Employee Conduct, Accountability, and Ethics in the Workplace

A Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff at Northern Illinois University
# Table Contents

A Message from the President ........................................... 3

Introduction ................................................................. 4

Employment and Serving as a Representative of the University Community .... 5

Employee Conduct and Ethics - Generally .................................. 6
  A. Conditions of Employment ........................................... 6
  B. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act ............................. 7
  C. Political Activity ......................................................... 7
  D. Non-Discrimination/Sexual Harassment Prevention .................... 8
  E. Professional Behavior and Representation of University Interests ......... 8
  F. Fitness for Duty ......................................................... 10

Stewardship of University Resources ........................................ 11
  A. General Statement ...................................................... 11
  B. Information Security ................................................... 11
  C. Acceptable Use - University Resources, Computers, Telephones, and Networks ...................................................... 12
  D. Confidentiality - University Records and Information ........................ 13
  E. Cash Handling and Fiscal Responsibilities ................................ 14

Conflicts of Interest .......................................................... 15
  A. Disclosure of Economic Interests ....................................... 15
  B. Outside Employment, Consulting or Research ................................ 15
  C. Academic and Research Integrity ........................................ 16
  D. Family Relationships ..................................................... 16
  E. Consensual Relationships, Conflicts of Interest, and Assumption of Risk ...................................................... 16

Employee Rights, Due Process, Grievance Complaint Procedures ................. 17
  A. Grievance Procedures for Faculty and Staff ............................. 17
  B. Grievance Procedures for Members of the Supportive Professional Staff ...................................................... 17
  C. Due Process .................................................................. 17
  D. Grievance Procedures for Violations of Academic Freedom .......... 18
  E. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources - Investigation Procedures ...................................................... 18
  F. Workplace Civility ......................................................... 18
  G. Legal Representation and Indemnification ................................ 18

University Resources for Assistance ........................................... 19

Major Policy/Procedure References ........................................... 19

Ethical Prohibitions, Whistle Blower Protections, Complaints .......................... 20
As I begin my presidency at Northern Illinois University, one of the pillars upon which I hope to build our future is Ethically Inspired Leadership.

That phrase was chosen carefully. It is intended to communicate not just one concept, but three separate and important ideas – ethics, inspiration and leadership. Notice that ethics is at the top of that list.

I hope that all of us at NIU – faculty, staff and even students – will seize the opportunity to become leaders, to take ownership of the challenges we face and to find solutions. Doing so will require inspiration, it will take extraordinary ideas to move us forward.

Such innovation is of little good to us, however, if the solutions we devise and implement are not ethical. If we are to persevere in the long term, we must ensure that every decision we make meets the highest standards of integrity, trust, professional ethics and standards of performance.

Guidance is available. I strongly urge you to familiarize yourself with the information in this booklet. It summarizes a wide range of policy statements, rules and regulations from federal, state and university sources. All of these standards and legal requirements relate directly to the work and professional responsibilities of every employee.

I believe that, through careful attention to these directives, we will achieve our goal of making NIU a national model for ethically inspired leadership.

Doug Baker
President
Northern Illinois University
Introduction

This reference guide is informational and intended to assist employees by providing an overview of established policies, regulations, and legal requirements that exist as both standards of conduct and conditions of employment for Northern Illinois University faculty, staff, and student employees. Detailed information concerning these policies can be obtained from various sources, including the links contained in this publication, Human Resource Services, and the different resource offices listed in this publication. This guide is not to be regarded as a binding legal document or contract independent of the standards articulated in other relevant employer publications.

