



**NORWICH**  
**UNIVERSITY™**

*Expect Challenge. Achieve Distinction.*

# STAFF HANDBOOK

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February 25, 2008

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# Staff Handbook

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## **Welcome to Norwich University**

Norwich University is the oldest private military college in the United States. Students who enroll in the Corps of Cadets follow a disciplined military regimen, while civilian students lead a more traditional collegiate lifestyle. Both groups reside on the Northfield campus, attending classes and participating together in sports and other activities. Norwich also offers online continuing education, professional training, and graduate degree programs for the adult student.

Few American institutions of higher learning as old as Norwich University still closely adhere to the educational principles of its founders. Norwich is one of the exceptions and in a very substantial sense the institution today is the lengthened shadow of its founder, Captain Alden Partridge. The educational philosophy of Alden Partridge continues to guide Norwich University on its 188th anniversary and serves as a touchstone by which the university can be measured and appraised.

Captain Alden Partridge (1785-1854) probably did more than any other individual to promote military education in civilian institutions in the United States prior to the Civil War. Partridge originated a novel system of education which combined civilian and military studies in order to produce enlightened and useful citizen-soldiers. Like John Milton, Alden Partridge saw the ideal education as a liberal one which prepares youth for the responsibilities of peace and war. The fundamental promise of Partridge's thinking was that education must prepare youth "to discharge, in the best possible manner, the duties they owe to themselves, to their fellow-men, and to their country."

Today, Norwich University still closely adheres to the purposes and precepts laid out by its founder Alden Partridge in 1819. The system of education articulated by Partridge was so broad, sensible, flexible, and visionary that it continues to have extraordinary currency.

## **Statement of Guiding Values**

Norwich University is a diversified academic institution that educates traditional age students in a Corps of Cadets or as civilians, and adult students. Norwich identifies the following as our guiding values.

1. We are men and women of honor and integrity.  
We shall not tolerate those who lie, cheat, or steal.
2. We are dedicated to learning, emphasizing teamwork, leadership, creativity, and critical thinking.
3. We respect the right to diverse points of view as a cornerstone of our democracy.
4. We encourage service to nation and others before self.
5. We stress being physically fit and drug free.

6. To live the Norwich motto, -- I will try! – meaning perseverance in the face of adversity.
7. We stress self-discipline, personal responsibility, and respect for law.
8. We hold in highest esteem our people and reputation.

### **Vision Statement**

Norwich University will be a learning community; American in character yet global in perspective; engaged in personal and intellectual transformation and dedicated to knowledge, mutual respect, creativity and service.

### **Mission Statement**

To give our youth an education that shall be American in its character – to enable them to *act* as well as to *think* – to *execute* as well as to *conceive* -- “to tolerate all opinions when reason is left free to combat them” – to make moral, patriotic, efficient, and *useful* citizens, and to qualify them for all those high responsibilities resting upon a citizen of this free republic.

First Published – 1843 Catalog

### **Institutional Priorities = I<sup>5</sup>**

Improve Learning

Inspire Students

Information Technology for All

Internationalize the Campus

Invest Strategically

Revised 6/2005

## **Preface**

The policies in this handbook apply to Norwich University staff,\* both exempt and non-exempt.

The Norwich University Staff Handbook is a compilation of information that has been developed to guide employees, supervisors, and managers in the Human Resource functions of the University.

Within these pages, you will find answers to many personnel questions, both routine and otherwise. We trust that you can rely on the Handbook as a valuable resource to help maintain the healthy condition of our University as a place where people can feel good about what they do. We believe that this Handbook will help clarify practices and promote consistency for all staff employees.

However, not every question can be answered by reading this handbook. If you are unable to find the reference you need, or if you wish to have further clarification of any Norwich policy, please see your supervisor or the University Human Resources Director.

These policies supersede any policy statements issued prior to January 1, 2008, and include those policies in effect on that date.

This handbook is current as of February 25, 2008, and should not be relied on for current information after that date.

Norwich University reserves the right to make policy changes which it considers in the best interest of the Norwich community, and will attempt to communicate to employees any changes in these policies as they occur. Amendments/new policies immediately will be put on line and shared with all departments for insertion in the loose leaf version of the handbook maintained by each department. Staff members should consult those sources to find updated policy information.

This policy handbook does not constitute a commitment to any terms and conditions of employment and the University remains free to change those terms and conditions. This handbook is not a contract.

*\*Policies for faculty can be found in the [Faculty Manual](#)*

## **Some Key Definitions For The Handbook**

### **Regular employee:**

An employee is considered to be employed in a regular capacity if she/he is hired for an annual continuing position.

### **Exempt employee:**

Staff paid on a salary basis under contract and not entitled to overtime payment as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **Non-exempt employee:**

Staff paid hourly and entitled to payment for any approved overtime hours worked as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **Part-time employee:**

Anyone who works fewer than 37.5 hours per week on a regular year round basis. (Minimum of 100% of an academic year)

**Full-time employee:**

Anyone who works 37.5 hours or more per week on a regular year round basis. (Minimum of 100% of an academic year)

**Temporary employee:**

Anyone who is hired to work for a specified short period of time.

**Fiscal year:**

June 1 - May 31

**Benefit entitlement:**

Any employee who works 20 hours or more per week on a regular annual basis. There is a waiting period for some of these benefits.

**Family member:**

Spouse or civil union partner; unmarried children under the age of 19 or unmarried children under 25 who are full time students and who are dependents as defined by the IRS.

**FTE:**

Full-time Equivalent

# **I. Staff Compensation Policy**

## **Position Classification**

It is the policy of Norwich University to compensate its employees in a manner that:  
rewards them for their contribution to achieving its mission and goals;  
motivates superior performance, continuous improvement and development, innovation, creativity, and teamwork; and  
is competitive, equitable and in compliance with relevant legal requirements.

## **Components of Compensation**

The total compensation of Norwich University employees includes the components of:

- pay
- benefits
- retirement
- tuition scholarship

## **Pay Plan**

The pay plan for Norwich University staff is determined based on an analysis of relevant labor market pay practices and funding available. Individual salaries are based on a combination of factors including:

- analysis of position responsibilities
- marketplace conditions
- individual development and performance
- consideration of internal pay equity among existing comparable positions

## **Program Levels**

There are five levels, as follows:

- Executive
- Manager/Senior Professional
- Administrator/Professional
- Administrative Support
- Service

## **Position Evaluation**

Position evaluation is the systematic process of rating positions in relation to one another in order to determine relative worth. Positions are evaluated based on compensable factors including:

- knowledge and skills
- experience
- problem solving
- independence of action

- policy development
- initiation and management of change
- predictability of events
- budget responsibility
- responsibility for the work of others
- planning

Executive level positions will be evaluated based on simple ranking by the President.

All other positions will be evaluated and assigned to appropriate levels based on an analysis of the compensable factors distinguishing them.

### **Salary Bands and Ranges**

Each level is assigned a salary band; each band has one or more established salary range zones. Salary bands and range zones will be determined based on market surveys and the availability of funds in the University budget.

### **Adjustments: Salary Structure**

The salary bands and range zones will be adjusted periodically based on salary surveys of comparable positions in selected institutions/organizations.

All salaries will be within the appropriate established bands/range zones unless an exception is made by the President.

Any annual salary increases granted by the University normally take effect on June 1, at the beginning of a new fiscal year, or may be deferred until October 1, when the fall enrollment figures are known. The University budget committee will include its recommendation for salary increases in the budget proposed to the President for each fiscal year.

### **Adjustments: Individual Salaries**

Periodic adjustment will be made to individual salaries based on consideration of market movement, inflation, individual development and performance, and funding available.

### **Non-Base Building Compensation**

Non-base building (i.e., bonus) lump-sum amounts may be awarded from time to time, at the discretion of the President, to recognize outstanding contributions of individuals and/or teams.

