

STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

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January 31, 2012

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The State Universities Civil Service System respectfully submits the Final Audit Report of the Biennial Institutional Compliance Audit conducted at the Northern Illinois University. The audit period tested was August 1, 2008 through August 31, 2010. This report is intended to communicate the final material findings, recommendations and corresponding institutional responses formulated through a comprehensive human resource compliance and operational audit.

On behalf of the audit staff, we thank Northern Illinois University and their human resource staff for a very productive audit experience. If there are any questions or a personal briefing on any item is desired, please call Lucinda M. Neitzel (217) 278-3150 ext. 239.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lewis T. Morelock".

Lewis T. (Tom) Morelock
Executive Director

Northern Illinois University Final Audit Report



State Universities Civil Service System Compliance Audit

January 31, 2012

Audit Period

August 1, 2008 to August 31, 2010

Prepared by:

Lucinda M. Neitzel
Audit and Advisory Services Manager

Northern Illinois University
Final Audit Report

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Introduction

PURPOSE

The State Universities Civil Service System was created as a separate entity of the State of Illinois and is under the control of the University Civil Service Merit Board as set forth in Section 36b(3) of the State Universities Civil Service Act (Act) ([110 ILCS 70/36b\(3\)](#)). The purpose of the State Universities Civil Service System is to establish a sound program of personnel administration for its constituent employers (110 ILCS 70/36b(2)). To achieve this purpose, the Merit Board has been given a broad range of statutory powers and duties, which include the power to make rules to carry out the purpose of the State Universities Civil Service System and to appoint an Executive Director to administer the Act (110 ILCS 70/36d(11) and (12)).

As part of its statutory power, the Merit Board has promulgated rules that delegate to the Executive Director the authority and responsibility for conducting “ongoing audit programs of all Civil Service operations at all places of employment for the purpose of assuring compliance with the [Act (110 ILCS 70/36b et seq.)] and [Part 250 of the Illinois Administrative Code (Code) ([80 Ill. Adm. Code 250](#))] and for improving the programs of personnel administration of its constituent employers” ([80 Ill. Adm. Code §250.140\(c\)](#)).

This report communicates the final outcome of a comprehensive human resource operational audit, which included an on-site evaluation that was conducted April 18-21, 2011. A formal exit conference was conducted on December 13, 2011, which provided an opportunity for the Employer to discuss both the Material and Non-Material findings contained in the initial Draft Audit Report. Upon completion of the exit conference and submission of the Institutional Corrective Action Plan, a Final Audit Report (Material Findings only) is sent to the Employer, and a Supplemental Report (Non-Material Findings) is sent to the campus/agency Human Resource Office for internal use.

OVERVIEW

The following Human Resource activities were reviewed and utilized in identifying the Material (Final Audit Report) and Non-material Findings (Supplemental Report):

- **Assignment of Positions to Classes**

The Auditor completes a review of selected job descriptions for timely updates, proper administration, and correct assignment of position classifications. Additional desk audits of selected positions are conducted onsite for appropriateness of position classifications. There is also an evaluation of the Employer’s position audit process and corresponding determinations.

- **Compensation Programs**

The Auditor completes an analysis of the Employer's use of pay rates and pay ranges, as approved by the Merit Board. An overall evaluation is then conducted of the Employer's compensation program and initiatives to meet requirements of pay equity within the Employer's market area.

- **Examination Program**

The Auditor conducts a review of pre-employment testing operations. This includes test administration, admission procedures of applicants to examinations, license and certification verifications, scheduling, security, and register management.

- **Administration of Employment and Separation Procedures**

The Auditor reviews the Employer's business processes and procedures related to the employment cycle, including pre-employment activities, probationary and status employment, and employment separation programs. There is also an assessment of the Employer's utilization and monitoring of non-status appointments.

- **Administration and Employment Protocols of Positions Exempt from Civil Service Guidelines**

The Auditor completes a review of the employment protocols and assigned responsibilities for Principal Administrative Appointments. This review is conducted to assure compliance with recognized exemption authorization procedures. The Employer's exemption forms and related position descriptions are reviewed and selected incumbent interviews are conducted for validation of approved exemptions. The audit process also includes a review of the Employer's administrative procedures related to these appointments and their approved exemption status.