A very wide range of policies and standards apply to your employment at Northern Illinois University. The policies and regulations referred to in this reference guide are sorted among five primary categories:

- Employee Conduct and Ethics
- Stewardship of University Resources
- Conflicts of Interest
- Employee Rights, Due Process, Grievance, and Complaint Procedures
- Resources for Assistance

All faculty, staff, and student employees are responsible for being aware of these policies, conditions of employment, and standards of performance. While the university organization is very complex, with a great variety of employee roles and college/operating unit environments, the conditions of employment outlined in this reference guide apply consistently to all university employees. Clearly, it is the responsibility of every employee to ensure that these policies and regulations are maintained throughout all aspects of work and professional service in an employment capacity. Beyond the individual, the university community, divisions, colleges, departments, operating units, and participating employees all have a shared responsibility to uphold these standards and requirements as shared participants and members of the university organization.

This reference guide also contains contacts, referral sources, and procedures for the reporting of information should you experience or become aware of violations of university policies. This guide will be frequently updated, is subject to revision, and is not intended to be an exhaustive compilation. For greater detail and to review the actual policy references, please access the web sites listed in the guide, the QR (Quick Response) code at the top of each page, and/or contact Human Resource Services. Thank you for your attention to these important policies.

COMPLAINTS

An Ethics or Whistle Blower complaint can be forwarded through a variety of channels, including the following:
- E-mail NIUEthicsOfficer@niu.edu
- Call 1-855-544-6665 and leave message.
- Ethics Complaint Form (obtained from the Compliance Administration website at http://www.compliance.niu.edu/ or Human Resource Services.

An Ethics Complaint may be submitted to either the University Ethics Officer and/or the Office of the Executive Inspector General:
Employment and Serving as a Representative of the University Community

In all of their many capacities, employees serve as ambassadors and representatives of the university organization. Whether in the classroom, department, committees, professional meetings, conferences, interviews, interactions with external constituencies, or providing services/information to students and public communities, all are examples of important aspects of an employee’s scope of work and representation of the university. Simultaneously, all faculty, staff and student employees in any capacity are required to be aware of and maintain compliance with the applicable laws, contract requirements, policies, regulations, procedures and standards of conduct, including those outlined in the Employee Conduct, Accountability, and Ethics in the Workplace: A Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff.
Employee Conduct and Ethics - Generally

Several policy standards apply to the broad category of Employee Conduct and Ethics. In any employment capacity, individual employees may interact with one another, the organization, students, external communities, representatives of other organizations, stakeholders, and public officials on a daily basis. In these respective contexts, employees make decisions and take actions every day that relate to the standards of conduct outlined in these policy references. All of these actions reflect the integrity of the NIU organization.

A. Conditions of Employment

In accordance with NIU Board of Trustees Regulations, all employees are responsible for compliance with applicable state and federal laws, university policies set forth by the NIU Board of Trustees, and those set forth by the president or designee.

Policy References...

Faculty and Administrative Employees  
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml#anchor803627

Operating Staff (civil service) Employees  
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionIII.shtml#anchor944771

Graduate Assistant Employees  
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionIV.shtml#anchor1011973  
http://www.niu.edu/provost/policies/index.asp#IV

Student Employees  
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionIV.shtml#anchor1011973  
B. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act

1. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act PA 93-0617: Program for Compliance
The State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA) requires the Illinois public university governing boards, in coordination with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, to demonstrate they have adopted and implemented, for all employees under their respective jurisdiction and control, specific personnel policies relating to (a) political activity associated with publicly supported work time or resources; (b) documentation of time worked; (c) documentation for reimbursement of authorized travel expenses while on official State business; (d) compensation, and the earning or accrual of State benefits for all State employees who may be eligible to receive those benefits; and (e) required annual State ethics training programs.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=610

2. Gift Ban
Most gifts to state officials and employees are banned by Article 10 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA). SOEEA prohibits constitutional officers, members of a government body, and government employees (and their spouses and immediate family living with them) from receiving any gratuity, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other tangible or non-tangible item having monetary value from a prohibited source, with exceptions.


This notice informs employees of their rights and protection from retaliation under the Whistle Blower Protection article of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/15. The notice provides that employees are protected from retaliation if they disclose or threaten to disclose an act or omission that the employee reasonably believes violated a law, rule, or regulation. It further protects employees if they provide information to or testify before any public body conducting an investigation, hearing, or inquiry into a violation of a law, rule, or regulation or assists/participates in a proceeding to enforce the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.