### **Administration**

This policy will be administered by the Director of Human Resources with the assistance/oversight of the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer (CFO). A standing committee, the Compensation Policy Advisory Committee (CPAC) will be advisory to the CFO and the President to assist in the implementation of this policy and to recommend appropriate modifications.

## **Appeals**

Employees may request review of a personnel action taken in accordance with this policy. An employee who has a complaint shall discuss it with the immediate supervisor in an effort to have the complaint resolved informally. Failing resolution, the complaint may be submitted in writing, within thirty calendar days of the event which gave rise to the complaint, to the Director of Human Resources who will investigate and make a recommendation to the Chief Financial Officer and the President. Their decision shall be final.

## **Implementation Procedures**

### **Position Descriptions**

Written position descriptions will be maintained in each department/division and updated as necessary. Copies of new position descriptions and updates are to be provided to the Human Resources office.

The Position Description is comprised of Part I, the Position Analysis Questionnaire (PAQ) and Part II, the Summary.

Position descriptions will be reviewed and updated, if necessary, every two years.

### **Position Evaluation**

All positions will be evaluated and assigned to salary levels, unless an exception is made by the President. An up-to-date position description will provide the basic document upon which the evaluation is made and may be supplemented by interviews with appropriate individuals, including the incumbent and the supervisor.

An incumbent or an individual may initiate a position evaluation request to the Director of Human Resources. Upon movement of the position to a higher level, the Director of Human Resources may approve a salary increase, if appropriate.

### **Performance Appraisal**

The performance of each employee shall be evaluated at least annually and evaluations shall be used as the basis for appropriate personnel actions.

Norwich University's performance appraisal process:

- Encourages coaching and communication

- Measures factors that the University, its supervisors, and employees agree are important;

- Involves employees in the development of work standards by which their performance will be judged;

- Uses one generic format for use in all departments, for all employees, and permits departments to supplement or modify the format as appropriate;

- Involves employees themselves, customers, peers, subordinates, team members, and appropriate others in the review of employee performance;

- Provides on-going training for supervisors and staff.

Non-exempt employees are evaluated following the end of their initial evaluation period (90 days) and then annually based on their anniversary date of hire.

Exempt employees are evaluated annually in March and April.

Senior administrators may establish annual review periods for all employees of units in their area of responsibility that differ from those indicated above with the concurrence of the Director of Human Resources.

## **II. Hours of Work and Overtime**

### **Exempt Employees**

The normal full time workweek is 40 hours but it is understood that often additional hours of work are required to complete the responsibilities of the job.

### **Non-Exempt Employees**

The workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at 12:00 midnight the following Saturday. Within this workweek, you will be scheduled for your regular hours. Most full time office staff work 37.5 hours per week; 7.5 hours per day with one unpaid hour for lunch, five days a week. Full time Facilities Operations staff work 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day with one unpaid hour for lunch, five days a week.

Work schedules are assigned by the supervisor and may be changed as necessary to meet the needs of the University. Whenever possible, employees will be given two weeks notice of any schedule change, but sometimes immediate changes must be made. If you are unhappy with your schedule, you are encouraged to discuss it with your supervisor. An effort will be made to consider your wishes in scheduling matters, but other considerations may make it necessary to assign you a schedule, which is not what you prefer. The final decision on scheduling questions rests with the supervisor.

The regular office hours at the university are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and in Facilities Operations the hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There are exceptions to these hours to meet the needs of the University. Where possible flexible hours may be scheduled to meet the needs of the employee and the University.

### **Rest Period**

Full-time non-exempt employees are entitled to one 15-minute rest period per day. The time at which rest periods are taken is up to the supervisor. They cannot accumulate for future time off. Abuse or over extension of rest periods may result in disciplinary action.

### **Overtime**

To the extent possible, all work will be completed within regularly scheduled hours. At times, however, there are situations that require supervisors to authorize overtime for employees.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to distribute overtime fairly among all qualified employees. Any overtime worked must have prior approval of the supervisor. If overtime is needed and there are no volunteers, supervisors may require an employee to work.

Non-exempt employees who work overtime will be paid at one and one-half times their usual hourly rate for all hours worked over forty in a work week. All other hours will be paid at the regular rate.

### **Compensatory time (comp time)**

Federal wage and hour laws state clearly that comp time may be granted to an employee only if it is taken in the same workweek that the overtime is worked. For additional information go to the United States Department of Labor's website at: [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov). It is not legal and against University policy to take comp time except in the same week in which it is earned.

### **Holiday Pay**

Employees are paid at the regular hourly rate for the number of hours in an average work day when they are given a University Holiday off. Non-Exempt employees required to work on the holiday will be paid their regular hourly rate for the holiday plus 1.5 times their regular hourly rate for each hour worked (for a total of 2.5 times their regular hourly rate).

### **Shift Differential**

Non-exempt employees whose total work shift is outside of the normal work day hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. will be paid a shift differential of \$.35/hr.

## **III. Payroll**

### **Non-Exempt Employees**

Employees are paid biweekly (every other Thursday, 26 payrolls per full year) on the basis of time sheets signed and submitted to the Payroll Office, Jackman Hall, Room 322, by the supervisor. All time sheets must be in that office by the Friday before payday for check distribution the following Thursday. To assure proper and timely payment, time sheets must be completed following instructions for recording hours. Paper copies of time sheets are available in the Payroll Office. Time sheets are also available online on the Human Resources page at <http://www.norwich.edu/about/hrforms.html>.

### **Exempt Employees**

Employees are paid monthly (the last working day of each month, 12 payrolls per full year) on the basis of one twelfth of their annual salary as stated in their contract or letter of agreement. Contracts are issued when someone is first hired or if there is a change in position and responsibilities. Letters are issued annually thereafter stating any change in salary.

### **All Employees**

Payroll checks are distributed through the campus mail to the employee's department. However, employees are encouraged to use direct deposit to their checking and/or savings account so that wages and salary are automatically deposited at their bank or credit union and the mail merely gives notice that this has been done. This prevents lost checks, and when employees are away from campus there is no worry about whether checks will be deposited in a timely manner. Check with the Payroll Office, room 324 in Jackman Hall, Ext. 2052, on how to take advantage of this process. If you wish to have your check mailed to your home address, please send a written request to the Payroll Office.

## **IV. Staff Benefits**

Norwich University is committed to attracting and retaining quality staff. One way that the University supports this goal is to offer the best total compensation program it can within its means. It is in this spirit that the University offers an array of employee benefits and services. While the programs are designed to enhance your financial security, quality of life, and well being they also add significantly to your total compensation.

### **Eligibility**

All Regular Employees (see Definitions) who work twenty hours a week or more unless specifically noted otherwise are eligible for benefits.

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment forms are now available online and must be completed by each new employee within 30 days from date of hire to activate benefits. Open enrollment begins in November of each year and every eligible employee must again complete the online enrollment process.

### **Cafeteria Plan of Benefits**

Under this plan the University allocates a tax free Monthly Benefit Allowance (MBA) to each eligible employee when hired and annually at the beginning of each plan year, January 1. You, the employee, can then use your benefit dollars to elect, within broad parameters, the benefits that best meet your current needs. Under this cafeteria plan the LIFE, and LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE are mandated or core benefits. Additional information on the Cafeteria Plan and insurance is provided in Summary Plan Descriptions given to all new employees and available at: <http://www.norwich.edu/about/hrforms.html>. READ THE CAFETERIA PLAN INFORMATION CAREFULLY EACH YEAR. If you elect not to allocate all of your monthly benefit allowance to the choices under the plan, you may take the remaining allowance in cash. Cash is taxable.

