



Sabin Hall 2011

# ***MSW Student Handbook***





Welcome to the University of Northern Iowa's Department of Social Work! We are delighted that you have selected our program for your graduate studies. Our faculty represent an array of disciplines and specialties that will provide you a high quality professional education. Through your coursework and field experiences, you will have the opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills in the various fields that comprise the social work profession.

This MSW Handbook provides practical advice about your MSW program. You will find useful information about courses and curricula, degree requirements, student advising, and procedures for handling complaints. The handbook also sets forth your obligations to the Department, to the faculty, and to your fellow MSW students in terms of academic and professional conduct and ethical standards.

We hope that your time at UNI is both rewarding and enjoyable. Please do not hesitate to call upon us should you have questions or concerns about the MSW Program.

Sincerely,

Cindy Juby, Ph.D., Department Head and MSW Director

*Note: This Handbook was created by the Social Work Department to help guide students through the MSW program and is not an official publication of the University. It is not a statement of all UNI policies. For official rules, regulations and degree requirements, refer to the [Graduate Catalog](#) and the [Graduate College Language and policies](#) in this Handbook should not be relied upon as legal terms or conditions of enrollment, and are not intended to create a contract between the Department and its students. This Handbook is subject to change at any time at the Department's discretion. To the extent a policy is inconsistent with federal or state laws, the policy will be superseded by the applicable governing law.*

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## **MSW Program Mission**

The mission of the MSW program is to provide students with a trauma-informed foundation within a generalist perspective that will prepare them for advanced social work practice and leadership. Core values of the program include the inherent dignity, rights, and strengths of all individuals, families, and communities, regardless of social, historical, economic, and cultural contexts. Critical thinking, a fundamental program component, is supported by the promotion of multicultural sensitivity, human rights, and social and economic justice.

## **MSW Program Goals**

- *Provide a foundation curriculum rooted within a generalist perspective that addresses knowledge and skills necessary for effective and ethical practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;*
- *Provide a concentration curriculum built on a professional foundation that prepares students to practice autonomously as advanced level professionals in trauma-informed practice within a wide range of client systems and practice settings;*
- *Infuse social work values and ethics throughout students' educational experience to serve as guides for practice in field placements and future professional social work practice;*
- *Promote student understanding of diversity through curriculum that identifies the experiences and needs of vulnerable and oppressed groups while emphasizing resilience and strengths;*
- *Increase students' understanding of the types and processes of discrimination and oppression and enhance their ability to promote social and economic justice through advocacy and social reform;*
- *Prepare students to critically assess and apply empirically-based knowledge, evaluate their own practice effectiveness, and participate in the evaluation of programs and policies.*

## **Table 4. Mission Statement, Program, Goals, and Program Objectives**

### ***Program Objectives***

Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### ***Program Goals***

Provide a concentration curriculum built on the professional foundation that prepares students to practice autonomously as advanced level professionals in either trauma informed or administrative practice within a wide range of client systems and practice settings.

Infuse social work values and ethics throughout students' educational experience to serve as guides for practice in field placements and future professional social work practice settings.

Promote student understanding of diversity through curriculum that identifies the experiences and needs of vulnerable and oppressed groups while emphasizing resilience and strengths.

Increase students' understanding of the types and processes of discrimination and oppression and enhance their ability to promote social and economic justice through advocacy and social reform.

## Social Work Faculty and Staff Members

**Cindy Juby**, Ph.D., Department Head and MSW Director  
Sabin 235B, 319-273-5910 [cynthia.juby@uni.edu](mailto:cynthia.juby@uni.edu)  
Interests: Child Welfare, Poverty

**Donna Raubs**, MSW Secretary  
Sabin 235, 319-273-5910 [donna.raubs@uni.edu](mailto:donna.raubs@uni.edu)

**Ashley Rasmussen**, Department and BSW Secretary  
Sabin 235, 319-273-6249 [ashley.rasmussen@uni.edu](mailto:ashley.rasmussen@uni.edu)

**Jenny Becker**, MSW, LISW, Director of Field Education and BSW Director  
Sabin 243, 319-273-7881 [jennifer.becker@uni.edu](mailto:jennifer.becker@uni.edu)  
Interests: Mental Health, School Social Work, Child Welfare, Disabilities

**William Downs**, Ph.D.  
Sabin 215, 319-273-5911 [william.downs@uni.edu](mailto:william.downs@uni.edu)  
Interests: Adolescence, Family Violence, Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse

**Libby Fry, MSW**  
Sabin 243, 319-273-2814 [elizabeth.fry@uni.edu](mailto:elizabeth.fry@uni.edu)  
Interests:

**Sei-Young Lee**, Ph.D.  
Sabin 319-273- [seiyounq.lee@uni.edu](mailto:seiyounq.lee@uni.edu)  
Interests:

**James McCullagh**, Ed.D.  
Bartlett 1109, 319-273-2399 [james.mccullagh@uni.edu](mailto:james.mccullagh@uni.edu)  
Interests: Cherokee Nation Educational System; B.A. practice; school social work

**Steven Onken**, Ph.D.  
Sabin 245, 319-273-6585 [steven.onken@uni.edu](mailto:steven.onken@uni.edu)  
Interests: Recovery & Wellbeing, Trauma-Informed Care & Systems, Behavioral Health, Qualitative Research

**Laura Parker**, Ph.D.  
Sabin 263, 319-273-7485 [laura.praglin@uni.edu](mailto:laura.praglin@uni.edu)  
Interests:

**Laura Praglin**, Ph.D, LMSW  
Sabin 251, 319-273-3163 [laura.praglin@uni.edu](mailto:laura.praglin@uni.edu)  
Interests: Conflict Resolution, Cultural Diversity, Social Work History, Historical Trauma, Post-Traumatic Growth