C. Political Activity

The NIU Board of Trustees Regulations establish policies pertaining to political activity in relation to publicly supported work time or resources. Individuals cannot use their relationship with the NIU Board of Trustees or the university to “(a) coerce, command, advise or solicit anyone to pay, lend or contribute money or other thing of value to any partisan party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes; (b) use Board or university funds, resources or time for any political candidate or partisan purpose other than educational.”

Policy References...
Faculty and Administrative Employees
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml
Operating Staff (Civil Service) Employees
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionIII.shtml
D. Non-Discrimination/Sexual Harassment Prevention

1. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources (AADR) Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedures for Employees and Students.

AADR and university policies prohibit harassment and discrimination in employment or education on the basis of sex, religion, national origin, race, color, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, victims or perceived victims of domestic or sexual violence, or any other factor not related to professional qualifications, as mandated by state laws, federal laws, and university policy. The policy also outlines the complaint and investigation processes.


E. Professional Behavior and Representation of University Interests

1. Statement on Professional Behavior of Employees

Pursuant to the Statement on Professional Behavior of Faculty, students, faculty, administrators, and trustees have an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and define intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off campus.


2. Statement of Professional Ethics - Faculty

The Faculty Statement of Professional Ethics reflects the standards and obligations of faculty at Northern Illinois University. The Statement of Professional Ethics was established by the faculty and adopted by the University Faculty Senate.


3. Statement of Professional Ethics - Supportive Professional Staff

The Statement of Professional Ethics for Members of the Supportive Professional Staff reflects the standards of professional conduct. The Statement of Professional Ethics for Members of the Supportive Professional Staff was established by the Supportive Professional Staff Council.


4. Professional Conduct Standards for Operating Staff

Conduct standards for Operating Staff reflect policies outlined in the Statute and Rules of the State Universities Civil Service System, as well as NIU policies. The rules address a variety of topics, including the treatment of other employees, the acceptance of personal gifts, outside employment that may conflict with an employee’s responsibilities to the university, and solicitation for organization memberships and/or funds.

Policy References: Procedures Manual, Section 7-18
5. Discipline – Operating Staff
Operating Staff Discipline guidelines provide a general statement regarding progressive discipline as it relates to non-negotiated operating staff (civil service) employees.


6. State Universities Civil Service System Statute and Rules
The State Universities Civil Service System Statute and Rules are applicable to operating staff (civil service) employees. Section 250.110(d) describes some of the offenses that justify disciplinary suspensions. Section 250.110(e) describes the offenses that justify discharge and prescribes the steps the university must take to discharge an employee from the university including all applicable proceedings and appeal rights afforded to the employee.


7. Violence in the Workplace
The university is committed to providing employees a safe environment. The Violence in the Workplace policy outlines the university protocols and procedures associated with the investigation, discipline, and potential dismissal of individuals accused of violence in the workplace.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=310

8. Policy Statement on Sexual Assault, Prohibited Sexual Contact, Stalking, Dating, and Domestic Violence
Northern Illinois University does not tolerate interpersonal violence, which includes sexual assault, prohibited sexual contact, stalking, dating and domestic violence in any form. This statement outlines the University’s policy prohibiting interpersonal violence, which includes sexual assault, prohibited sexual contact, stalking, dating and domestic violence.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=660

9. Title IX Policy and Procedure
All members of the University, including guests and visitors, have the right to learn and work in a safest possible community and environment and to be free from all forms of sex-based misconduct, including sex discrimination, sexual harassment, hostile work environment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment. All members of the University community, visitors, and guests are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe on the rights of others. This policy and procedure outlines the steps the University will follow to maintain compliance.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=670

10. Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act
The Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act requires that all university employees have a duty to immediately report or cause a report to be made whenever they have “reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected”. At the time of hire, all employees are required to complete training and sign the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/Training/Programs/DCFS/
F. Fitness for Duty

1. Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act/Drug-Free Workplace Act Policy
The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989, and the policies of Northern Illinois University prohibit unlawful possession, use, and/or distribution of controlled substances and alcohol on university property or in association with any university-related activities. This policy also provides resources and assistance for individuals who are experiencing problems with illegal drug use or alcohol. Appropriate disciplinary sanctions are also outlined for employees and students who are found to be in violation of applicable laws and policies.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=650
Stewardship of University Resources

A. General Statement

University employees are to utilize university assets and resources only for authorized purposes, in accordance with applicable policies, procedures, and legal standards. Unless otherwise authorized, it is a violation of university policy for any employee to receive or use university resources or property for a non-work-related or non-university purpose. Furthermore, an employee cannot be compelled by a supervisor or university official to violate university policies, regulations, or legal standards.

In the event that an employee witnesses a possible violation of university policy, the situation should be discussed with their supervisor or the administrative leadership of the area involved. If there remain unresolved questions or concerns, these problems may be discussed with the applicable vice president (or designee), representatives in Human Resource Services, Compliance Administration, Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources, and/or the University Ethics Officer. University policies are intended to protect any employee who engages in good faith disclosure of alleged wrongful conduct to a designated supervisor or university official.

University employees are responsible for acceptable use of university resources in support of the mission of the university. Employees are expected to protect the resources of the university. Northern Illinois University has several policies that cover the safeguarding of university resources.

B. Information Security

This policy establishes the requirements necessary to prevent or minimize accidental or intentional unauthorized access or damage to university information resources related to potential information breaches or system outages. This policy balances the need for information security with the desire to foster an open and information-sharing atmosphere among members of the academic community. This policy applies to all university students, faculty and staff, third-party support contractors, and all others granted use of NIU information resources. This policy also puts into place procedures for reporting information breaches.

Policy References: http://www.its.niu.edu/its/policies_root/information_security_policy.shtml

1. Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard

This Policy outlines the policy and procedure for compliance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. The Policy requires that departments work with NIU Merchant Services to ensure compliance with the required standards and annual self-assessment questionnaires. Approval from NIU Merchant Services is required before a credit card merchant account can be established.

C. Acceptable Use - University Resources, Computers, Telephones, and Networks

1. Acceptable Use Policy - Information Technology Resources
The Acceptable Use Policy describes the acceptable use of information technology resources including the electronic communications network (NIUnet) on the NIU campus, off-campus education, research centers, and the computers attached to this network. These principles and guidelines also extend to networks and information technology resources outside the university accessed through NIUnet via the Internet.

Policy References: http://its.niu.edu/its/policies/au.shtml

2. Telephone Usage Policy
The Telephone Usage Policy describes the proper use of university telephones. The use of university telephones is intended for university business. The policy further defines a business call and outlines the university policy regarding personal phone calls during operating hours.


3. Networks and Electronic Mail (E-mail) Policy
The E-mail Policy describes the acceptable use of the university’s e-mail system. The policy identifies the approval levels for mass mailings and details unacceptable uses of the university e-mail system. The policy also notes that, under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), electronic files are considered the same as paper files. Any official university documents (as defined by law) in the files of employees of the State of Illinois are considered public documents and may be subject to inspection through FOIA, unless exempted by law.

Policy References: http://www.its.niu.edu/its/policies/email_pol.shtml

4. System Access and Security Policy (SASP) for Users of Administrative Workstations
The System Access and Security Policy (SASP) details the guidelines that all employees are expected to follow when using Northern Illinois University computer systems and networks. It discusses the confidential nature of the information employees can access, the downloading of software packages that will impact university operations, accuracy and integrity of data, general user responsibilities, department and supervisor responsibilities, and the consequences for noncompliance.