### **Life Insurance and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance**

All eligible employees are covered under the plan the first day of the month coincident with or next following the date they commence employment. Insurance is one times your base annual salary (minimum \$15,000) rounded to the next highest thousand.

### **Long Term Disability Insurance**

All eligible employees are covered under the plan the first day of the month coincident with or next following the date they commence employment. This insurance replaces 70% of your base monthly salary following six months of disability.

### **Health Insurance**

Eligible employees have the opportunity to enroll in health coverage. As of June 1, 2006, two health insurance options are offered: an HMO option using a Vermont based provider network and a Comprehensive option with a national provider network; both are coupled with a Health Savings Account (HSA).

All regular full-time employees must have health insurance coverage either with the University or elsewhere.

## **Dental**

Eligible employees may choose to enroll in this plan that pays 80% of covered expenses with a maximum benefit of \$750 per year per person covered.

## **Flexible Spending Accounts for Health Care and Dependent Care**

These accounts give eligible employees the option to use either monthly benefit dollars or to voluntarily reduce salary to pay for uninsured health care and/or dependent care expenses with before tax dollars. IRS regulations apply to these accounts.

## **Premium Conversion**

Employees may pay for premiums not covered by the monthly benefit allowance with pre-tax dollars from their salary.

## **Retirement Plan**

The University Defined Contribution Retirement Plan matches employee contributions for investments with the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association and College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF). Employees are encouraged to take advantage of this benefit.

Exempt employees may enroll in this plan at the beginning of their contract; non-exempt employees are eligible following the completion of one consecutive year of employment.

The University contributes 1% of salary for eligible employees who enroll in the plan. When you contribute 5% of your gross salary, Norwich contributes an additional 6.5% of your gross salary to your annuity. All contributions are fully vested in you immediately. You may make additional contributions, within established federal guidelines, but the University will not match those contributions. If you choose to contribute less than 5%, the 6.5% is prorated accordingly.

## **Tuition Scholarship**

Regular employees who work at least twenty hours per week are eligible for tuition scholarships at Norwich University.

Exempt employees are eligible for this scholarship at the beginning of their contract; non-exempt employees are eligible following successful completion of a three-month initial evaluation period.

## **Tuition Scholarship for Spouses and Legal Dependents**

Your spouse and legal dependents (defined as children receiving more than half of their support from you and who are declared as dependents for your federal income tax purposes) are eligible for undergraduate tuition scholarships. Your child up to age 24 who is not your dependent is also eligible, but the benefit is taxable as income.

Your spouse is also eligible for graduate level tuition scholarship.

Spouses and dependents of exempt employees are eligible for tuition scholarships when the employee begins employment.

Spouses and dependents of non-exempt employees are eligible for tuition scholarships when the employee has satisfactorily completed one year of continuous employment.

Charges and procedures are the same as they are for employees.

## **Undergraduate Courses and Programs**

The scholarship normally will cover the tuition cost of a course(s) taken for credit per semester.

The University retains the right to limit enrollment in courses or programs and occasionally an employee may be unable to register for a course or program until a later date because of full enrollment.

It is the responsibility of employees to arrange with their supervisor for missed work time to attend classes/residencies. The maximum time an employee may be away from work to attend classes is six hours per week. To meet the demands of a heavy workload the supervisor may require that an employee make up time spent in class and may also limit the number of hours an employee may be absent for classes, labs, field trips, etc.

## **Graduate Courses and Programs**

The scholarship covers tuition cost of programs/courses at the graduate level for employees and their spouses as outlined above. Some or all of the graduate tuition scholarship may be taxable under Federal law, which has changed from time to time. Graduate tuition scholarships are currently considered taxable income to the employee receiving the benefit. The University will work with employees to spread the tax impact of this benefit over the year to avoid heavy unpaid taxes on December 31. Contact the Payroll Office for additional information.

## **Charges**

The employee must pay some costs. The most common charges are listed below. If you have questions about whether other fees will be charged, please contact the Bursar's Office.

- Room and board fees
- Lab fees
- Application fee if you wish to be a matriculating student
- Re-enrollment fees
- A per course charge for summer school courses and continuing education non-credit courses.

Check with either Human Resources or the Bursar regarding specific fees.

## **Procedures**

Admission into degree-granting programs for employees, spouses, and children eligible for tuition scholarship is under the same application process and admissions standards as for other student applicants. Continuing Education enrollment for students not seeking a degree is handled by the Registrar each semester. Tuition scholarships are granted for a semester at a time. Tuition scholarship forms are available in the Human Resources Office and must be completed and submitted to Human Resources for approval each semester.

## **Tuition Exchange**

Norwich University, with several hundred other colleges and universities, participates in the Tuition Exchange Program (TEP). This program is available to college age dependents of full time employees who have worked at the University for a minimum of five years. The dependents can apply for a scholarship at schools in the TEP program. Since this program operates on debits and credits (how many students are coming to Norwich versus how many from Norwich are attending other schools) TEP opportunities are not always available. The Student Financial Planning Office administers this program and has available an up-to-date list of TEP colleges. TEP charges Norwich a small administrative fee for each student accepted into the program and this fee is then charged to the student who has been accepted at a TEP school.

The University also participates in a similar program through the Council of Independent Colleges.

For further information, see the Tuition Exchange Policy at <http://www.norwich.edu/about/pdf/tuitionExchange-0507.pdf> or speak to the Liaison Officer in the Student Financial Planning Office.

## **Staff Development**

The University encourages staff to take advantage of sponsored workshops, seminars, classes and special training sessions to enhance their job skills and their own personal development.

Many of our staff have skills that would benefit the university community and they are encouraged to share these in training sessions. Human Resources would like to hear from staff who are interested in improving their presentation skills while sharing their expertise with their colleagues. We also would like to hear your suggestions on topics for future training.

## **Other Benefits**

### **Computer Loans**

The University has a limited revolving fund that provides interest free loans to assist employees in procuring personal computer equipment.

Exempt staff are eligible for a loan after 90 days of employment and non-exempt staff are eligible after completion of one year of employment. The maximum loan limit is \$3,000 with total repayment due in 30 months. Repayment is taken in equal installments from the employee's salary checks as agreed to in a signed promissory note.

If the employee leaves the University for any reason the loan becomes due and payable. This policy is administered by the Treasurer's Office. See Administrative Memorandum number 37 at [Administrative Manual: Norwich University](#) for details.

### **Second Mortgage Loans**

To provide assistance to first time home buyers, the University provides second mortgages to exempt staff. The maximum amount is \$10,000 for a period of 10 years and the interest rate is 1% below the average of five local banks. Monthly payments, per signed promissory note, are deducted from salary checks. If the employee leaves the University for any reason, the loan becomes due and payable six

months after termination of employment. It is expected that payment will continue for those six months. This policy is administered by the Treasurer's Office. See Administrative Memorandum number 36 at [Administrative Manual: Norwich University](#) for details.

## **Benefits Provided for All Employees**

### **Tax Deferred Annuity**

All employees are eligible to participate in this voluntary salary reduction program and thereby make tax deferred contributions to the Norwich University Tax Deferred Annuity Plan. Contributions are invested in TIAA-CREF retirement annuities.

### **Workers' Compensation**

All employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation law of the state in which they work. This insurance covers necessary medical expenses and provides income for lost time should you suffer an accident or illness related to your employment. Although the University is safety conscious and strives to prevent employment related accidents, they do occur. If you are accidentally injured while working on the job, you must report it to your supervisor as soon as possible, after seeking whatever immediate medical care may be needed. You and your supervisor should come to the Human Resources Office to complete the Employer's First Report of Injury. This report must be sent to the State within 72 hours of the accident. The Human Resources Office will process this report and your claim. The University cannot be held responsible for unreported injuries.