**Matthew Vasquez**, Ph.D.  
Sabin 249, 319-273-6249 [matthew.vasquez@uni.edu](mailto:matthew.vasquez@uni.edu)  
Interests: Trauma, Children's Mental Health, Attachment Disorders, Trauma-Informed Care, Residential Treatment

## **Selected Administrative Contacts**

### **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

Sabin Hall, Room 235

Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0405 Phone: 319.273.5910

FAX: 319.273.6976

Email: [donna.raubs@uni.edu](mailto:donna.raubs@uni.edu)

Web Page: <https://csbs.uni.edu/socialwork/>

### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, MSW PROGRAM**

Cindy Juby, Ph.D., Department Head/MSW Director

Jenny Becker, MSW, LISW, Field Director/BSW Director

### **COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION**

Brenda Bass, Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS)

### **UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION**

Mark Nook, President

Jim Wohlpart, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Patrick Pease, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs & Interim Dean of the Graduate College

### **ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER**

Nick Sullivan, Student Support Services Director

Deanne Gute, Ph.D., Writing Coordinator

Emily Borcharding, Student Success & Learning Coordinator

## **GETTING STARTED: ORIENTATION and other Basic Information**

All students should review the Online Orientation under Resources for New Graduate Students: [Here is the link](#). This site:

- describes the process to obtain a UCARD (University Identification Card).
- explains your [CatID](#) (necessary to access email or [MyUNiverse](#)),
- provides instructions for navigating [MyUNiverse](#),
- includes information for on-campus and off-campus [Housing](#),
- lists eligibility criteria for accessing the [Health Clinic](#),
- offers [maps](#) of both the campus and for directions to UNI,
- includes [parking and public transportation](#) information, and
- provides public safety information, including [UNI Alert](#)

**IDENTIFICATION CARD** If you just graduated from UNI, you already have your UNI ID. All other students must go to Room 10 in lower level of [Redeker](#) to get your UNI ID card. You will get your picture taken at no cost. If you lose your card, there will be a fee to replace it. You must show your ID to purchase your parking permit.

**REGISTRATION** Students should register as soon as possible through [MyUNiverse](#). Any student who has been awarded a Graduate Tuition Scholarship and/or Graduate Assistantship Stipend must be registered for fall classes in August; otherwise, the Graduate College will not process their paperwork.

**LICENSURE** Advanced Standing and 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW students may register to take the [LMSW Licensing Exam](#). The application process must be initiated by the student, but not before you have started your *final* semester of the MSW Program. If you decide to sit for the exam (before you receive your degree), contact the MSW office at (319) 273-5910 or e-mail [Donna Raubs](#) and ask the Department to send a letter to the Board of Social Work Licensure stating your anticipated graduation date.

**ADVISING** You will be assigned a faculty advisor before the start of classes. The advisor is available during their office hours or by appointment to answer questions about the program or your course plan. You will need the approval of your faculty advisor before you register for any elective courses.

**GRADUATE TUITION & FEES** Current tuition and fees information can be found on this [website](#).

## **MSW Program Prerequisites and Requirements**

Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited university.

Although most students meet the **Statistical Methods** requirement prior to admission to the MSW Program, those who have not must complete this course by the end of their first semester of coursework. The student must demonstrate competence in basic statistical methods through completion of a statistics course from an accredited institution, or by successful completion of a course at the UNI Department of Social Work with a minimum grade of C.

## **MSW Program Curriculum**

*The University of Northern Iowa MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and will prepare students for advanced professional social work practice. Students who graduate from the MSW program will receive the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree.*

The MSW program has two tracks, Foundation and Advanced Standing. Classes at the Foundation level introduce students to the history of the profession, fundamental theories of human behavior, and basic values and skills underlying generalist social work practice. Students learn to read and understand social work research, begin to incorporate a framework of professional ethics, and are introduced to the concepts of oppression and social justice that are fundamental to becoming an agent of change.

Full-Time students in the Foundation track complete 26 units of coursework during the first year, 6 units of advanced core in the summer, followed by 28 units of trauma informed specialization coursework, for a total of 60 academic units. Extended enrollment for Foundation students allows completion of 60 units over a thirteen-term (five-year) period.

Full-Time, Advanced Standing students complete 9 units of advanced core and 28 units of trauma informed specialization coursework for a total of 37 units over a three-term (one-year) period. Extended enrollment for Advanced Standing students allows the completion of 37 hours over a nine-term (three-year) period.

The Extended Enrollment Option (Part-time) is available to both advanced standing and two-year foundation students. Extended-enrollment students must be able to attend classes at times offered (3-hour blocks) and be available for the field practicum seminars. Most practicums take place at agencies that operate during regular business hours (9 am to 5 pm). Extended-enrollment students must complete all requirements within seven years.

## Graduate Field Instruction

***All full-time and extended enrollment students are required to complete a specified number of hours in the field.*** The field practicum prepares students with the skills and knowledge to improve the quality of lives of individuals and to provide leadership in the areas of social justice and community development. Students may choose agencies in the areas of public welfare, education, healthcare, mental health, community justice, and faith-based organizations, just to name a few.

The field practicum encourages you to think broadly, to ask the most complex questions, and to try out your knowledge and skills in an arena of practical experience. As you struggle with ideas and test them in the real world, you will have the opportunity to explore, to grow, and to become well educated for a career in social work.

The Field Director has a list of agencies students may consider for placement. The Field Director and faculty engage in an on-going process with agencies to expand and improve opportunities for student placement.

