

<b>Allegheny College</b> <b>PERSONNEL POLICIES &amp; BENEFITS HANDBOOK</b>	<b>900</b> POLICY NUMBER
	<b>9/01/02</b> EFFECTIVE DATE
<b>Subject: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT</b>	

## **900 Standards of Conduct**

### **900.1 Employee Conduct**

Employee conduct has a direct bearing on the general public opinion of the College; therefore, it is imperative that employees respect the rights of others and conduct themselves in a professional and businesslike manner.

The following conduct is prohibited and will not be tolerated by Allegheny College. Written standards, however, can be guidelines only; they cannot be all inclusive. Hence, the list of prohibited conduct below is not intended to be all-inclusive. Rather, each employee is expected to conform to common and accepted standards of behavior and job performance as well as to written standards. Questions regarding acceptable standards of behavior within a department should also be addressed with the supervisor.

- Falsification of College records, including employment applications, time or medical records, or the recording of anyone's time but your own, or granting permission to another employee to record your time.
- Insubordination.
- Deliberate destruction or defacing of College property, a student's property or the property of a fellow employee.
- Fighting or provoking a fight while on College premises or while conducting College business.
- Assaulting, threatening, intimidating, coercing or interfering with supervisors, employees, students, or visitors.
- Possession of weapons while on College premises.
- Unauthorized removal or alteration of College records or release of confidential information.
- Theft or misappropriation of College property.
- Illegal, immoral or indecent conduct.
- Gross negligence.
- Unauthorized absence for three (3) consecutive days.

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
- Harassment.
- Use of abusive language on College property or while conducting College business.
- Poor performance and willful misconduct.
- Violation of any College policy.
- Unauthorized use or possession of College-owned property.

This list of prohibited conduct does not alter the College's policy of at-will employment. Either you or the College remains free to terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without reason or advance notice.

## **900.2 Problem Resolution Procedures**

Any exempt employee who feels that he or she is experiencing difficulties in the performance of his or her job should feel free to discuss the matter with his/her supervisor. If the employee is unable to discuss the problem with his/her supervisor, the employee may contact the respective AEC member or the Director of Human Resources.

When an employee feels that a condition affecting him/her is unjust, inequitable, or a hindrance to performance, the following procedures should be followed:

Step 1: The employee should first bring the situation to the attention of his/her immediate supervisor. This is to encourage open discussion of the problem and facilitate a solution.

Step 2: If an employee feels the problem has not been resolved in Step 1, or if the employee is unable to discuss the problem with his/her supervisor, the employee may then bring the matter to the appropriate AEC member for resolution.

Step 3: If the employee still feels that the problem has not been resolved in Steps 1 and 2, the employee may then consult the Director of Human Resources who may require a written summary of the problem and proposed solution from any party involved previously in the problem resolution process. The Director may consult with the Executive Vice President to review the information and attempt to find a solution to the complaint. The decision of the Director of Human Resources on any grievance matter shall be final and no further appeal will be available.

## **900.3 Disciplinary Process**

The following disciplinary process applies to exempt employees. Discipline should be designed to correct problems in behavior or performance, where appropriate. Employees who are on progressive discipline may not apply for another position within the College.

The immediate supervisor must decide, based upon the circumstances in each case, what is the appropriate level and nature of discipline. If any employee objects to the discipline imposed, the employee may ask for a meeting with the department manager. If the situation is not resolved at this

level, the employee may request a meeting with the respective AEC member or with the Director of Human Resources.

The various types of disciplinary action, which may be used include (but are not limited to) the following, and do not necessarily have to follow in sequence:

- Employee counseling or oral reprimand is a discussion between the employee and the supervisor to determine if the employee understands the standards expected; to resolve whether any special circumstances were involved; to identify what is expected in the future from the employee; and to understand the employee's perspective of or response to the problem under discussion.
- Written warning is a formal action by the supervisor, which includes a description of the extent of the problem, suggested courses of action, and the time period for resolution. It should be discussed with the employee by the supervisor. This written warning will be included in the employee's personnel file.
- Demotion or transfer to another position may be an alternative short of termination. The employee will be given notice in writing describing the nature of the offense and the disciplinary action proposed.
- Termination of employment may result immediately for the commission of a serious offense, or it may be the final step in the progressive disciplinary process.

This disciplinary process does not alter the College's policy of at-will employment.

## **900.4 Attendance**

Regular attendance is expected of all employees of the College and is essential to the proper functioning of the College. If an illness or emergency prevents an employee from reporting at his/her scheduled starting time, the employee is responsible for notifying his/her supervisor before the scheduled starting time.

The supervisor has the responsibility for approving authorized absences. The Human Resources Office will maintain the official record of vacation and personal days. Since exempt employees do not follow a rigid time schedule, and work demands vary among offices and seasons, exempt employees are only requested to submit on a quarterly basis a summary of vacation and personal days taken. Since there is no specific form for this purpose, you can simply submit a summary of days taken to the Office of Human Resources on a quarterly basis, i.e. March 30, June 30, September 30, and December 31. Department managers/supervisors may establish other reporting requirements within their respective departments for the tracking of vacation, personal, and sick days.

If an employee is absent without notice for more than three consecutive days, it will be considered an abandonment of position. In addition, an employee is considered to have abandoned his/her position if the employee fails to report without notice for work at his/her scheduled starting time on the first scheduled work day following an authorized leave of absence, vacation or disability leave.