When accidents require lost time from work, the University is proactive and works with the employee and the provider so that the employee can return to work as soon as possible. Whenever possible, we arrange for transitional work that permits employees to be productive even though they are not yet able to perform all the functions of their normal positions.

### **Unemployment Compensation**

All employees are covered under the provisions of the Unemployment Compensation law of the state in which they actually work while performing services for the University. The law provides weekly income to eligible individuals during their periods of full or partial unemployment. In order to establish your eligibility for benefits, you should immediately go in person to the most readily accessible office of the Department of Labor if you work in Vermont, or the corresponding office in the state where you work, to register for work and file your claim. That department will make the decision on your claim.

### **Social Security**

The University matches your contribution to Social Security and Medicare.

### **ID Cards**

All employees are required to obtain a University photo ID card, available through the Norwich University Cadets Card Office. Check with your supervisor on where to call to set an appointment for receiving this card.

In addition to accessing various University events, you may post funds to your ID card for future purchases. The NU Cadets Cash plan allows you to post monies to be used at the Norwich bookstore,

Dewey's uniform shop and other locations. The Sodexo Meal plan allows you to purchase food and beverages at a discount in the Wise Campus Center.

### **Parking Permit**

This is required if your car will be parked on the campus. Parking permit forms are available in the Human Resources Office and are included with new employee information. Permits are sent via campus mail from the Security Office to your department. Abiding by all parking and driving notices on campus is necessary and fines for non-compliance are issued. Chronic non-compliance will lead to revocation of parking privileges or other disciplinary action.

### **Credit Union**

University employees are eligible for membership in the Central Vermont Teachers Credit Union, located in Barre, VT. Their services include savings, personal and auto loans, IRA accounts, etc. Payments for loans and savings may be made by payroll deduction if you wish. To join you must fill out an application card and make a deposit. Application cards are available in the Payroll Office.

### **University Facilities and Events**

University facilities and events are available to employees and their spouses and children. The Photo ID card may be needed to take advantage of these opportunities. You may obtain passes from Human Resources for your spouse or children. Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

**Library** - Once you have your Norwich Photo ID you may request a library card.

**Athletic Facilities** - Pool, racquet ball, running track, exercise equipment, basketball, ice rink, etc. are available for use when not being utilized by students. Check with the Athletic Office at Ext. 2230 regarding open hours for employees to utilize these facilities.

**University events** - Sports events, theater, concerts, speakers, movies. Contact Office of Student Activities for calendar of events.

# V. Leaves & Time Off

## **Vacation Benefits**

The University believes vacation time is important for everyone and that this time granted employees for rest, relaxation and renewal is advantageous for both employees and the University. Therefore, vacation time must be used in the calendar year after the year in which it is accrued for non-exempt employees, or in the fiscal year for which it is granted for exempt employees. Under special circumstances, up to one week may be carried forward with the approval of the employee's supervisor and the Director of Human Resources.

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring, tracking, and approving the use of vacation time. Any use of vacation time requires the permission of your supervisor in advance. You should request vacation time as far in advance of the proposed dates as is feasible. In turn your supervisor should respond to the request promptly. Individual departments may set minimum notification times prior to granting vacation (e.g., 48 hours). Ask for your department's policy.

Under no circumstances will you receive pay instead of vacation while you are employed. Employees who terminate during the year will be compensated only for vacation earned and not used through the date of termination.

When a University scheduled holiday occurs during a paid vacation period the employee will be given the holiday pay and will not have to use vacation time for that day.

Employees on an unpaid leave of absence will not earn vacation time during such leave.

Vacation days earned are prorated based on your full-time equivalency (FTE); the number of days earned is the same for all eligible employees with the same years of service, but the length of each vacation day is equal to the length of an average work day.

## **Vacation Eligibility for Employees with a 12-Month Appointment**

### **Exempt**

Exempt employees are granted 22 vacation days at the beginning of each fiscal year, to be used by the end of that year. The initial grant to new exempt employees is pro-rated based on the date of hire. Exempt employees who leave University employment will have their grant reduced based on the date of separation. Managers or supervisors of exempt employees are responsible for tracking the vacation usage and balances for the exempt staff that report to them.

### **Nonexempt**

Nonexempt employees following successful completion of the Initial Evaluation Period accrue vacation at rates based on length of service, according to the following table:

Years of Service		
0-4	5-14	15+
10 days per year	15 days per year	20 days per year
.833 days per month	1.25 days per month	1.666 days per month

Length of service is determined by the number of fully completed years of continuous service from date of hire to anniversary date of hire for nonexempt employees. If an employee moves from nonexempt to exempt status or vice-versa, years of service remain with the individual.

For nonexempt employees, vacation accrual is calculated by the payroll system each pay period. It cannot be taken before it is earned except that a fraction of a day exceeding one-half may be counted as an earned day. Vacation time may be taken any time after it is earned with supervisor approval. The payroll system will record vacation usage and update the balance shown on the pay voucher based on bi-weekly time reports.

Vacation accrued during any calendar year must be used by the end of the following calendar year.

Part-time regular employees (20 hours a week or more) earn vacation time in the same manner as full-time employees except that the time earned is prorated based on the scheduled work hours per week. Vacation days accrue at the same rate based on years of service as for a full time employee, but the length of a day of vacation is the same as an average work day. For example, an employee scheduled to work 25 hours per week will accrue vacation days that are 5 hours each. For those who do not work a 12 month term of employment the accumulation rates are the same; however, no accrual occurs during months not worked.

## **University Scheduled Holidays**

NOTE: The holiday schedule is published at the beginning of each fiscal year and is available at: <http://www.norwich.edu/about/holiday.html>. The following holidays are observed:

- New Year's Day
- Spring Break Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (2 days)
- Christmas\*

\*Usually the week between Christmas and New Year's is generously declared a holiday by the President; the number of days off is dependent on the day of the week on which the holiday falls.

Nonexempt employees also receive their birthday as a holiday.

## **Sick Leave**

### **Intent**

It is the intent of this policy to provide for salary continuation when an eligible employee must be absent from work due to personal illness or injury, and for absences due to illness or injury of immediate family members. In the case of an employee's extended illness or disability, the benefit is available for up to the six-month Benefit Waiting Period required before eligibility for benefits under the Norwich University Long Term Disability Plan. (Non-exempt employees who do not have sufficient sick leave credit to cover the entire six-month period may be eligible for Shared Leave.) This policy also specifies the rights and benefits for employees when a disability due to illness or injury extends beyond the maximum six-month period of salary continuation.

### **Applicability**

This Employee Medical and Sick Leave Policy applies to all employees of Norwich University that are eligible for employee benefits, including both faculty and administrative staff. This includes all exempt employees on annual contracts for at least half of a full-time schedule, and all nonexempt employees who work 20 hours or more per week on a regular annual basis.

### **Salary Continuation**

The University provides for continuation of an employee's salary when an employee must be absent due to personal illness or injury, including periods of disability due to pregnancy and immediately after the birth of a child. The benefit also includes employee absences to provide direct care to an ill or injured immediate family member, to arrange for longer-term care, or to provide support at the time of surgery. For this purpose, "immediate family" means mother, father, siblings, spouse or civil union partner, children, and legal dependents. Paid Medical and Sick Leave may also be used for employee and family medical appointments that cannot be scheduled during non-work hours.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

When illness or an injury prevents an employee from performing normal job duties, the employee shall notify his or her supervisor as far in advance as possible to allow for rescheduling of work or hiring temporary help. The employee shall notify the supervisor no later than one hour after the employee ordinarily reports to work. The employee shall keep the supervisor informed of the expected date of return to work.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities**

Supervisors are responsible for approving and keeping a record of medical and sick leave usage. The supervisor may, after consultation with the Director of Human Resources, require documentation from a health professional regarding any absence under this policy.