### **Policies and Procedures for Establishing a Field Placement**

*Foundation Student Agency Placement Process; Foundation students are scheduled for practicum during the second term of their first year for 400 field hours. Requirements and process information will be covered during new student orientation.*

*Advanced Standing Student Agency Placement Process: Advanced standing students do their field placements concurrent with coursework during the fall and spring semesters for 500 field hours.*

*Department Policy on Liability/Malpractice Insurance: Social work students are strongly urged to have a liability/malpractice insurance policy purchased before they begin their field placement. Students may purchase liability coverage for field through NASW Insurance Trust. Most medical centers now require students to show proof of liability coverage prior to beginning a field placement.*

### **Ethics and Professional Behavior**

Graduate students of the Department of Social Work will be held to the highest standards of professional performance. These standards are reflected in UNI's *Student Code of Conduct*, that applies within the university setting, and the *NASW Code of Ethics*, that applies within practicum settings. Students found to be in violation of the University of Northern Iowa's Student Code of Conduct, procedures outlined in Section 3.02 (Student Conduct Code) of the University Policies and Procedures Manual (at <http://www.uni.edu/policies/>) will be followed. The Manual addresses the rules, procedures, rights and responsibilities governing the university and includes the identification of offenses punishable by disciplinary action, the role and responsibilities of university officials, recommended sanctions and the right and procedure of the student appeal. Violations of the NASW Code of Ethics in the professional or practicum setting will be addressed by the Department of Social Work.

## **Student Advising**

The following policies and procedures provide faculty and students with understanding advising procedures in the Department of Social Work. These policies and procedures are in addition to those in effect for the University. The scope of student advising includes academic performance, career counseling, course selection and field site selection in keeping with field instruction placement guidelines.

1. All full-time faculty members in the Department of Social Work may advise students. Each is assigned a roster of advisees.
2. Students will be assigned a Social Work advisor early in their MSW program. Notice of this assignment will include advisor's name, office hours and address, phone and e-mail address.
3. Faculty Advisors will post office hours and also make themselves available on an appointment basis.
4. Advising in the Department of Social Work will include, but not be limited to, orienting students to the department and program, early and periodic evaluation of advisees' performance, referrals, guiding advisees in selecting courses, and working out schedules.
5. Faculty Advisors will participate in Special Advising processes when required for their advisees.
6. Students are responsible for seeking out their advisors if they have questions regarding the curriculum or other major-related questions.
7. Students may change their advisor by making the request for such change in the Department office.
8. The Department expects students to be responsible for ensuring that all MSW program and other university requirements for graduation are fulfilled. This is the responsibility of the student, not the student's advisor.

## **Policies and Procedures Regarding Transfer of Courses**

*The following policies and procedures help avoid the necessity of students repeating already-taken courses and to preserve the integrity of the MSW program.*

1. Students transferring from other accredited Master's social work programs may seek substitution of courses taken in those programs for corresponding courses in the MSW program at UNI. Students should consult with their social work faculty advisor regarding courses they wish to substitute under these circumstances. The faculty advisor will assess the courses regarding course syllabi objectives, content, learning activities, theoretical frames of reference, bibliographies, text, and instructor qualifications. With the advisor's approval, the MSW Director and Graduate College will review the requests and, if appropriate, provide approval. This process is carried out through use of the Student Request Form. Credit for *Social Work Practice I* and *Social Work Practice II* will only be provided when the courses have been taught by an MSW Social Worker with two years of post-MSW experience. If the requested substitutions are approved, the Student Request

- Form is placed in the Department's advising file.
2. Students may be able to transfer or substitute courses from graduate programs other than accredited MSW programs. Only those courses meeting or exceeding the standards of the courses within the program, including qualifications of instructors, may be approved. Students seeking to transfer or substitute courses from graduate programs other than accredited MSW programs must provide copies of syllabi to be approved by their advisor, the MSW Director, and the Graduate College. This process is carried out through the Student Request Form. If this request is granted, the Student Request Form is placed in the Department's advising file.
  3. Substitutions for specialization courses will be determined on an individual basis with approvals from the MSW Director, Department Head, and Graduate College.
  4. Academic credit for life experience and/or previous work experience will not be given in whole or in part for required courses or for the field practicum in the MSW program.
  5. Proficiency exams will not substitute for required social work courses.

### **Provisional Status**

At the discretion of the appropriate academic department, an applicant with an undergraduate and prior graduate GPA of less than 3.00 may be admitted as a *Provisional Degree Student*. A Provisional Degree Student is admitted to a graduate program subject to certain reservations and requirements. Upon admission, the department must notify the student in writing of its reservations and requirements that must be satisfied before a student may be removed from provisional status.

A Provisional Degree student who completes eight (8) or more graded hours of a degree program with at least a 3.00 grade point average is generally eligible for reclassification to Degree Status. The responsibility for such reclassification rests with the academic department concerned. Reclassification review should take place the semester after the student has completed eight (8) semester hours in the graduate program. The department must notify the Dean of the Graduate College about the reclassification decision. No student may receive a UNI graduate degree while on provisional status. The department admitting a student to its graduate degree program will draft a letter of acceptance to be sent to the student; this letter will describe requirements necessary for completion of the degree program in question. Any waivers of degree requirements as established by a department must be furnished to the applicant by the department in the letter of acceptance.

### **Procedures for Withdrawing a Student from the MSW Program**

In most cases students withdraw from the MSW program for academic and nonacademic reasons through the normal institutional mechanisms, including consultation with their social work faculty advisor. Accordingly, social work faculty should take concerns about a student to the student's social work faculty advisor. In some instances, a student's social work faculty advisor may ask the MSW Admissions and Retention Committee to convene and consider the student's case.

The Committee will notify the student in writing about the purpose of the meeting and invite him or her to attend, allowing opportunity to respond and provide information. It may meet with the advisor and other social work professionals directly involved with the student's situation in its deliberations.

Academic reasons for withdrawing a student from the MSW program result from the student's overall U.N.I. GPA being below the stipulated minimum for graduation as a graduate student. When a student's GPA falls below the minimum, the social work faculty advisor is informed by the Department office. If the advisor has not already met with the student, the advisor informs the student in writing that they are below the minimum U.N.I. GPA and asks to meet with the student. Students may need to retake courses to restore their U.N.I. GPA to the required minimum, or they may elect to withdraw. In keeping with university policy, students are bound by the GPA minimums and policies regarding the major stipulated in the University of Northern Iowa catalogue when they are accepted into the MSW program (see [Graduate Policies](#)).

