

***A Statement of Professional Ethics for Members of the Supportive Professional Staff
at Northern Illinois University***

Approved May 2, 2002

Revised October 11, 2012

Introduction

Supportive Professional Staff (SPS) perform a wide variety of duties and functions at Northern Illinois University. The Supportive Professional Staff Council has adopted the following statement on professional ethics.

The principles that follow are not laws or regulations (such as those enacted by the Legislature, the Board of Trustees, and other bodies). No statement of standards can cover all possible situations with ethical implications, but rather these standards are intended to broadly define the essentials of appropriate and honorable conduct for SPS. The Council was guided by five “bedrock” principles:

1. Do no harm;
2. Act to benefit others;
3. Act to promote justice and fairness;
4. Be respectful of autonomy (of self and others); and
5. Act with integrity.

Definition of SPS

As defined in Article 2, Section 2.52, of the NIU Constitution, Supportive Professional Staff members are “those whose appointments designate them as holding (a) no-rank faculty status, or (b) faculty rank with administrative assignments outside the academic division of the university.”

Statement of Principles

SPS will strive to apply the following principles in their work, whether that work is with students, university administrators or officials, faculty, Operating Staff, other SPS, or the general public.

- I. SPS shall be dedicated to providing and maintaining excellence in the area(s) of their particular responsibility. .
- II. SPS shall abide by the standards of professionalism which apply to them – whether as members of a given profession or occupations or as members of the academic community. They shall be honest intellectually and professionally in their work, and will strive to uphold that honesty by taking appropriate corrective steps with respect to those who may be engaging in fraud, deception, or other dishonest practices.
- III. SPS shall respect and abide by the laws, policies, and regulations in force at all times. They shall also recognize an expectation to evaluate those laws, policies, or regulations critically and to seek needed revisions when they are perceived to be contrary to the best interests of the community.
- IV. SPS shall behave respectfully toward all with whom they interact. They shall strive to remain objective in their dealings with others, and to avoid any harassing or disrespectful behavior.

- V. SPS shall respect, within the constraints of applicable law (and university policies, published standards of appropriate professional organizations, etc.), the confidences and the privacy of others.
- VI. SPS shall be committed to education. SPS members shall continue to study, apply, and advance knowledge whenever possible. They shall consult other professionals and NIU employees as necessary and appropriate, and shall not fail to give proper credit to those with whom they consult or on whose expertise they draw.
- VII. SPS shall accept their responsibility, to the extent allowed by their primary duties and responsibilities, to participate in activities which contribute to the improvement of the university and to the betterment of the community as a whole, including university governance.
- VIII. SPS shall support access to education for all people who desire it. And the right of all citizens to freedom of inquiry and expression, as guaranteed by the statutes, regulations, and policies of the United States, the State of Illinois, and Northern Illinois University.
- IX. SPS shall encourage freedom of inquiry in their students, and respect it in their colleagues. SPS shall demonstrate respect for their students and those students' rights, and will ensure that the students' grades or evaluations will be based solely and fairly on the merits of the students being graded.
- X. To the extent that they do not interfere with their primary duties and responsibilities to the university, SPS may pursue other interests and activities while employed at NIU. SPS shall not make inappropriate use of university facilities or resources, or of the university's name, in the pursuit of outside interests.
- XI. SPS are also members of society as a whole, and as such they enjoy the rights and obligations of any other citizen. Those rights and obligations, however, shall be balanced against the SPS members' responsibilities to their employer, their colleagues, their students (if any), and their profession. When they speak or act as private persons SPS shall avoid creating any impression that they speak for the university, the SPS, or anyone other than themselves.

Acknowledgments

This document is a revision of the previous Statement approved by SPS Council May 2, 2002.

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