### **Limitations**

Employees who use medical and sick leave for brief absences are expected to continue to meet the work standards for their position.

## **Exempt Employees**

Medical and sick leave may be taken as needed with the approval of the supervisor. In the case of major illness or disability, medical and sick leave may be approved with appropriate medical documentation for up to the entire six-month Benefit Waiting Period for long-term disability benefits.

## **Nonexempt Employees**

Medical and sick leave may be taken as needed with the approval of the supervisor, up to the employee's accrued balance. In the case of major illness or disability, paid leave may be approved with appropriate medical documentation for up to the entire six-month Benefit Waiting Period for long-term disability benefits, using accrued medical and sick leave, other forms of paid leave, or Shared Leave if the employee's own paid leave is exhausted. (Note that even with Shared Leave donations, there may not be sufficient paid leave for the entire six-month period.)

Full time regular non-exempt employees will be credited with one day of medical and sick leave for each month worked. Leave time will be credited but may not be used during the initial evaluation period, normally the first 90 days of employment. Approved leave usage is reported on the biweekly time report. Unused leave is carried over from one year to the next and accumulated up to 180 days. Part time regular employees who work 20 hours per week or more are credited with leave time in the same manner as full time regular employees, except that the time credited is prorated based on the scheduled work hours per week.

At the end of each full calendar year, the Payroll Specialist reviews medical and sick leave records for non-exempt employees. Those who use four or fewer days will be credited with one personal day, and those who use two or fewer days will be credited with two personal days, to be used during the following year. The Payroll Specialist will notify the employee and the supervisor of any personal days earned. These days can be used at a time mutually agreed by the employee and the supervisor.

There is no cash compensation for unused medical and sick leave balances at any time.

## **Employee Sick Leave and Family and Medical Leave**

The provisions for absence from work with pay under this Employee Medical and Sick Leave Policy overlap the Family and Medical Leave Policy, which provides up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave under certain circumstances, as required by State and Federal law, and up to six weeks of paid leave in certain circumstances as required by State law. In cases where an absence qualifies for both Family and Medical Leave and paid medical and sick leave, the paid leave will count toward part or all of the twelve weeks of Family and Medical Leave. Any absence under the Employee Medical and Sick Leave policy of more than one calendar week, and any cumulative use of sick leave above ten workdays in one calendar year must also be documented under the Family and Medical Leave policy provisions.

## **Employment-Related Injuries**

In the case of injuries on the job that require absence from work, absences beyond the first three days are covered under Workers' Compensation insurance rather than under the Employee Medical and Sick Leave Policy. The University covers the first three days of any such absences, with no reduction in any leave balances.

## **Total Disability**

Totally disabled employees will be separated from employment on the date of eligibility for long term disability benefits, unless the University's physician determines, based on the available medical evidence (including a physical examination at University expense if necessary), that recovery sufficient to perform their former duties is likely. In such cases, an unpaid disability leave of absence may be approved for up to one year, with the potential for extension based on the available medical evidence at the end of the first year of leave, for a maximum total of two years of unpaid leave.

## **Partial Disability**

In the case of an illness or injury that prevents an employee from performing his or her full duties, the Director of Human Resources in consultation with the University's physician as necessary will determine what accommodation of the disability is reasonable under the circumstances.

If the employee is able to perform the essential functions of his or her regular position, and it is operationally reasonable for the position to be performed on a part time basis, then the work schedule for the position will be reduced to accommodate the partial disability for a specified period of time. At the end of that time period, the Director of Human Resources will review the situation, in consultation with the University's physician as necessary, and make a new determination under this paragraph.

If the employee is not able to perform the essential functions of his or her regular position or the duties cannot be performed part time, the University will attempt to place the employee in an alternative position. If an alternative position is available, the employee will be placed in that position for a specified period of time. At the end of that time period, the Director of Human Resources will review the situation, in consultation with the University's physician as necessary, and make a new determination under this paragraph. If the employee refuses the offer of an alternative position, the University will separate the employee from employment.

If no alternative position that the employee is able to perform is available, and the University's physician determines based on the available medical evidence (including a physical examination at University expense if necessary) that recovery sufficient to perform the former duties is likely, the employee will be placed on unpaid leave for up to one year, with the potential for extension based on the available medical evidence at the end of the first year of leave, for a maximum total of two years of unpaid leave.

If the University's physician determines that recovery from the disability is unlikely and that the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of his or her regular position, and there is no alternative work available to accommodate the partial disability, then the employee will be separated from employment.

## **Employees Returning from Disability Leave**

An employee who is medically cleared by the University's physician and returns to work after a disability leave of absence under this policy shall be entitled to return to their former position or a comparable one at the discretion of the Director of Human Resources.

## **Rehire after Disability**

All former employees, if they are medically cleared by the University's physician to return to work after a separation due to disability and are rehired into an open position, will receive the same credit for their prior service as if they had been on an unpaid leave of absence for the period of separation.

## **Tenured Faculty and Disability**

Regardless of whether a disability leave of absence was approved under the provisions for all employees above or the employee was separated from employment, tenured faculty members will be entitled to return to their former faculty position for three years after the date of eligibility for long term disability benefits if they are medically cleared by the University's physician to resume their full duties.

*History: Staff provisions: Supersedes Staff Personnel Handbook policy dated February 1998. Faculty provisions: New policy. Approved by President: June 26, 2002*

## **Shared Leave**

The purpose of this is to permit a regular nonexempt employee to donate vacation or sick leave, or a regular exempt employee to donate vacation time, to a non-exempt employee whose leave balances may be depleted as a result of severe or life threatening illness or injury. The approved transfer of any such leave may not result in a sick leave balance of less than ten days for the donating employee, and the maximum amount of leave a recipient may receive is 160 days.

## **Eligibility**

The requesting employee must initiate a request to and receive written approval from the Director of Human Resources or a designee of his or her eligibility for the shared leave program before taking any steps to seek donations of leave from fellow employees. To be eligible to receive shared leave, all of the following conditions must apply:

- The requesting employee must have exhausted his or her vacation, sick and personal leave time available, and is seeking the shared leave due to an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition, which is severe or life threatening and involves the employee or the employee's family member.
- The employee must submit a medical certificate from a licensed physician verifying the severe or life threatening nature of the condition and its expected duration.
- The condition is not compensable as work related, an intentionally self-inflicted injury, or an injury received in the course of committing felony or assault.
- The employee has followed institution policies regarding the use of leave time and must not be in a period of any disciplinary actions.

The donating employee may donate any amount of earned leave time provided the donation does not result in the employee's sick leave balance falling below ten days. Written approval of the Director of Human Resources is necessary before any leave can be donated.

All donated leave must be given voluntarily. No employee shall be coerced, threatened, intimidated or financially induced into donating leave for purposes of this program.

Any shared leave not used by the recipient during each incident/occurrence will be returned to the donors.

## **Compassionate Leave**

When there is a death in the immediate family employees may be excused from work with pay for up to three consecutive days. An immediate member of the family is defined for this purpose as your spouse, child, mother, father, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother or sister-in-law, grandparent or grandchild.

With the supervisor's permission, employees may be excused from work with pay for one day to attend the funeral service of a close relative or close friend who is not a member of the immediate family or household.

## **Military Leave**

Norwich is supportive of staff that must be away from their jobs to serve in the armed forces of the United States and ensures that its personnel practices are in compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA).

If you serve in the National Guard or military reserve, you will be granted time off to serve. You may use accumulated leave time or take an unpaid leave of absence. Supervisors may seek to coordinate with military services in arranging time off for active duty that meets the needs of both the University and the military. In all instances, Norwich will make accommodations as required by the USERRA.

If you are a member of a Guard or Reserve unit ordered to duty by the Governor of Vermont or the United States President you will be granted time off. You may use accumulated leave time or take an unpaid leave of absence.