Non-academic reasons for withdrawing a student from the major may include inadequacies in his or her ability to demonstrate professional conduct, relationship skills or behavior inconsistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession as set forth in the current National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. Inadequacies in professional conduct include inadequacy of professional integrity or emotional stability requisite for professional practice, inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, staff, or clients, or failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships.

If the Committee's decision is to place the student on non-academic probation or to dismiss the student, the Committee will share its decisions in writing with the advisor and the student and place a copy in the student's departmental advising file. The committee will follow the University's Departmental Non-academic Probation and dismissal Policy and Procedures as set forth in the University Catalogue. In those cases where the decision is to withdraw the student from the program, the department head is advised. The student may appeal the committee's decisions in accordance with the institutional appeal procedures as set forth in the current University of Northern Iowa catalog.

Nothing in this policy is intended to contradict or abridge the Student Rights and Responsibilities or other similar policies or procedures promulgated by UNI.

### **Academic Discipline**

Graduate students in degree programs are expected to maintain high academic standards. At the end of each term and when incomplete grades revert to F (Failure), graduate student records are reviewed. Students with unsatisfactory performances are placed on probation or

suspended from graduate degree programs and any graduate enrollment at UNI.

A student who has registered for nine (9) semester hours in a program of study and attained a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 in that program will be placed on probation. If the student registers for eight (8) hours while on probation without qualifying as a degree candidate (GPA of 3.00), the student is reviewed at the end of the term for suspension from graduate degree programs. A student who has registered for eighteen (18) semester hours in a program of study and attained a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 in that program will be suspended. Students placed on academic suspension cannot enroll in non-degree graduate status or take courses in the student's program of study during the year of academic suspension.

**Reinstatement:** After one full calendar year, students who wish to enroll in classes must re-apply to their degree program and receive approvals from their departments and the Graduate College for reinstatement.

After a student is suspended, at least one calendar year must elapse before a reapplication for admission to a graduate degree program may be made. Applications for Readmission to Graduate Study must be approved by the department and the Graduate College before a student will be removed from academic suspension. Such applications must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College.

A student reinstated after suspension who fails to attain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 in the program of study for the first enrollment period will be permanently suspended from the graduate program.

In determining a graduate student's grade index, all graded course work attempted at UNI within the student's program of study will be used as a basis of computation. *If the student has not yet filed a program of study, all graduate courses will be used as a basis of computation.* If a graduate student repeats a course, both grades will be used to compute the index.

**D or F Grades:** If a student receives a D or F in a course that is taken to satisfy degree requirements, no credit is given and the course must be repeated.

**C Grades:** *No more than six (6) semester hours of C credit (C+, C, C-) earned within the program of study may be applied toward credit for graduation. If the student receives two C- grades in the MSW program, one or more of these courses must be repeated.*

The original grade for any repeated course will be included in computation for the cumulative GPA in the program of study, as well as in the overall GPA. The original grade for any repeated graduate course (5000, 6000, 7000) will be included in the computation for the cumulative GPA in the program of study, as well as in the overall GPA. Individual departments may identify specific courses within the program of study for which a minimum grade of B is required. For additional information, please see [Graduate Policies](#).

### **UNI Equal Opportunity Policy Statement**

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines regarding equal opportunity and non-discrimination at UNI in compliance with federal and state non-discrimination and affirmative action laws and regulations. **Policy Statement:** No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied

benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, any educational program, or any activity of UNI on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other basis protected by law. UNI prohibits discrimination and promotes affirmative action in its educational and employment policies and practices as required by Title IX of Educational Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Sec. 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other applicable laws and University policies. UNI prohibits sexual harassment, including sexual violence. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and serves as the University Title IX Officer: Leah Gutknecht, Assistant to President for Compliance and Equity Management, 117 Gilchrist Hall, UNI, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0028, 319-273-2846, [leah.gutknecht@uni.edu](mailto:leah.gutknecht@uni.edu). Office of Compliance and Equity Management, approved March 2002, July 2012. For more information, contact Office of Compliance and Equity Management, 117 Gilchrist, UNI, 319-273-2846, [www.uni.edu/equity](http://www.uni.edu/equity).

### **UNI Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy**

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines regarding discrimination and harassment applicable to the entire University. **Policy Statement:** It is the policy of the University of Northern Iowa that there will be equal employment and educational opportunity without regard to age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other basis protected by federal and/or state law. This includes the provision of a campus environment free from illegal discrimination and harassment. The University will not tolerate any form of illegal discrimination or harassment and will not condone actions or words that constitute such.

All members of the University community are accountable for compliance with this policy. The University is committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and harassment, wherever they occur in the University community, by taking corrective action as a result of violations of this policy. Violations may lead to disciplinary action up to and including separation from the University.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination occurs when an individual is treated adversely because of the individual's membership in one of the legally protected groups listed above.

**Harassment:** Harassment occurs when unwelcome conduct, based on an individual's membership in a protected group, unreasonably interferes with the individual's work or academic environment.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: a) submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting the individual; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, academic, or social

environment.

**Consensual Relationships:** Consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships where a power differential exists, whether real or perceived, may constitute sexual harassment. The effect of such a relationship may render an individual's work, academic, or social environment intimidating, offensive or hostile. Further, the individual with the power in the relationship will bear the burden of responsibility should a complaint of sexual harassment be filed. Hence, all University employees are strongly discouraged from entering into romantic and/or sexual relationships, which could lead to the creation of a hostile educational, social and/or work environment for other members of the University community.

**Confidentiality:** Complaints of discrimination or harassment filed with the University will be treated with the utmost privacy possible to the extent allowed by law, while also assuring a complete investigation. University personnel involved in or responsible for any aspect of a complaint shall maintain such confidentiality throughout the processing of the complaint. Should the complainant publicly discuss the complaint, the University shall be relieved of its confidentiality obligations related to the disclosed information under this policy.