- **General Review of the Employer's Human Resource Program**

The Auditor completes a general review of the Employer's human resource programs with respect to effectiveness, efficiency and levels of communication to constituencies. There is also an assessment of the recognition and interaction of human resource programs within the Employer's faculty, administrative and support staff employee groups. The impact of new technology on the recordkeeping and processing of information is also an element for review.

- **Other Follow-up Items from Previous Audit**

Other follow-up items from previous audits, as well as other matters deemed necessary and appropriate, may have been reviewed and submitted as additional audit topics.

The following staff members from the System Office, Audit and Advisory Services Division, were directly responsible for conducting various aspects of the audit:

[Lucinda Neitzel, Audit and Advisory Services Manager](#)

[Jeff Brownfield, Manager of Operations Division](#)

[Paula Mitchell, Human Resource Assistant](#)

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Executive Summary
YEAR ENDED--FY2011

The compliance testing performed during this examination was conducted in accordance with State Universities Civil Service Act ([110 ILCS 70/36b et seq.](#)), Part 250 of the Illinois Administrative Code (Code) ([80 Ill. Adm. Code 250](#)), [State Universities Civil Service Procedures Manuals](#), applicable University/agency policies/procedures, and auditing standards.

SUMMARY OF MATERIAL FINDINGS

<u>Number of</u>	<u>This Report</u>
Findings	1
Repeated findings from previous audit®	1®

SCHEDULE OF MATERIAL FINDINGS

<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Description</u>
NIU FY11-01	5	FINDINGS (STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE ACT) Exemption Authorization Applied to Positions That Match Civil Service Classification Specifications®

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Material Finding, Recommendation, and Institutional Corrective Action Plan

NIU FY11-01 Exemption Authorization Applied to Positions That Match Civil Service Classification Specifications

Criteria/Standards (i.e., what should exist):

- 1) [State Universities Civil Service Act \(Act\), Section 70/36e Coverage](#)
- 2) [Illinois Administrative Code \(Code\), Section 250.30\(a\) Coverage](#)
- 3) [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 1.1 Overview](#)
- 4) [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 3.1 Principal Administrative Appointments](#)
- 5) [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 6.3 System Office Review](#)
- 6) [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 8.2 Changing an Exempt Position to a Civil Service Position](#)

These guidelines provide that all positions are Civil Service, except as categorically outlined. Exemptions are allowed in accordance with procedures, requiring either documented exemption approval from the System Office or verification of exemption authorization through the position descriptions when general titles are used. Accordingly, a periodic review and update of position descriptions are required to confirm that these exemption authorizations remain valid.

Periodic job description review and update procedures may indicate that a position originally identified as a Principal Administrative Appointment (PAA) may have incorrectly been classified or may have changed to the point whereby a department now must convert this position, and any employee currently occupying these positions, to an identified and appropriate Civil Service classification.

In this respect, biennial compliance audits of University System employers will include, but not be limited to:

- Comprehensive review of position descriptions
- Compliance with statutory and procedural criteria for exemptions
- Adequacy and thoroughness of related employment procedures
- Adequacy of internal review and approval processes
- Thoroughness and accuracy of quarterly reporting requirements
- Any other associated special interest items

When it has been determined and established that the job responsibilities and duties of a position do not meet the criteria for a PAA exemption under Section 36e(3), the Employer may

be required to change the position from an exempt appointment to an appropriate Civil Service appointment in a recognized classification.

Conditions/Facts (i.e., what actually exists):

Through a review of approximately one-hundred ten (110) position descriptions, including on-site interviews with various exempted employees, it was determined that fifty-one (51) exempted positions (46%) listed in **Appendix A** were performing duties matching the specifications for various Civil Service classifications. These positions do not appear to contain the duties or level of authority and responsibility that would typically fall outside the specifications of standard professional or technical Civil Service classifications.

Cause (i.e., why deficient condition occurred):

According to the Employer, 'standard' titles approved for use by the System Office were applied to the majority of the exempted positions.

Effect (i.e., impact of the problem):

A failure to establish appropriate classification plan management protocols that properly update, analyze and evaluate position descriptions leads to unauthorized exemption authorizations, utilization of inappropriate employment protocols, and non-compliance with the Act, Code and Procedures. Consequently, positions are improperly identified and appropriate Civil Service protocols circumvented, significantly increasing the possibility of employment issues.