Policy References: http://www.its.niu.edu/its/policies/sasp.shtml

5. Web Site Privacy Policy
The Web Site Privacy Policy acknowledges and details Northern Illinois University’s policy regarding web site privacy. The policy outlines the uses of NIU web sites and the policy regarding the collection and sharing of supplied personal user information and data, the use of Cookies (information placed automatically on visitors’ computers), information provided by the user in public forums and online surveys, federal and state laws, and disclaimers.

Policy References: http://www.its.niu.edu/its/policies/privacy_policy.shtml
D. Confidentiality - University Records and Information

University employees have access to confidential information. Employees are entrusted to protect this information in accordance with standards established by their employing departments, university policies, and applicable state/federal laws. Confidentiality policies specifically address employee/student information, medical records, dissemination of confidential information, and protocols for the maintenance of confidential records.

1. Records Inspection Policy
Employees have certain rights and responsibilities relating to the inspection of their employment records. In accordance with Illinois Personnel Records Review Act 820 ILCS 40/0.01 et seq, the Records Inspection Policy outlines Human Resource Services' procedures regarding employee record inspection and authorization for record inspection by a designated representative.

Policy References: http://www.hr.niu.edu/Policy/PolicyView.cfm?Policy=320

2. Release of Student Information
In accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the university is prohibited from releasing student educational record information to parents or others external to the university in most circumstances. In accordance with this provision, student information is held at the strictest level of confidentiality and will only be released to persons other than the student if circumstances warrant and are authorized by this Act.


3. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Compliance
The federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance policy is located in the NIU Board of Trustees Regulations. It provides a general statement about protecting individuals' personal health information, notes that the president of the university shall designate a privacy officer, and directs utilization of safeguards that should be taken to protect the information.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionVII.shtml#7D

4. Illinois Identity Protection Act
The Information Security Policy for Northern Illinois University, and in accordance with the Illinois Identity Protection Act, NIU establishes the Identity-Protection Policy to protect social security numbers from unauthorized use or disclosure. This policy is applied in conjunction with the University’s existing policies and practices, as well as State and federal laws, on (1) protecting the confidentiality of social security numbers, and (2) preventing identity theft at Northern Illinois University.


5. Red Flag Rules and Guidelines
The federal Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 compliance policy is located in the NIU Board of Trustees Policies. It provides information regarding the university’s Identity Threat Prevention Program to detect, prevent, and mitigate identity theft in connection with the opening of certain covered accounts or certain existing covered accounts.

6. Working with Athletes

All employees who work with or interact with athletes should be aware of the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) regulations. Strict adherence to all applicable governing policies, procedures, and regulations of the NCAA is required and is a condition of employment.


E. Cash Handling and Fiscal Responsibilities

The university maintains a designated set of cash handling and fiscal control positions in accordance with the Campus Security Act and internal cash handling policies. A zero tolerance policy exists with respect to theft of monetary assets. The policy also addresses the borrowing and lending of money between supervisors and employees in cash control positions and gifts exceeding $100 in value.

1. Fraud Detection and Prevention

NIU’s Fraud Detection and Prevention policy is a global policy regarding the detection and prevention of fraud at Northern Illinois University. Management is responsible for the detection and prevention of fraud, misappropriations, and other irregularities. Fraud is defined as the intentional, false representation or concealment of a material fact for the purpose of inducing another to act upon it to his or her injury. Each member of the management team will be familiar with the types of improprieties that might occur within his or her area of responsibility and be alert for any indication of irregularity.
Conflicts of Interest

A. Disclosure of Economic Interests

NIU’s policy for Disclosure of Economic Interests is contained in the NIU Board of Trustees Regulations and is also governed by two Illinois statutes, the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act and the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, PA 93-0617 (SOEEA). The Illinois Governmental Ethics Act requires specific public officers and employees of the university to file a Statement of Economic Interests by May 1 of each year. SOEEA requires these disclosures be submitted to the University Ethics Officer for review before they are filed with the Secretary of State.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml [Section II.B.3]