**Retaliation:** The University seeks to create an environment where students and employees are free, without fear of reprisal, to use these procedures to determine if there has been a violation of their civil rights. Any act of retaliation will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Similarly, persons who use this process to bring frivolous or otherwise bad faith allegations against an employee shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**Reporting Responsibilities:** All University employees in a supervisory capacity are required to report to the Office of Compliance and Equity Management any allegation of discrimination and/or harassment of which they are made aware. The confidentiality of all parties will be honored to the extent legally allowed and which provides for an appropriate investigation. Persons seeking information or guidance concerning potential discrimination or harassment allegations are advised that the University may need to take action once it is informed of an allegation whether or not the person wants to pursue a complaint. Non-supervisory employees are strongly encouraged to report allegations of discrimination and/or harassment to any supervisor or directly to the Office of Compliance and Equity Management.

**Disabilities:** To receive assistance with requests for accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the Office of Student Disability Services. An employee with a disability who wishes to request an accommodation should contact his/her supervisor or the coordinator of employee disability services located in Human Resource Services. A visitor with a disability who wishes to request an accommodation should contact Human Resource Services. If an employee or student feels his/her rights under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 have been violated, they may consult with the Office of Compliance and Equity Management and/or utilize the following procedures.

**Procedure for Resolution:** An allegation of discrimination and/or harassment against a University employee, vendor, or other third party should be addressed to the Office of Compliance and Equity Management. An allegation against a student should be reported to the

Dean of Students and will be resolved through student conduct procedures. Except in cases involving criminal activity and/or sexual assault, an employee or student alleging discrimination and/or harassment under this policy is encouraged to discuss the allegation with the head of the department in which the alleged discrimination and/or harassment occurred. The department head will then consult with the Office of Compliance and Equity Management to determine an appropriate course of action. If it is determined appropriate, an attempt to facilitate an informal resolution of the matter will be made. If an informal resolution is not reached, is not appropriate, or is not pursued, the student or employee may consult with the Office of Compliance and Equity Management to initiate a formal investigation. If, at any time, the employee or student is not comfortable addressing the department head, the Office of Compliance and Equity Management may be contacted directly. **Note:** If an allegation includes actions that involve criminal activity and/or sexual assault, the individual is strongly encouraged to file a report with UNI Police. Such reports will not be handled informally within the department.

The Office of Compliance and Equity Management will provide a complaint form, which the complainant will then complete and return. The complaint will describe the alleged discrimination and/or harassment, the specific type of discrimination and/or harassment being alleged, and name of person(s) against whom the complaint is being filed. The Office of Compliance and Equity will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint in writing and will also notify in writing the following parties: the accused person and his/her department head/director, dean, vice president, and the president. When deemed appropriate by the Office of Compliance and Equity Management, the complainant is given the option to resolve the complaint through mediation rather than investigation. Only if both the complainant and accused agree to mediation will that option be utilized. If either party declines mediation, the Office of Compliance and Equity will investigate the alleged discrimination and/or harassment charges. Cases of sexual harassment will generally not be considered for mediation.

Following is the process for the investigation of complaints which have not been resolved through mediation: A person designated by the Office of Compliance and Equity Management will initiate an investigation into the allegations. A typical investigation will involve meeting with the person filing the complaint, the person(s) named in the complaint, and with other persons who may have knowledge relevant to the investigation.

The Assistant to the President for Compliance and Equity Management will receive a report of the investigation from the designated investigator. S/he will render a finding of sufficient or insufficient evidence that this policy has been violated. This determination will be based upon the evidence obtained as a result of the investigation process. The complainant and the accused will be notified of the finding in writing. The accused person's department head/director, dean, vice president and the president will also be notified.

If there is a finding of a violation of University policy, the vice president of the accused will determine appropriate disciplinary sanctions based on the recommendation from the Office of Compliance and Equity Management, and will notify in writing the accused and the Office of Compliance and Equity Management of his/her decision. This written decision must be issued within 15 working days of the date of the notice from the Office of Compliance and Equity Management. If the vice president serves as a party or witness in an investigation, the notice will be sent to the president for determination of disciplinary sanctions. This is the conclusion of

the internal procedures under this policy. Office of Compliance and Equity, Approved 3/02, Amended 6/07, 2/09. President's Cabinet, approved 4/02, Amended 6/07, 2/09.

### **Accommodations of Disabilities**

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines regarding the University's compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. **Policy Statement:** No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination by the University. This policy applies to all aspects of campus activities including employment, education, student programming, and services provide to the community at-large.

**Students: To receive assistance with requests for accommodations related to a disability, a student must contact Student Disability Services.**

If a student feels his/her rights have been violated, s/he may consult with the Office of Compliance and Equity Management and/or utilize procedures outlined in the Discrimination and Harassment Policy. The Assistant to the President for Compliance and Equity is the designated ADA Compliance Officer. For more information, visit <http://www.uni.edu/disability> or contact Office of Compliance & Equity, 117 Gilchrist, 319 273-2846, [equity@uni.edu](mailto:equity@uni.edu), [www.uni.edu/equity](http://www.uni.edu/equity). *approved 12/2010.*

### **Student Academic Grievances**

**Purpose:** Provide a process for redress of academic grievances for graduate students within the framework of academic freedom, the integrity of the course, and prerogative of faculty to assign grades.