Finding from Previous Audit:

The Auditor identified four (4) exempted positions out of fifty (50) sampled that appeared to be performing duties and responsibilities comparable to those found in Civil Service classification(s) in the FY2009 compliance audit. *[Finding Code NIU FY09-02, pages 4-6].*

Recommendation:

The Illinois Administrative Code, Section 250.30(a) specifically provides that the Merit Board has the authority to determine Principal Administrative Appointments (PAA) at each institution or agency. Specifically, it states that "The Director shall publish guidelines for such exemptions, as approved by the Merit Board."

We refer the Employer to these guidelines located in the [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 3.1, Principal Administrative Appointments](#), approved by the Merit Board in June 2009. By definition, a PAA is "...an employee who is charged with high level administrative responsibilities, whose decisions are based on administrative policies, and who exercises discretion and independent judgment. In addition, a PAA can be defined as an employee who is in a position requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study...and which requires the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment, e.g., physician, attorney, engineer, architect."

In accordance with the statutory intent and basic premise contained in these standards, the assignment of positions to Civil Service classifications when the position description matches appropriate classification specifications must take precedence over the use of exemptions through utilizing general titles. Improper exemptions from Civil Service regulations can lead to a fundamental breakdown of several interrelated human resource functions; including employment status, position classification, seniority, recruitment, compensation, performance, and benefit administration.

We recommend that the Employer complete an in-depth review of the position descriptions for the positions listed in **Appendix A** to further determine if they meet the specifications of the recommended Civil Service classifications. If it is determined that these positions match the specifications of the recommended Civil Service classifications, they should be transitioned to a Civil Service appointment. It is strongly recommended that positions designated to be transitioned to Civil Service appointments be moved as soon as possible, but certainly no later than at such time that these positions become vacant again. We refer the Employer to the [Exemption Procedures Manual, Section 8.2, Changing an Exempt Position to a Civil Service Position](#) for guidance in transitioning these positions to appropriate Civil Service Appointments. Please note that positions designated for transition through the audit process will be reviewed in the next biennial audit process and should be monitored by the Employer periodically.

The Employer may also utilize the Pilot Program classification designations and transition the positions to be reviewed into one of these classifications if appropriate. These [Pilot Program](#) classifications utilize more flexible employment protocols and would offer a more transparent transition.

Institutional Corrective Action Plan—provided by Dr. Steve Cunningham, Vice President Administration and Human Resources

Northern Illinois University has procedures in place to evaluate job descriptions associated with 36(e) established positions. As updated positions are received, they are reviewed for proper classification and exemption. Positions found to meet the specifications of the recommended Civil Service classifications are tagged and the position transitioned to Civil Service upon the departure of the employee and reevaluation of the duties. The University has been diligent in this practice. For those positions identified in the audit, the University will utilize existing procedures to evaluate the job descriptions as the positions become vacant and will continue to augment these procedures to assure processing review and oversight.

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Appendix A

*Principal Administrative Appointments
Position Descriptions Matching Civil Service Specifications*

Employee Name	Title	Position Number	Recommended Civil Service Classification
Albert, Charles B.	Admission Counselor	4353	Admissions & Records Series or Program Adviser
Alfredson, Amy E.	Assistant Director of Alumni Relations	35386	Assistant Director of Alumni Relations
Altersohn, Russell	Assistant Director	34178	Assistant Director of Alumni Relations or Development Officer
Arntzen, Diana L.	Coordinator, NIU Art Museum	4177	Museum Instructor/Educator
Bailey, Maxine R.	Assistant Director Residence Dining Operations	5002	Food Service Administrator Series or University Food Service Director
Baker, Mary M.	Technical Support Coordinator	4528	Network Specialist Series, Technical Support Specialist, or Information Technology Support Associate
Baker, William H.	Athletic Sales Director	4753	Radio/Television Producer/Announcer
Berryhill, James W.	Web Network Specialist	4236	Information Technology Management Series, Information Technology Manager/Administrative Coordinator, or Information Technology Technical Associate
Blaustein, Greer E.	Admission Counselor	4060	Admissions & Records Series or Program Adviser
Bulita, Steven L.	Information Systems Manager	4526	Applications Programmer Series, Information Technology Technical Associate, or Information Technology Support Associate
Carrier, Amanda L.	Communication Specialist	4307	Public Information Series
Chin, Siew-Sim	Associate Director of International Admissions	4302	Admissions & Records Series or Program Adviser
Conant, Brian S.	Illinois Periodicals Project Coordinator	4714	Web Specialist Series or Information Technology Support Associate
Dallman, Ashley N.	Instructional Video Production Coordinator	35912	Instructional Communications Programmer Series
Depper, Kathy I.	Web Network Specialist	4987	Web Specialist Series or Information Technology Support Associate
Dyslin, Kellie M.	Research Development Specialist	34644	Grants & Contracts Administrator Series or Grants & Contracts Development Specialist
Erdman, Stacey N.	Technical Coordinator, Library Digital Project	4151	Information Technology Management Series, Information Technology Manager/Administrative Coordinator, or Information Technology Technical Associate
Garvey, Crystal M.	Coordinator, University Admissions Systems	33348	Applications Programmer Series or Information Technology Technical Associate
Gillis, Melissa M.	Senior Admissions Counselor	4263	Program Adviser
Glick, Brian M.	Assistant Director	4244	Student Judicial Programs Series
Grady, David L.	Assistant Director, Student Diversity in Engineering & Tech	34889	Program Adviser
Harrison, Noor M.	Compliance Coordinator	5046	Immigration Specialist