During periods of temporary military duty-limited to ten days of mandatory annual training and ten days of emergency service in any year-all fringe benefits for which you are eligible will continue with Norwich contributions.

## **Volunteer Emergency Service**

If you are a community volunteer fire fighter, EMT, or auxiliary police person and are called from or delayed in reporting to work because of an emergency, you will be paid your straight-time hourly rate or salary rate while absent during your scheduled work hours. You must notify your immediate supervisor if you are, or intend to become, a member of such emergency organizations, so that lateness or absence due to an emergency may be anticipated. Due to work obligations it may be necessary to limit your emergency volunteer time to one agency. Check with your supervisor.

Certain positions, such as those that require your availability for campus emergencies or those where continuous attendance is critical to the department's operation, may be excluded from this policy by the appropriate vice president, director or administrative officer.

When emergency service results in absence or late arrival to work, you must notify the supervisor of the time, place and nature of the emergency as soon as possible.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees called for jury duty should inform their supervisor and Human Resources as soon as notification is received. Except in situations where your presence at the University is needed (as

determined by the court) leave will be granted. Employees are expected to return to work when a court releases them temporarily from jury duty. You will receive your regular straight time earnings for the period you are absent as a juror.

## **Family and Medical Leave Policy**

The University's Family and Medical Leave policy (in compliance with the Federal FMLA of 1993 and the Vermont PFLA of 1991, as amended) provides employees who are eligible for benefits up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave during any twelve month period, if requested, for the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child or to care for such child
- A child's placement with the employee for adoption or foster care
- To care for a spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition
- The employee's own serious health condition

Parental leave for a newborn child or for adoption or foster care placement of a child must be completed within twelve months of the birth, adoption or placement.

Family leave is for a serious health condition which is defined as a health condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing in home care treatment under the direction of a physician.

An employee may elect to substitute any paid vacation, sick or personal leave for all or part of the FMLA leave. Under Vermont law, the University must provide up to six weeks of the leave as paid sick leave.

Spouses employed by the University are jointly entitled to a combined total of twelve weeks of family leave for the birth or placement of a child and elder care. For the care of the spouse or child with a serious health condition or for the employee's own serious health condition, each employed spouse is entitled to a separate twelve-week limit.

Employees are expected to give at least 30 days advance notice of leave to the extent advance notice is possible.

## **Return to Work**

Employees who have taken a family or medical leave will be returned to the same or equivalent position and employment benefits when they return to work at the end of the leave.

## **Benefits During Leave**

Health care benefits (medical, dental, health care flex spending accounts) will be continued on the same basis as if the employee was actively at work. Any employee contributions (per employee's cafeteria plan selection) normally paid through payroll deduction will be owed by the employee on the first of each month of the unpaid leave. If the employee wishes to prepay the contributions (e.g. through increased payroll deductions when the need for unpaid FMLA is foreseeable) that is permissible on request from the employee. All other benefits cease during the unpaid leave.

Should the employee not return to work after the leave for reasons other than health conditions or some other reason beyond the employee's control, the employee will be charged retroactively for the University portion of the health care premium costs during the FMLA leave

## **Request for Leave**

Applications for Family and Medical Leave are available in the Human Resources Office, Jackman Hall, Northfield campus, Ext. 2075

## **Personal Unpaid Leave or Absence**

A leave of absence for compelling personal reasons may be granted if, in the opinion of the supervisor and department head, staffing and workload permit. Normally a personal leave will not be granted for a period exceeding six months. In exceptional cases a personal leave may be extended for a period of time not to exceed a total of one year unpaid leave. An employee will not be granted a leave of absence to accept a temporary or permanent position or to enter into a contractual agreement. The department head and the HR director may waive this provision when it is in the best interest of the University.

## **Benefit coverage during personal leave of absence**

Individuals who are on an unpaid leave are not eligible for University contributions to insurance coverage under the Cafeteria Plan of Benefits or for contributions to the retirement plan.

Individuals may continue group health care and dental coverage while on leave by paying monthly premiums. The employee should contact HR for information regarding continuation of benefits during the leave of absence.

No vacation/sick time is earned during this leave of absence.

## **Reinstatement following leave of absence**

At the time the leave is arranged, the employee and the supervisor/department head should discuss reinstatement at the end of the leave. Normally, the employee will return to her/his position without the loss of seniority.

It is the responsibility of the employee on leave to notify the supervisor/department head one month prior to the anticipated date of return.

An employee who fails to return to work upon the scheduled expiration of an approved leave of absence and who has not obtained an extension will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

## **Request for unpaid leave**

Employee should submit a written request for leave to supervisor/department head stating why leave is needed and for how long and any other pertinent information that would help in considering the request. A copy of this request should also be sent to the HR Director.

## **VI. University Personnel-Related Policies**

### **Hiring Procedures**

See [Administrative Memorandum 2: Personnel Hiring Policies](#).

### **Nepotism**

See [Administrative Memorandum 43: Nepotism](#).

### **Sexual Harassment Policy Information**

See the [Non-Discrimination Policy's - Statement of Prohibited Conduct](#).

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

See the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

### **Harassment Policy**

See the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

### **Policy on a Drug-Free Workplace**

It is the University's intent and obligation not only to provide a drug free, healthy and safe work environment but to have staff and faculty who serve as positive role models for enrolled and prospective students. In this role employees are expected to behave in an exemplary manner and to support, by example, a drug free community (i.e. coming to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol or using these substances at work is strictly prohibited).

The unlawful possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance on University premises or while conducting University business off campus is prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may have legal consequences.

The University recognizes drug/alcohol dependency as an illness and a major health problem as well as a potential safety and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to seek information, referral and assistance from Human Resources, the Counseling Center or the University Chaplain and the health insurance plan as appropriate. Conscientious efforts to seek such help will not jeopardize any employee's job and will not be noted in any personnel record.

Employees must, as a condition of employment, abide by the terms of this policy and report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on campus or off campus while conducting University business. A report of a conviction must be made within five (5) days after the conviction. (This requirement is mandated by the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.)

### **HIV/AIDS Policy**

The University shall treat people with HIV/AIDS the same as people with any other disease that may be contracted by students and employees. People with HIV/AIDS or related diseases will be permitted to

work at and/or enroll in courses unless the student's or employee's personal physician, campus medical personnel or state or federal health officials declare that the disease represents a substantial risk to the health and safety of other members of the community. In such instances, appropriate measures will be taken to protect the institution and the individual.

## **Smoking**

Norwich University buildings are smoke free. Although smoking is permitted outside of buildings, smokers should be at least fifteen feet away from the building and in consideration of those inside buildings, particularly in the summer, should be farther away from the building so that second hand smoke does not waft through the air and into the building. See [Administrative Memorandum 4: Smoking Policy](#).

## **Safety in the Workplace**

The University makes every effort to provide a safe and comfortable environment for every member of the community. It can be kept that way only through the constant attention of all employees who are expected to bring to their job an awareness of safety, and a determination to avoid accidents.

Employees will be instructed in specific safety precautions to be observed in their work area. Supervisors will tell you if you are required to wear any special clothing or equipment. If you are, the University will supply it, but wearing it and using it are your responsibility. In some areas, to comply with the State and Federal regulations, employees may be required to take a test in the proper use, storage and disposal of hazardous material. Employees may be required to successfully pass the test prior to accepting full responsibilities. The University complies with the Right-to Know laws.

If you see a safety hazard, do something about it. If you can't remove it yourself, notify your supervisor or call Facilities Operations, Ext. 2145 and inform them of the specific problem and location.

The University is proud of its safety record. With the help of all employees it can be even better.