**Policy and Procedures:** The procedures described in this policy shall be the sole and exclusive means for redress of a student's academic grievance. Recognizing that grade determinations are an integral part of a faculty member's academic freedom, administrative officers cannot substitute their judgment for that of faculty concerning assignment of a grade except as a result of the grievance process outlined in this policy or as defined by circumstances requiring an administrative grade change as documented in University policy regarding administrative grade changes. Grievances regarding make-up work for absences should refer to Section 7 of this document below. Grievances involving alleged acts of discrimination or harassment of students based on age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or other basis protected by federal and/or Iowa law, should be reported to the Office of Compliance and Equity Management/Title IX Officer no later than the time at which the student files a formal grievance under Section C below. If the Office of Compliance and Equity Management (OCEM) receives a student complaint of discrimination that also involves an academic grievance, the academic matter will be referred to the Office of Executive Vice President and Provost and handled through this student academic grievance process. The OCEM will be notified of the findings of the Student Academic Appeals Board regarding the academic matter. If a faculty member or administrator fails to respond by any applicable deadline specified in this procedure, the student may move the grievance to the next step in the process. If a student fails to respond by any applicable deadline specified in this procedure, the grievance shall be closed and documentation stating such shall be prepared by the relevant academic administrator, sent to the department and kept in the student's departmental file for ten years.

At any time during the informal or formal grievance process either party may elect to be accompanied to meetings or hearings by an advisor. At the student's request, the Dean of Students Office or Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) may designate a representative to accompany and assist the student.

At the faculty member's request, United Faculty may designate a representative to accompany and assist the faculty. Throughout this document, "class days" refers to university class days during the regular fall and spring semesters.

#### **A. Informal Procedures**

A student who feels academically aggrieved due to something that a faculty member has/has not done shall make every reasonable effort to resolve the grievance informally with the faculty member of record.

1. The student must inform the faculty member of his/her grievance in writing, via electronic communication, within ten class days of the first day of the semester following the semester or summer session in which the alleged offense occurred.
2. The faculty member must respond within 10 class days from the date notification of the grievance is sent by the student unless both student and faculty member agree in writing to continue the informal process. If the student is an undergraduate, the faculty member's department head may act as a mediator to help the faculty member and student come to an informal resolution of the issue. If the student is a graduate student, the Associate Dean of the Graduate College or the faculty member's department head may assume the mediator role as appropriate.
3. If the student remains dissatisfied with the resolution of the grievance proposed by the faculty member or with the solution offered through the mediated process described above, the student may initiate the first stage of a formal appeal, using the procedures described under Section C below.

#### **B. Formal Procedures**

A student who is dissatisfied with the resolution of her/his grievance using the informal procedures specified in Section B above may initiate a formal process by completing the Appeal Form available in the following locations:

- The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, Seerley Hall Room 1
- online at [http://www.uni.edu/provost/sites/default/files/pdf/files/formal\\_grievance\\_form\\_2013a.pdf](http://www.uni.edu/provost/sites/default/files/pdf/files/formal_grievance_form_2013a.pdf)
- in the academic department

The Appeal Form requires the student to state the specific nature of the grievance and to describe, in detail and through specific examples, how the faculty member's policy or conduct has affected the student's academic outcomes. Only evidence pertinent to the grievance will be considered.

If the student at any point in the grievance process wishes to withdraw his/her grievance, he/she must notify all parties involved of his/her intent to do so. A copy of this notification shall be kept in the student's departmental file for ten years. If there is a dispute about the timeliness of sending the Appeal Form, the person responsible for sending the Appeal Form at that step has the burden of proving that the Form was sent within the time limit specified. Throughout this policy, whenever the use of e-mail or electronic transmission of a document is specified it indicates that the official, assigned UNI e-mail address for the student, faculty member or relevant administrator must be used for these communications.

#### **Pre-Hearing Stages of Formal Procedure**

1. The first stage of the formal appeal must be initiated within five class days following the completion of the informal appeal process. The formal process is initiated by the student sending the Appeal Form electronically to the faculty member involved in the grievance at the faculty member's UNI email address.
2. The faculty member has 10 class days from the initiation of the formal process to complete the response section of the Appeal Form and send it to the student electronically at the student's assigned, official UNI e-mail address. In the response, the faculty member must either propose a means of redressing the grievance or give reasons why s/he believes the grievance is without merit or cannot be redressed.
3. If the student is satisfied, s/he need take no further action. If no further action is taken within ten class days of the faculty member sending the completed Appeal Form, the student will be deemed to have agreed with the faculty member's response. If the faculty member's response proposes redress requiring an action by the faculty member or student then the responsible party has ten class days from the date the Appeal form is sent by the faculty member to the student to take such action. If the faculty member fails to complete an action proposed in the agreed upon redress within ten class days then the student may resume the appeal process by sending the Appeal Form to the faculty member's department head

with an explanation for reviving the appeal. If the student fails to complete an action necessary to achieve the agreed upon redress within ten class days of the sending of the Appeal Form by the faculty member the grievance will be considered closed.