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Appendix A

*Principal Administrative Appointments
Position Descriptions Matching Civil Service Specifications*

Employee Name	Title	Position Number	Recommended Civil Service Classification
Hendricks, Robin A.	Assistant Director of Registration & Records	4227	Records Management Series
Hoerdeman, Sara L.	Marketing & Publicity Manager	35315	Advertising Series, Publications Series, or Associate Director of Publications
Hoskin, Christopher M.	Creative Specialist	27535	Radio/Television Producer/Announcer Series or Broadcasting Program Assistant
Houghtaling, Russell D.	Athletics Media Coordinator	33882	Sports Information Director Series
Imm, Jacob G.	Assistant Director of Alumni Events & Public Relations	27801	Assistant Director of Alumni Relations or Development Officer
Jordan, Jane M.	Associate Director for Client Services	34990	Financial Aid Series
Kavulic, Michael A.	Coordinator of Residential Facilities	32495	Housing Administration Series
Kipp-Garcia, Susan	Applications Support Specialist	5039	Applications Programmer Series or Information Technology Technical Associate
Klefstad, Daniel S.	Operations Director	4965	Radio Station Production Supervisor or Radio/Television Producer/Announcer Series
Kloster, Sheila K.	Operations Manager	35992	Program Coordinator Series, Program Adviser, or Business/Administrative Associate
Larry, Jason A.	Technical Support Coordinator	30483	Technical Support Specialist or Information Technology Support Associate
Liu, Jian	Research Associate	4152	Educational Program Evaluation Coordinator
Manning, Linda L.	Marketing Manager	4662	Publications Series
Mayfield, Diane L.	Information Technology Coordinator	4885	Applications Programmer Series or Information Technology Technical Associate
Murphy, Colleen	Admission Counselor	4060	Admissions & Records Series or Program Adviser
Neelapala, Lavanya	WWW Programmer/Database Manager	36036	Webmaster, Information Technology Manager/Administrative Coordinator, or Information Technology Technical Associate
Paruchiri, Anitha	Specialist	27707	Information Technology Management Series, Information Technology Manager/Administrative Coordinator, or Information Technology Technical Associate
Pietrowski, Mark A.	External Programming Coordinator	4871	Continuing Education Community Coordinator
Pincus, Daniel B.	Applications Support Specialist	4778	Applications Programmer Series or Computer Programmer Series
Posey, Aaron J.	Senior Admissions Counselor	35092	Program Adviser
Saalfeld, Kathryn B.	Assistant Director	4249	Program Adviser
Salvani, Emily B.	Alumni Coordinator	35091	Assistant Director of Alumni Relations or Development Officer
Schultz, Eric J.	Assistant Director of Ticket Office	30358	Ticket Sales Series

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*Principal Administrative Appointments
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Employee Name	Title	Position Number	Recommended Civil Service Classification
Snell, Roselyn M.	Assistant Director, Affirmative Action & Diversity Resources	4639	Equal Opportunity Officer Series, Human Resource Series, or Human Resource Associate
Stoddard, Catherine D.	Assistant Telephone Center Manager	27803	Survey Interviewer Series
Thomas, Keisha M.	Copywriter and Web Editor	29541	Public Information Series or Publications Series
Trottier, Timothy J.	Assistant Director of Residential Facilities & Operations	4096	Housing Administration Series
Woodruff, Megan E.	Assistant Director	35005	Program Adviser
Yandle, Sandra	Donor Relations Coordinator	4422	Development Officer