inputs at TV cart in theatre and at rack in AV closet. Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor with A/V needs.	

Wirtz Center Chicago

The Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing and Media Arts opened in 2021 on Northwestern University's Chicago campus. Located in Abbott Hall, this 24,000 square foot center serves as the creative hub for the School of Communication's suite of MFA and professional programs in acting, stage design, directing, sound arts and industries, documentary media, and writing for screen and stage.

The facility is designed for a combination of performance and instruction and includes multi-use black box spaces, a lobby and gallery space, teaching and design studios, and a computer lab.

The Wirtz Center Chicago theaters are equipped and suitable for theatre productions, speeches, screenings, and other events.

Wirtz Center Chicago features one pre-function space, equipped with a bar, lobby furniture, and passenger elevator. Small to medium-sized receptions and meals are possible in the lobbies and necessitate a cleaning fee.

The Wirtz Center Chicago campus prioritizes student learning before scheduling all other events. Availability is limited by classes, curricular rehearsals, and Wirtz Center productions.

Base Prices - <i>Subject to change, additional rates may apply</i>				
Room	Student	Department	Sponsored	External
203	\$8.20/hr	\$14.06/hr	\$28.11/hr	\$42.17/hr
206	\$4.10/hr	\$7.03/hr	\$14.06/hr	\$21.09/hr
210	\$1.92/hr	\$3.84/hr	\$6.72 /hr	\$10.08/hr
212	\$1.92/hr	\$3.84/hr	\$6.72 /hr	\$10.08/hr

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Performance Black Box (Abbott 203) - 710 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611		
Wirtz’s Abbott 203 is a 100-seat purpose-built black-box.		
Style:	Flexible (default configuration includes one bank of fixed seating)	
Capacity:	Standard: 79 seats / Maximum: 100 seats	
Accessible Seating:	Chairs in the front row may be removed for ADA seating. Note that ADA regulations in Chicago require at least 4 wheelchair seats for audience sizes 51-100. Each ADA seat must have one accompanying companion seat.	
Communal Spaces:	Two (2) dressing rooms and one (1) green room. Each dressing room can accommodate approximately 6-8 people. All dressing rooms have lighted mirrors, sinks, and showers. No food or drink other than water is allowed in the dressing rooms. *NO LAUNDRY FACILITIES ON-SITE.	
Technical Specifications		
Sound	Rep PA Configuration	L/C/R System: Main speakers mounted. Side and Rear surround speakers hung on the sides of the house. Subwoofer on deck level, house right.
Sound	Yamaha QL1 Digital Mixing Console in Sound Booth	Patched with rep PA inputs and outputs
Sound	2x Shure Axient Wireless Handheld Microphone	
Sound	Macintosh Computer with Qlab Sound License	Includes 8-channel interface connected to mixer
Lighting	Basic Stage Wash	Stage Wash will vary depending on prior productions in space. Only a full-stage front light wash is guaranteed.
Lighting	ETC ION Console in Light Booth	6144 channels, including fader wing

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Lighting	ETC Paradigm Touch Panel	
Lighting	Wireless Access Point	Allows connection of ETC RFR apps. Contact Lighting and Sound Supervisor for more information.
A/V	Panasonic PT-RQ13KU	Mounted in a custom-built box; cannot be moved or re-focused from classroom position. Currently focused on the upstage screen.

Large Black Box (Abbott 206) - 710 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611

Wirtz's Abbott 206 Theater is an intimate, purpose-built black box theater.

Style:	Flexible
Capacity:	15-20 for movement/classroom use; 50 for events. No fixed seating.
Accessible Seating:	ADA chair placement flexible. Note that ADA regulations in Chicago require at least 1 wheelchair seat for audience sizes 4-25 and 2 wheelchair seats for audience sizes 26-50. Each ADA seat must have one accompanying companion seat.

RTVF Black Box (Abbott 210) - 710 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611

Wirtz's Abbott 210 Theater is an intimate, purpose-built black box theater space.

Style:	Flexible
Capacity:	24
Accessible Seating:	ADA chair placement flexible. Note that ADA regulations require at least 1 wheelchair seat for audience sizes 4-25. Each ADA seat must have one accompanying companion seat.

South Black Box (Abbott 212) - 710 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611	
Wirtz's Abbott 212 Theater is an intimate, purpose-built black box theater space.	
Style:	Flexible
Capacity:	24
Accessible Seating:	ADA chair placement flexible. Note that ADA regulations require at least 1 wheelchair seat for audience sizes 4-25. Each ADA seat must have one accompanying companion seat.

Additional Space Usage:

There are two (2) dressing rooms and one (1) green room on-site. Each dressing room can accommodate approximately 6-8 people. All dressing rooms have lighted mirrors and one gender-neutral bathroom including a shower.

Use of the green room, dressing rooms, and other ancillary spaces requires prior approval and may incur additional fees.

Loading Facilities:

Abbott Hall loading dock includes enough space for one (1) 24-ft truck. A large generator and trash compactor are permanently placed in the loading area. The loading dock is shared between all departments at Abbott Hall.

Dumpsters in loading dock are for recyclable materials only. If renter plans to discard large amounts of waste, special arrangements must be made with Wirtz Center and Facilities Management. This may incur an additional fee.

Abbott Hall is equipped with one freight elevator with access to the basement, ground level, and second level. Note that all items (scenery, A/V, etc.) must be able to fit through a standard-width door for use in most spaces.

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Parking:

Use of Abbott Hall parking lot during business hours is not permitted.

Abbott Hall parking lot is available for audiences/public use after 5pm on weekdays and anytime on weekends. To access parking lot, a security officer must be hired for \$25.37/hour at a minimum of 4 hours. This process is facilitated by the Wirtz Center.