Abandonment of position will be considered a voluntary resignation from employment at the College. The supervisor must notify the Director of Human Resources in writing as soon as it is determined that a position has been abandoned. The notification will become part of the employee's personnel file and

may adversely affect his/her eligibility for rehire. Repeated absenteeism or lateness, even if reported in advance, will not be tolerated and may be considered as grounds for dismissal.

## **900.5 Handling Confidential Information**

Employees of the College may come in contact with information which, if released without authorization or carelessly handled, can have critical consequences. It is important to handle all confidential information with discretion, labeling it “confidential,” safeguarding it when in use, filing it properly when not in use, and discussing it only with those who have a need to know for a legitimate business reason. All medical or personnel information will be treated as confidential.

## **900.6 Confidentiality of Student Records**

The privacy of student educational records is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and by Allegheny College Policy on the Privacy of Student Records (Appendix F). The attached policy on the privacy of student records outlines your responsibilities under FERPA and Allegheny College Policy. These guidelines are intended to protect our students and the College from any unintentional misuse of student information. Employees should seek guidance from the Registrar or from the Dean of Students before releasing, accessing, or discussing information about students.

## **900.7 Personal Dress and Appearance**

Personal neatness and appropriate attire are essential in maintaining a professional work environment. Employees are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their work environment and the function they are performing.

## **900.8 Commencement**

Formal Commencement exercises are held once each year in May, although degrees are conferred on three separate occasions during the academic year. All administrators are expected to participate in the commencement exercises unless excused in advance by the President; individuals are responsible for procuring appropriate academic costume. Academic attire can be ordered through the College Bookstore.

## **900.9 Financial Internal Controls – (Effective 4/1/06; revised 10/20/09)**

Allegheny College has a responsibility for the stewardship of College resources and the private support that enables it to pursue its mission. The College is committed to compliance with the laws and regulations to which it is subject and to promulgating College policies and procedures to interpret and apply these laws and regulations in the College setting.

The College’s internal controls and operating procedures are intended to detect and to prevent or deter improper activities. However, even the best systems of control cannot provide absolute safeguards against irregularities. Intentional and unintentional violations of laws, regulations, policies and procedures may occur and may constitute improper activities. The College has a responsibility to investigate and report to appropriate parties allegations of suspected improper activities and to report the actions taken by the College.

The Audit and Evaluation Committee of the Board of Trustees shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding College accounting practices, finances, internal controls, auditing or standards of conduct relative thereto.

It is the responsibility of all College employees, students, parents, alumni, and other individuals to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this “whistle-blower policy.” No individual who in good faith reports a violation or suspected violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment or academic or educational consequence. Additionally, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act’s (ARRA) statutory provisions prohibit non-Federal employers receiving covered funds from taking actions against employees in reprisal for whistle blowing. The ARRA notice of rights and remedies is posted in the Office of Human Resources.

Individuals wishing to report violations or suspected violations may do so in writing by sending a sealed envelope addressed to the Chair of the Audit and Evaluation Committee, Allegheny College Board of Trustees. This report should be sent to the Office of the Executive Vice President or to the President’s Office (sealed envelopes sent to the College are to be delivered intact to the Chair of the Audit and Evaluation Committee for review), or directly to the Chair of the Audit and Evaluation Committee.

The Chair of the Audit and Evaluation Committee will inform and consult with the Executive Vice President or the President as is prudent concerning these matters brought to the Committee so that an internal investigation can begin and a report be rendered expeditiously to the Committee concerning remedial action that has been or will be taken to ameliorate the situation. The Executive Vice President will subsequently write in confidence to the reporting party the explanation for or the resolution of the violations or suspected violations.

Anonymous reports will be handled in the same manner as signed reports, however, no response will be sent. The Executive Vice President will maintain a file for the purpose of documenting resolution to reported violations or suspected violations.

At all times names of persons involved and the situations will remain confidential and a professional, non-threatening procedure to resolve these matters will be adhered to by all concerned.

### **900.10 Employee Conflict of Interest Policy – (Effective 7/1/07)**

All employees who as a part of their duties must negotiate or secure contracts or hire employees on behalf of the College shall abide by Allegheny College’s Conflict of Interest Policy. This policy applies to employees who hold senior executive positions in the College, Director level positions, and any other position that is deemed by the President to have some delegated autonomy of authority. Such designated employees will be asked to sign a conflict of interest disclosure statement.

Each designated employee shall perform his or her respective duties in those positions so as to avoid encountering a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest. In addition, the employee agrees to manage the College’s resources reasonably, ethically, and in the best interest of the College in all business affairs.

An employee is considered to have a conflict of interest when the employee or any of his or her family or associates either (1) has an existing or potential financial or other material interest which impairs or might reasonably appear to impair the individual’s independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of responsibilities to the College, and (2) may receive a financial or other material benefit from knowledge of information confidential to the College. Any employee who is uncertain whether a conflict or interest may exist in any matter may request of the Executive Vice President or President to make a determination whether a conflict of interest exists.

### **900.11 Record Retention – (Effective 6/1/08)**

In the event of a pending legal matter, any files, documents, and electronic correspondence, including e-mail correspondence, pertinent to the legal matter must be retained until the matter has been concluded. Therefore, employees should not destroy any documents that are pertinent to such matters as identified by the College as having reasonable potential of being connected to a pending legal matter. This policy supersedes any internal policy-driven time for destruction of documents.