## **Children in the Workplace**

While it is recognized that there are extenuating circumstances when it is necessary for an employee to have a child in the workplace, it is also recognized that employees' children in the workplace are distracting and disruptive for colleagues, students and visitors as well as the employee and create an additional liability for the University. Therefore, it is University policy that employees' children are not to be in the workplace. See [Administrative Memorandum 6: Children in the Workplace](#).

## **Pets in the Workplace**

Pets in the workplace are distracting and create a liability for employees and students with allergies to animals. Therefore, it is University policy that pets are not allowed in the workplace. See [Administrative Memorandum 45: Pets in the Workplace](#).

## **Inclement Weather**

Because of the requirement to provide services to students and because of the frequency of poor weather in Vermont, all University employees should be prepared to maintain all normal services for all scheduled hours of operation.

Only the President, or in his absence, the Chief Administrative Officer, may grant exceptions to this policy and unilaterally implement a change in scheduled hours due to inclement weather.

See [Administrative Memorandum 5: Work Schedules - Inclement Weather](#).

## **Business Travel Expense**

See [Administrative Memorandum 35: Travel Policies](#)

## **Military Uniforms**

Employees in some staff positions are required to wear the military uniform and these are provided by the University. It is important that the uniform be worn properly. See [Staff and Faculty Uniform Manual](#).

## **Other Uniforms**

The University provides other uniforms for those who are required to wear them (i.e. facilities and security). Additional information regarding uniforms will be provided by the appropriate department when new employees are hired.

## VII. Employee Relations Policies

### Constructive Discipline

The principle underlying all discipline of Norwich University employees is constructive discipline, not punishment. All constructive action must be undertaken with the primary goal to develop and retain efficient, productive employees. Punitive and other negative motives have no place in constructive discipline. Constructive actions must be fair and not discriminatory. The same standard should be applied to all employees who do similar jobs.

Situations sometimes arise when an employee's job performance or standards of behavior do not meet the standard of the University. It is the intent of the University to coach and counsel employees so that they may overcome work-related shortcomings, strengthen their work performance and achieve success. The following steps are used to coach and counsel employees:

**Step 1 - Oral Discussion** - This discussion takes place between the employee and the supervisor regarding the problem(s), concerns and expectations and the solutions necessary to change job performance or behavior. A written summary of the discussion will be prepared and signed by the employee and the supervisor.

A follow up to the discussion regarding progress made will take place after two weeks.

**Step 2 - Written Reminder** - If problems continue, the supervisor, the employee, and a third party (if requested by the employee or supervisor) will meet again to discuss an agreed upon course of action to be taken. The employee will then receive a written reminder of the extent of the problem(s) and the corrections needed to be undertaken.

A follow up to this reminder will take place after two weeks.

**Step 3 - Decision Leave Day** - If problems continue and no corrective progress has been made, the employee will be granted a decision making leave day to consider whether the employee wants to make the changes necessary to perform the job as expected or resign. The employee will return to work with a written decision regarding whether he/she will meet job expectations or resign from the University.

If the employee decides to remain at the University there will be a follow up discussion within two weeks.

**Step 4 - Dismissal** - If the employee does not meet job expectations because he/she did not or would not change his/her job performance or behavior in meeting job expectations, dismissal will occur.

When employees have corrected performance problems, and there have been no additional written disciplinary statements put in the personnel file for one year, the supervisor will write a letter stating that performance standards are being met, and there is no further need for taking additional steps in the process.

## **Problem Solving Policy**

Norwich University strives to foster an environment in which everyone feels free to bring up professional issues and employment problems for constructive consideration. This policy is intended to cover complaints of an employee relating to:

- Disciplinary actions, including dismissal, demotions, and suspensions.
- Improper and/or unfair departmental policies, procedures, rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes or their improper or unfair implementation.
- Acts of reprisal as a result of using this procedure.
- Acts of reprisal as a result of being a witness or giving information during the informal or formal steps of this policy.
- Problems involving alleged violation of federal and/or state constitutional rights. These do not include situations in which a person believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, age, or veteran status. For complaints involving discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, employees should follow the steps explained in the [Norwich University Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

The following matters are not grievable under this procedure:

- Termination during an initial evaluation period not immediately preceded by continuous employment with Norwich for at least one year.
- The contents of Norwich University policies, procedures, and rules approved by or with the authority of the President and the Board of Trustees.
- The measurement and assessment of work activity through a performance appraisal except where the employee proposes to show the evaluation to be arbitrary (i.e. not done according to sound reason or judgment).
- The methods, means and personnel by which work activities are to be performed, unless the employee proposes to show that her/his health or welfare is endangered, or unless the employee alleges to show that these methods, means, etc., are punitive or arbitrary.
- Termination, layoff, demotion or suspension from duties because of lack of work, reduction in force, job abolition or release from the University as a result of a demonstrable emergency.
- Position classification. (A separate process exists for the appeal of a position classification. See [Norwich University Staff Compensation Policy](#)).

There are three problem solving processes:

- Informal problem solving
- Mediation
- Formal problem solving

Employees who are not satisfied with the outcomes of informal problem solving or mediation may request formal problem solving. All employees may use these processes freely and without fear of punishment or intimidation.

Supervisors are expected to recognize that employees may need assistance in solving problems. All parties involved in problem solving are expected to keep all proceedings confidential. However, frivolous claims may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Note: Staff members who are uncertain whether their complaint may be considered under this procedure are encouraged to seek the advice of the Director of Human Resources.

### **Informal Problem Solving**

Many staff members and their supervisors can solve their problems informally and are encouraged to do so. In addition, supervisors can sometimes help two employees understand and resolve their differences. Informal resolutions are encouraged within each department or division. However, employees are always welcome to discuss their problems directly with Human Resources staff who will work to encourage a mutual understanding and a fair decision.

### **Mediation: An Alternate Dispute Resolution Process**

An employee or a supervisor who does not agree with the outcome of the informal problem solving process may choose mediation as a second step in solving problems. Mediation may also be requested at any stage in the formal problem solving process, and may be recommended by the Director of Human Resources. Both parties and the Director of Human Resources must agree to mediation. Mediation is a voluntary procedure led by a neutral third person to assist in reaching a mutually agreed upon solution. The Director of Human Resources will normally act in this role, but may appoint a mediator.

### **Formal Problem Solving Process**

If a problem is not resolved informally or through mediation, the staff member may choose the formal problem solving process. Norwich University has established this formal internal procedure to resolve, fairly, concerns related to conditions of employment. No one from outside the University may participate in the formal process. Should mediation be requested during the formal stage, outside mediators may be appointed.

**Step I** - Any employee who wishes to use the formal problem solving process should write a letter of complaint to the Department Head within two weeks of completion of the informal solving process or the mediation process. This letter should describe those acts or occurrences the employee questions and explain what she or he wants done. The employee should also send a copy of the letter to the Human Resources Department. The Department Head will investigate the matter and respond in writing with a copy to Human Resources within two weeks.

**Step II** - If the employee who requested formal problem solving does not agree with the Department Head's response, she or he may submit a letter of appeal to the appropriate Senior Staff member within two weeks after the date shown on the written response. The employee should also send a copy of the appeal to the Human Resources Department. The Senior Staff member will investigate the matter and respond in writing, with a copy to Human Resources, within two weeks.

**Step III** - If the employee who requested formal problem solving does not agree with the Senior Staff member's response, she or he may request a hearing on the matter within two weeks after the date of the Senior Staff member's response. The hearing will be conducted by a Hearing Officer appointed by the Director of Human Resources. Hearing Officers, so appointed, neither shall have been involved in nor shall have detailed knowledge of the matter under review. A Hearing Officer is expected to be neutral, unbiased and respected in the Norwich community.