4. If the student is dissatisfied with the faculty member's response on the Appeal Form, the student must indicate continuing disagreement on the Appeal Form and send it to faculty member's department head electronically within ten class days of the date the Form is sent by faculty member to the student.
5. Within ten class days (the consultation period) of the Appeal Form being sent by the student to the department head, the department head must consult with the student and faculty member separately to discuss the basis for grievance. Based on Appeal Form and consultations, department head has two alternative courses of action.
  - a. If the department head concludes the grievance is unfounded or without merit, s/he must complete the department head's section of the Appeal Form, indicating reasons for his/her judgment. The Appeal Form must be sent to the student electronically with a copy to the faculty member, within five class days of the expiration of the consultation period. If the student is satisfied, s/he need take no further action. If no further action is taken within ten class days of the department head sending the completed Appeal Form, the student will be deemed to have agreed with the department head's response.
  - b. If the department head concludes there are reasonable grounds for student's complaint, the department head may meet with the faculty member and student separately or together to facilitate resolution of the grievance to which all parties must agree. Such facilitation must conclude within ten class days (the facilitation period) of the end of the consultation period, unless both faculty member and student agree in writing to extend the time for facilitation. In no case may the facilitation period exceed 15 class days. If a resolution is reached with which both parties agree, a written statement of resolution will be appended to the Appeal Form, which will be kept in student's departmental file for ten years. Alternatively, if the department head is unable to resolve the grievance by mutual agreement between faculty member and student within the specified facilitation period, the department head must complete the section of Appeal Form indicating no mutual resolution was possible and making any recommendations for resolution of the grievance. The department head must send the Form electronically to the student grievant, faculty member and appropriate dean within 5 class days of completion of facilitation period. For graduate students, the appropriate dean is Dean of the Graduate College.
6. Within 10 class days (consultation period) of Appeal Form being sent by department head to the dean, the dean must consult with student and faculty member separately to discuss the basis for the grievance. Based on Appeal Form and meeting with student, the dean has 2 alternative courses of action.
  - a. If the dean concludes the grievance is unfounded or without merit, s/he must complete the dean's section of the Appeal Form, indicating reasons for his/her judgment. The Appeal Form must be sent electronically to the student, to the faculty member and the faculty member's department head within five class days of completion of the consultation. If the student is satisfied, s/he need take no further action. If no further action is taken within ten class days of the dean sending the completed Appeal Form, the student will be deemed to have agreed with the dean's response.
  - b. If the dean concludes there are reasonable grounds for the student's complaint, the dean may either meet with the faculty member and student separately or together to facilitate resolution of the grievance to which all parties must agree. Such facilitation must conclude within ten class days (the facilitation period) of the end of the consultation period, unless both faculty member and student agree in writing to extend the time for facilitation. In no case may the facilitation period exceed 15 class days. If a resolution is reached with which both parties agree, a written statement of resolution will be appended to the Appeal Form, which will be kept in the student's departmental file for ten years.
  - c. Alternatively, if the dean is unable to resolve the grievance issue by mutual agreement between faculty member and the student within the period of time specified in paragraph b above, the dean must complete the appropriate section of Appeal Form indicating that no mutual resolution was possible and making any recommendations s/he has for resolution of the grievance. The dean must send the Form electronically to the student grievant, the faculty member, the faculty member's department head, and the Executive Vice President and Provost within five class days of completion of the facilitation period.

7. Upon receipt of the Appeal Form, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost will send a copy of the Form to the pool of potential Appeals Board members and will initiate the Academic Appeals Board process within ten class days of receipt of the Form.

### **Membership of the Board**

The Committee on Committees will hold elections each year to create a pool of ten faculty who can serve as appeal board members in the event a student files a grievance appeal with the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. The pool shall consist of two faculty representatives who have been duly elected by and from graduate instructional faculty of each undergraduate college and two representatives who have been elected at large. Faculty members are initially elected for a 3-year term and may be elected for additional 3-year terms. The faculty members shall be tenured at the rank of assistant professor or higher. The Chair of the Board shall be elected annually from among the pool of ten elected faculty members.

All student members shall be appointed by Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) Senate. Student members are appointed for one-year terms; students may be reappointed for additional one year terms. The President of the NISG will notify the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost of the names and contact information of the students who have been appointed at the start of each academic year. The Student Academic Appeals Board has final student/faculty authority for adjudicating student academic appeals, except as provided in Part E of this policy. A student academic appeal will be heard by a panel consisting of 5 faculty members drawn from the pool and 4 students who are of the same status, undergraduate or graduate, as the student making the appeal to the Board.

When notified of an appeal by the Provost's office, the Chair will randomly select 4 faculty members from the pool to constitute the panel and will notify designated administrative assistant for the Board in the provost's office, who will contact selected panel members. The president or vice president of NISG will notify designated administrative assistant with names of designated student representatives for the panel. If a faculty member or student who has been selected for the panel has a conflict of interest, s/he shall recuse him/herself from the Board and not be involved in deliberations involving the Appeal. A conflict of interest for faculty members in the pool is created when the grievance is against a faculty member in the same department, one with whom the faculty member collaborates on scholarly work, or to whom the faculty member is related by blood, marriage or other personal relationship or if the grievant is an advisee, current student of the panel member or is related by blood, marriage or other personal relationship. A conflict of interest for a student panel member is created when s/he has a familial, romantic or friend relationship with the grievant or is in a course with the faculty member, is advised by the faculty member or is related by blood, marriage or other personal relationship to the faculty member.

If a member of the faculty or student pool is unable to fulfill her/his duties or if the faculty or student member has been derelict in his/her duties such as by nonattendance at hearings which have been confirmed, then, as applicable, either (1) the faculty member may be permanently removed from the pool by a majority vote of faculty members, including Chair of the Board, or (2) student member may be permanently removed from the pool by majority vote of the student members and Chair of the Board. If a faculty or student member is permanently removed, the body responsible for electing or appointing that person will be notified by the Chair of the Board of the need for a replacement.

### **Student Appeal Board Procedures.**

The Executive Vice President and Provost or his/her designee places a case on the Board docket, arranges the time and place for the hearing, and provides materials for Board review prior to the hearing. Notice of the hearing and rules governing the Board are available in advance to both parties. The hearing will be held within 20 class days after the appeal has been filed with the Office. The Board Chair in consultation with the Provost or designee has discretionary power to delay the hearing due to mitigating circumstances. Hearings are closed to the public. Only individuals with a specific role in the hearing, as described in these procedures, may be present.

In addition to parties to the grievance, their witnesses and advisors, and members of the appeal board, a staff member from the Executive Vice President and Provost's office will be present to make an audio recording of proceedings and the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs or designee will be present to answer procedural questions. In the event that student or faculty member brings an attorney as an advisor, University Counsel will also be present at the hearing. The audio recording is a confidential record and will not be disclosed except as required by law. After resolution of the appeal, the recording will be maintained in the Office of Executive Vice President and Provost for 7 years. If the faculty member and/or the student prepares a written statement for presentation at the hearing, the other party to the grievance will be provided a copy of the written statement at least 2 class days prior to the hearing. Both parties to the appeal have the right to present additional evidence to the Board, subject only to the Board's judgment that such evidence is relevant to the case. Additional evidence may include testimony by members of the university community (students, faculty, staff). In making judgments on the relevance of such evidence including testimony, the Board will, consistent with the gravity of such proceedings, admit such evidence unless it is clearly not relevant to determining the outcome of the appeal. Generally, parties are limited to 15 minutes for presentation of their case.