B. Outside Employment, Consulting or Research

1. Outside Employment - Generally

Pursuant to Outside Employment standards set forth in the NIU Board of Trustee Regulations, faculty and administrative employees shall not be employed under any employment or regular agreements or contracts for more than normal full-time employment from the State of Illinois. Exceptions may be granted in the case of faculty teaching extension or noncredit courses, or other circumstances when duties are performed in addition to the regular appointment. The president or designee shall authorize in writing those persons designated to approve outside employment.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml [Section II.B.2]

2. Outside Consulting or Research

In accordance with the University Faculty Research and Consulting Act, full-time faculty members must have prior written approval by the president, or a designee, to perform research or provide consulting services to non-governmental agencies.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml [Section II.B.2]
C. Academic and Research Integrity

1. Research Integrity at Northern Illinois University

The Research Integrity policy addresses the issue of research misconduct. Examples of intentional research misconduct include falsification of data, improper assignment of authorship, claiming research as one's own, plagiarism, manipulation of experiments and statistical or analytical data, and misappropriation of research funds. This policy outlines the confidential review and investigation process that is undertaken when an allegation of research misconduct is filed.


D. Family Relationships

Pursuant to NIU Board of Trustees Regulations, all employees are selected for employment and promotion without regard to relationship by blood or marriage in accordance with appropriate qualifications for the performance of specified duties. However, no individual shall initiate or participate in personnel decisions involving initial employment, retention, promotion, salary, leave of absence, or other direct benefit to an individual employee who is a member of the same immediate family or immediate household. Immediate family includes an employee's spouse, parents, brothers, sisters, and children.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml [Section II.A.8]
http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionIII.shtml [Section III.A.5]

E. Consensual Relationships, Conflicts of Interest, and Assumption of Risk

The university Non-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention policy outlines the conflicts of interest and assumptions of risk that may arise with adult romantic consensual relationships. The policy describes the inherent power differential that exists when personal relationships develop between supervisors and employees or faculty/staff and students. Consensual personal relationships involving a power differential risk becoming violations of university policy and equal opportunity law. Consensual personal relationships, whether or not a power differential is involved, that affect or result in the perception of interference with the working or learning environment may be treated as an employment/academic performance issue. Individuals who enter into these relationships unavoidably do so at their own personal hazard and assume all related personal risks.

Employee Rights, Due Process, Grievance and Complaint Procedures

NIU employees have the right to be free from acts/experiences of discrimination, harassment or retaliation in the workplace, as well as the right to file a complaint and/or to be provided notice about complaints. Any employee or student who experiences and/or witnesses possible violations of laws, policies, regulations, acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has the right and responsibility to immediately report this activity to the applicable university administrator, to appropriate officials in HRS or other campus resource offices, or to the office of Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources (AADR). All complaints and/or allegations of misconduct or discrimination will be examined in a reasonable, objective, and expedient manner in accordance with applicable federal/state employment laws and university procedures.

A. Grievance Procedures for Faculty and Staff

The university’s grievance procedure is intended to provide recourse for allegations of inappropriate treatment or the misapplication of policies. The procedures provide an orderly disposition of disputes and facilitate reasonable resolution of issues that are presented. This grievance procedure is not applicable to employees who are members of one of the university’s collective bargaining units. Negotiated employees are limited to filing a grievance in accordance with their respective collective bargaining agreements and AADR complaint procedures.


B. Grievance Procedures for Members of the Supportive Professional Staff

The Supportive Professional Staff (SPS) grievance procedures afford SPS employees an appeal for certain employment related decisions that are not subject to the Grievance Procedures for Faculty and Staff mentioned earlier in this reference guide. Pursuant to these procedures, SPS employees may appeal employment decisions including, but not limited to, dismissal for cause; official reprimands; arbitrary and capricious decisions related to benefits, working conditions and performance evaluations; non-renewal of an employment contract; and irreconcilable salary disagreements.