The Hearing Officer will conduct a hearing into the matter within two weeks of the request for a hearing. The requesting employee will present her or his complaint, including supporting information from appropriate witnesses. The supervisor, Department Head, and/or the Senior Staff member will respond to the complaint, and may present witnesses in the response. Each party will have an opportunity to question the other party and any witnesses. The complaining employee is entitled to be accompanied and advised by another University employee of his or her choice, but neither party will be represented by legal counsel. The hearing will be conducted as informally as possible while preserving order and fairness in the proceedings. The Hearing Officer will consider the information presented at the hearing as well as any relevant documents, including the submissions and responses from the previous steps. The Hearing Officer will render a decision within two weeks after the date the hearing is held. A copy of that decision will be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources.

**Step IV** - If the employee who requested formal problem solving does not agree with the Hearing Officer's decision, she or he may request a review of the matter by the President. The President will consider the request, and may elect to uphold or reject the Hearing Officer's decision with or without comment, or may elect to conduct a hearing into the matter following the same process for the hearing as provided at Step III. If the President is the immediate supervisor of the employee who made the complaint, the Director of Human Resources shall appoint a mediator who is not a University employee to hear the complaint and make a recommendation in the matter.

### **Record Keeping**

Records of formal problem-solving procedures are maintained in a separate file in the Human Resources Office under the employee's name.

## **Termination of Employment**

If your employment has been terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, you must return all Norwich University keys, identification cards, credit cards, uniforms and other Norwich property and pay any outstanding fees or charges by the end of your last working day. If you have a promissory note, conditions of repayment are on the signed note and you must discuss these with the Treasurer's Office by the end of the last working day. The supervisor may withhold the employee's final pay check until all Norwich University property which was assigned to the employee has been returned.

### **Involuntary Termination**

#### **During Initial Evaluation Period**

If you are terminated during or at the end of the initial evaluation period because of unsatisfactory job performance, the termination is final and not subject to appeal.

Non-exempt staff will be given notice or pay, to be determined by the supervisor.

Norwich University contribution to benefits will stop on the date of termination.

Employees terminated during the initial evaluation period because of unsatisfactory job performance have no reinstatement rights.

#### **For Cause**

Occasionally employment may be terminated because of poor job performance, improper attitude, misuse of sick leave, habitual lateness, illegal possession or use of alcohol or drugs in the work place, theft, fighting, possession of dangerous weapons, misconduct, violation of Norwich policies, unauthorized access or use of computerized information or for other appropriate reasons. If you are absent for three or more days without notification to your supervisor, you will be considered as having resigned without notice.

#### ***Notice***

When terminated for cause, you will usually be given either two weeks notice or two weeks pay to be determined by the supervisor. If notice is given verbally, the supervisor must follow up with written confirmation of the dismissal, giving the reason for the termination and the date of the last day of employment. (If the cause of termination is sufficiently serious, or a grave violation of Norwich policy, employment may be terminated without either two weeks notice or two weeks pay.) If two weeks notice is given, Norwich contributions to insurance will cease at the end of the two weeks; if pay is given in lieu of notice, Norwich contributions will cease upon the date of termination. Earned and unused vacation will be paid to you unless you have not completed your initial evaluation period.

#### ***Re-employment***

Employees terminated for cause have no re-employment rights.

### **University Financial Difficulty**

Should there be a period of University financial difficulty, the employment of staff may be terminated.

## **Selection**

Selection is based on quality of job performance, experience in and ability to perform the remaining work and length of service. Regular staff will receive preference for continued employment over staff in an initial evaluation period.

## **Notice**

You must be notified at least four weeks in advance or receive four weeks pay in lieu of notice, to be determined by the supervisor.

## **Re-employment**

A list of staff whose employment has been terminated will be maintained by Human Resources. For six months after the date of termination, each person on the list will be given preference for job referrals and interviews based on qualifications, experience, and physical ability to perform the duties of the job.

## **Reorganization and Other Similar Circumstances**

During periods of reorganization it may be necessary to terminate employment of staff members. If this becomes necessary, the following provisions will apply.

## **Selection**

Whenever possible, selection will be based on the quality of the job performance, experience in and ability to perform the remaining work and length of service. Regular staff will receive preference for continued employment over staff in an initial evaluation period.

## **Notice**

Notice of termination or payment in lieu of notice (to be determined by the supervisor) should be given according the following procedure: if you have

less than two years of service and have completed an initial evaluation period, you will be given a minimum of one month notice of termination

at least two years of service but less than six, you will be given a minimum of two months notice of termination

six or more years of service, you will be given a minimum of three months notice of termination.

## **Voluntary Termination**

### **Notice**

Non-exempt employees who leave a position voluntarily are asked to give a minimum of two weeks notice.

Exempt employees who leave a position voluntarily are asked to give a minimum of thirty days notice.

Norwich University contribution to benefits will not continue after the date of termination.

### **Re-employment**

If an employee has two years previous service and returns to work at Norwich within two years (except if terminated for cause) he or she will be reinstated with an adjusted date of hire and all waiting periods for benefits will be waived.

### **Employees with specific termination date**

The termination of employees hired with a specific termination date as stated in the employment notification is subject to the same provisions as voluntary termination, except there is no notice requirement either on the part of the staff member or the University.

### **Employee Records**

Your employment record is on file in the Human Resources Office (Rm. 322 in Jackman Hall). It is your responsibility to notify the HR Office of any change in names, home addresses, telephone numbers, beneficiaries, number of dependents, changes in family status or other pertinent information.

Any change in an employee's tax status must be made on a Withholding Certificate, W-4, available from the Payroll Office.

### **Access to Personnel Records**

Access to the central personnel file of any staff member presently or previously employed is limited to the following Norwich personnel:

- the employee
- the employee's current or prospective supervisor
- the Norwich President, appropriate vice president, dean/director or designee
- necessary HR and payroll staff

Personnel files of any current or former staff are not available for review by any investigator of private or public agencies, prospective outside employers, or others without written release from the employee or appropriate legal authorization.

### **Examination of Personnel File by Employee**

If you wish to examine your personnel file, call the HR office and schedule a mutually convenient time to do that. You must review your file in the presence of HR staff. Although the file may not be removed or taken to another location, you may request copies of information contained in the file. There may be a small charge for copies.

### **Release of Information**

Any request for verification of employment or other information should be referred to Human Resources.

When responding to phone inquiries from commercial establishments for the purpose of establishing credit, HR will give your job title, department, dates of hire and termination, and full or part-time status.

Banks and other financial institutions often require verification of salary before granting loans, mortgages, credit cards, etc. Such information will not be released without your signed authorization.

## **VIII. Staff Council**

The University Staff Council is an advisory body serving the President of Norwich University both directly and through the Chief Administrative Officer. The Staff Council is charged with properly representing the various University staff constituencies and assuring that staff issues and advice are considered in the institutional decision making process.

There are ten members of the Council representing, as much as possible, the various constituencies of the staff of Norwich University. When terms expire, the Council solicits nominations or volunteers from the University staff community, reviews and selects before forwarding the names recommended to the University President, through the Chief Administrative Officer, for review and approval. Minutes of Council meetings are distributed to the community.

Names and officers of the current Staff Council may be obtained by contacting the Chief Administrative Officer or Human Resources.

## **IX. Staff Recognition**

### **Length of Service Awards**

Five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five years and more of service are celebrated at the Annual Recognition Dinner with the President. This dinner also includes those employees who are retiring from the University and recipients of the Kathleen Bowen Staff Recognition Award.

### **Norwich Volunteers**

The University may host an annual luncheon to recognize the many volunteers who are dedicated and committed to serving the University.

### **Special Events for all Employees**

Staff Council may sponsor two special social events a year-one in mid-winter and one at the end of the academic year. These are opportunities for employees and their families to gather together for fun, food and friendship.