The student may be accompanied to the appeals hearing by an advisor, who may be an attorney. If a student will be advised by an attorney, written notice must be provided to the Executive Vice President and Provost or designee at least 2 class days before the hearing. The Chair of the Board will be notified by the Executive Vice President and Provost or designee. The advisor cannot address the review panel, examine witnesses, ask questions of any participants or otherwise interrupt or interfere with conduct of the hearing. A student may ask for one recess, not to exceed 10 minutes, to consult with her/his advisor outside the hearing room. It is the student's responsibility to make the advisor aware of her/his role in the appeal process. The Chair of the Board may exclude the advisor from the hearing if s/he does not comply with these rules.

The faculty member may also be accompanied to the hearing by an advisor, such as a representative from United Faculty or private attorney. The advisor cannot address the review panel, examine witnesses, ask questions of any participants or otherwise interrupt or interfere with conduct of the hearing. A faculty member may ask for one recess, not to exceed 10 minutes, to consult with her/his advisor outside the hearing room. It is faculty member's responsibility to make the advisor aware of her/his role in the appeal process. The Chair of the Board may exclude the advisor from the hearing if s/he does not comply with these rules. Both parties to the appeal have the right to ask questions of the other during the hearing. Questions must be relevant to the issues of the appeal. The members of the Board may question both parties to the appeal. Questions must be relevant to issues of the appeal. Whenever the Appeals Board feels the need for expert advice within a particular area of scholarship, the Board shall have the authority and the University shall provide necessary means, to seek advice from experts whether or not associated with the University. Upon request from the Board, the faculty member shall make available any records pertinent to the appeal. The confidentiality of these records will be safeguarded. Failure to provide records without sufficient cause may result in finding in favor of the student at discretion of the Appeals Board. The student bears the burden of persuasion. Board members will be persuaded by clear and convincing evidence that the faculty member has acted arbitrarily or unfairly. "Clear and convincing" evidence means Board members must believe that the facts alleged are highly probably or reasonably certain.

Appeals are decided by a majority vote of a quorum of the Board. A quorum consists of six members, excluding the Chair, at least three of whom must be faculty. The Board's ruling and the reasons for the decision are reported in writing to both parties, to the faculty member's department head and dean (and Dean of the Graduate College as appropriate), and to the Executive Vice President and Provost. If the Appeals Board makes a decision that a grade must be changed, the Registrar receives a copy of the decision authorizing a change in the grade on the student's official records. If the grade change decision by the Appeals Board affects a decision by the Committee on Admission, Readmission and Retention

(CARR) regarding suspension of a student from the University, the CARR should also receive a copy of the decision so that it can reevaluate the suspension decision.

### **Appeal Based on Violations of Student Academic Appeals Board Procedures**

Within fifteen class days of being notified of the Board's decision, either party may appeal the decision of the Board on the grounds that stated procedures were not followed. An appeal is initiated by filing a written statement with the Office of the President of the university which clearly outlines the claimed violations of procedure and indicates how the procedural violation prejudiced the decision of the Board. The President or her/his designee will examine the transcript of the Board proceedings created from the recording and all exhibits entered as evidence to make a decision. A decision must be made and communicated within ten working days of the receipt of the appeal. The President or designee may either remand the case back to the Board with direction to reconsider the case in the light of specified procedural problems or uphold the Board's decision as procedurally sound. The substance of the Academic Appeals Board's decision cannot be appealed.

### **Extension of Time Limits**

It may be necessary, in the interest of justice, to extend a specified time limit when the parties involved in a grievance cannot be reached in a timely fashion by telephone, mail, email or other form of communication, or when the principal(s) may be absent from the campus or temporarily indisposed due to illness, accident, injury or other extenuating circumstances. Time limits may be extended in these circumstances by the Executive Vice President and Provost or his/her designee, as appropriate.

### **Special Procedures for Make-Up Work Grievances Arising from Absences**

Should an instructor refuse to allow a student to make up missed work, the instructor's decision can be appealed by the student using the grievance process outlined below. This process reflects constraints that both instructors and students face in dealing with timely make up of missed work: The student must contact instructor, instructor's department head, instructor's dean, and a Northern Iowa Student Government Executive Officer in writing electronically requesting a review of the instructor's decision within three (3) class days of the denial of make-up work. The NISG Executive Officer will organize a meeting between student, instructor, instructor's department head, and a minimum of two (2) tenured faculty members drawn from the pool of faculty elected to serve on the Academic Appeals Board and one student appointed to the Academic Appeals Board within two class days of receipt of the letter. The meeting shall take place within 5 class days of receipt of appeal letter. At the meeting the NISG Executive Officer will attempt to facilitate informal resolution of the situation.

If no informal resolution is reached at the meeting, the 3-person committee (2 faculty and student representative) shall designate a chair of the committee, and review cause of absence and instructor's reasons for denial and stated policies regarding attendance and make up work. This committee will render a final decision on whether student will be allowed to make up missed work within 2 class days of the meeting. This decision is final and binding upon instructor and student. Any make-up work or exam must be equivalent in academic demand to original assignment or exam, although it may differ in form. The specific findings of the committee will be strictly confidential, and reported only to the student, instructor, department head, and instructor's dean to ensure that the committee's decision is acted upon in cases where a student's appeal is granted. Failure of a faculty member to comply with the committee's decision to allow make-up work will provide the student with grounds for an academic grievance in accordance with the terms of this policy. Faculty Senate, approved April 16, 2012 President's Cabinet, approved August 6, 2012. *For more information please refer to the [Graduate Academic Grievance website](#).*