C. Due Process

Due process measures for faculty are outlined in the NIU Constitution and Bylaws. These procedures outline the process for the resolution of questions resulting from the dismissal of a tenured or non-tenured member of the faculty.

**D. Grievance Procedures for Violations of Academic Freedom**

The Grievance Procedures for Violations of Academic Freedom provide faculty with the opportunity to seek adjudication of claims or violations of their academic freedom by members of the university. The procedures outline the duties and responsibilities of each party and the steps that will be taken to resolve such claims.


**E. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources - Investigation Procedures**

Following the filing of a formal complaint pursuant to published procedures, AADR will review the situation and may conduct an investigation to determine if sufficient evidence appears to exist to substantiate that a violation of the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy has occurred. If the investigation determines there was an apparent violation of the policy, corrective and/or disciplinary action may be recommended. If the investigation concludes that a violation apparently did not occur, AADR may still recommend disciplinary or corrective action as warranted by the information contained in the complaint and/or discovered during the investigation.


**F. Workplace Civility**

It is crucial for the university to ensure the right of all faculty and staff (supportive professional staff and civil service) to perform their individual and collaborative roles in an environment that is free from incivility, misuse of authority, intimidation, retaliation, and infringement upon personal and academic freedoms. The Grievance Policy outlines the procedures to provide recourse for allegations of inappropriate treatment by other faculty and staff. The policy is intended to be consistent with the Preamble to the Northern Illinois University Constitution, which declares, “Respect for the intrinsic dignity of each member of the university community, both by the university itself and by each member of that community, is the basic cornerstone governing all community activities.” The policy and procedures provide for orderly disposition of disputes and to facilitate reasonable resolution of matters considered.


**G. Legal Representation and Indemnification**

The NIU Board of Trustees Regulations detail the provisions of legal representation and indemnification for claims or actions against a Trustee, a former Trustee, an employee of the NIU Board of Trustees, former employee, or estate of such person. Subject to certain conditions, defense and indemnification is provided for claims or actions based upon damage or injury allegedly arising from an act or omission occurring within the scope of duties performed on behalf of the NIU Board of Trustees. The Board Regulations further state that indemnification is provided for those that acted in good faith, without malice, and within the scope of their authority. Indemnification and legal representation will not be provided for misconduct or actions that were intentional. Legal representation and indemnification is subject to the Representation and Indemnification of State Employees Act and other applicable laws.

Policy References: http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionVII.shtml#7E
# University Resources for Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>753-1514</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/accounting/">http://www.niu.edu/accounting/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources</td>
<td>753-6000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/">http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Community Standards &amp; Student Conduct</td>
<td>753-1571</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/communitystandards/">http://www.niu.edu/communitystandards/</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Compliance Administration</td>
<td>753-6000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.compliance.niu.edu/">http://www.compliance.niu.edu/</a></td>
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<td>Employee Assistance Office</td>
<td>753-9191</td>
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<td>Ethics Officer</td>
<td>753-9517</td>
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<td>Information Technology Services (ITS)</td>
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<td>Internal Audit</td>
<td>753-1827</td>
<td><a href="http://www.finfacil.niu.edu/BusProcedureManual/18-01.htm">http://www.finfacil.niu.edu/BusProcedureManual/18-01.htm</a></td>
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<td>Marketing &amp; Communications</td>
<td>753-1681</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/univrelations/index.shtml">http://www.niu.edu/univrelations/index.shtml</a></td>
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<td>Ombudsperson</td>
<td>753-1414</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/ombuds/">http://www.niu.edu/ombuds/</a></td>
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<td>Procurement Services</td>
<td>753-1671</td>
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<td>Provost's Office</td>
<td>753-8387</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/provost/">http://www.niu.edu/provost/</a></td>
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<td>Registration and Records</td>
<td>753-0681</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reg.niu.edu/regrec/">http://www.reg.niu.edu/regrec/</a></td>
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<td>University Police</td>
<td>753-1212</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/publicsafety/">http://www.niu.edu/publicsafety/</a></td>
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# Major Policy/Procedure References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/">http://www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/DiversityResources/</a></td>
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<td>Central Management Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www2.illinois.gov/cms/Pages/default.aspx">http://www2.illinois.gov/cms/Pages/default.aspx</a></td>
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<td>Human Resource Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hr.niu.edu">http://www.hr.niu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Subjects in Research</td>
<td><a href="http://www.research.niu.edu/divresearch/">http://www.research.niu.edu/divresearch/</a></td>
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<td>NIU Board of Trustees Regulations</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/index.shtml">http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/index.shtml</a></td>
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<td>NIU Constitution and Bylaws</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/u_council/constitution/index.shtml">http://www.niu.edu/u_council/constitution/index.shtml</a></td>
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<td>Office of the Executive Inspector General</td>
<td><a href="http://www2.illinois.gov/oeig/Pages/default.aspx">http://www2.illinois.gov/oeig/Pages/default.aspx</a></td>
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<td>Public Safety</td>
<td><a href="http://www.niu.edu/publicsafety/">http://www.niu.edu/publicsafety/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>State Universities Civil Service System</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sucss.illinois.gov/">http://www.sucss.illinois.gov/</a></td>
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ETHELICAL PROHIBITIONS

Northern Illinois University is charged with maintaining an ethical environment for university employees and participants of the campus community. As an institutional standard, all faculty, students, and administrators are expected to maintain ethical conduct as a continuing aspect of professional responsibility. NIU strictly abides by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act and the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA). Anyone who violates applicable ethics requirements in their professional capacities as a state employee may face significant consequences, up to and including discipline and/or termination. University personnel are required to receive and complete ethics training annually and at the time of hire. Additionally, university personnel are required to report policy violations so that appropriate corrective action can be taken.

Ethical conduct and standards are outlined in University governing documents and summarized in applicable policy documents including the State Officials & Employees Ethics Act policy and the Employee Conduct, Accountability, and Ethics in the Workplace: A Reference Guide for Faculty and Staff of Northern Illinois University. As outlined in this guide, prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to:

• conflicts of interest;
• prohibited political activity;
• inappropriate use of State time, resources, and property;
• receipt of gifts from prohibited sources;
• procurement communications; and
• “revolving door” employment practices.

WHISTLE BLOWER PROTECTION/RETAILIATION

Employees also have a duty to report violations of law, rules, regulations, or policies that they become aware of in the course of their work for the State of Illinois. Northern Illinois University and the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act provide protection to persons coming forward with complaints of unethical behavior. Specifically, the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act provides that the University and its employees shall not take any retaliatory action against an employee:

• who has disclosed or threatened to disclose that the employee reasonably believes there has been or will be a violation of a law, rule, or regulation, or
• that provides information to or testifies before any public body conducting an investigation, hearing, or inquiry into any violation of a law, rule, or regulation, or
• who assists or participates in a proceeding to enforce the provisions of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. 5 ILCS 430/15-10. See also, the Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174 et seq.

COMPLAINTS

An Ethics or Whistle Blower complaint can be forwarded through a variety of channels, including the following:

• E-mail NIUEthicsOfficer@niu.edu
• Call 1-855-544-6665 and leave message.
• Ethics Complaint Form (obtained from the Compliance Administration website at http://www.compliance.niu.edu/ or Human Resource Services.

An Ethics Complaint may be submitted to either the University Ethics Officer and/or the Office of the Executive Inspector General:

James Guagliardo, Ethics Officer
Special Assistant Counsel
Altgeld Hall 330
DeKalb, IL 60115
NIUEthicsOfficer@niu.edu
Phone: 1-855-544-6665
Fax: 1-815-753-7818

Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor Illinois Building - 607 East Adams Street
14th Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62701
Phone: (217) 558-5600
Fax: (217) 782-1605

Anonymous complaints will be accepted but should contain sufficient information to allow for follow-up inquiries and investigation as appropriate.