

<b>Volume E1:</b> Employment/ Hiring	<b>E1.01.2</b> <b>Employee Excellence Award Program</b>  <b>Effective Date:</b> 02/02/2012 <b>Last Revision:</b> 03/23/2021 <b>Date of Next Review:</b> 03/01/2026	<b>Responsible Office:</b> Office of Human Resources
<b>Chapter 01:</b> Benefits		<b>Responsible Officer:</b> AVP for Human Resources

## POLICY STATEMENT

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) establishes an excellence award program to recognize and reward employees who contribute to student success, create problem solving initiatives, produce innovation, bring about improvement in quality outcomes, or enhance the quality and productivity of University operations through exemplary actions and attitudes.

## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The excellence award program identifies employees whose contributions have had a critical, positive impact in helping achieve the objectives associated with the University Mission, Values, Strategic Planning Initiatives and/or University work plan.

## WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

All continuing Administrative and Professional (A&P) and Civil Service employees as defined within the Regulations section.

## DEFINITIONS

**Collective Bargaining Agreement:** A labor agreement signed with a union representing a group of University employees.

**Predetermined termination date:** an employment end date for University employees whose employment is temporary, tied to a grant or temporary funding source that ends in the current nomination period.

## REGULATIONS

### Committee Composition

An Employee Excellence Award Committee will review nominations annually. The committee will consist of one A&P or Civil Service employee selected to represent each of the Vice President divisions and the Office of the President, one representative from the Civil Service Council, and one representative from the A&P Council. These A&P and Civil Service employees are eligible to serve if they have been employed by the University for at least twelve consecutive months, with the exception of those employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with a different excellence award program. The committee chair will be a representative from Human Resources or a designee who serves as a non-voting, *ex officio* member. Currently serving committee members are not eligible for award nomination.

### Nomination Eligibility

A&P and Civil Service employees are eligible to be nominated if they are one of the following:

- A continuing Administrative and Professional (A&P) or Civil Service employee who has been employed by the University for at least twelve consecutive months and not covered by a collective bargaining agreement with a different excellence award program.



- A temporary Administrative and Professional (A&P) employee who will return to a previous continuing appointment in an A&P or Civil Service classification that they have held for at least twelve consecutive months and not covered by a collective bargaining agreement with a different excellence award program.
- A temporary Administrative and Professional (A&P) employee who has served in their temporary appointment no fewer than three years and whose previous continuing appointment outside of A&P or Civil Service has been held for at least twelve consecutive months prior to the temporary appointment.

Employees with a predetermined termination date are not eligible.

Employees receiving an annual excellence award are not eligible to receive another excellence award during the next two award periods.

### **Award**

Annual awardees will receive a framed certificate and a one-time individual award of \$1,000 net. Collective awardees, as part of a group nomination, will split the \$1,000 in equal shares. The Office of Human Resources will process the award payment.

## **PROCEDURES**

The deadline for nominations is April 30th of the current fiscal year. Nominations are accepted throughout the year and are for contributions that occurred between April 1 of the previous fiscal year and March 31 of the current fiscal year. Nominations may be submitted by co-workers, staff, students, or faculty. Self-nominations are also accepted. The committee will select awardees by June 1 of each year.

For full consideration, nominators will submit a letter to the Director of Human Resources and include the following information:

- Date
- Employee Nominated
- Department/Job Title
- Nominator
- Nominator's Signature
- The category that most closely reflects the contributions of this nominee as described below
- A description of why the person you are nominating is deserving of an Employee Excellence Award, with examples that illustrate this person's exemplary contributions to the University.

Nominations for Individuals or Groups for the Excellence Awards should include, but are not limited to, these categories:

### **Work Contributions**

Exemplary in job performance and having demonstrated accomplishments in the individual area of responsibility. Criteria include innovation, creative thinking, decisive actions, and demonstrated results that provide process or quality improvements for students or staff colleagues. Nomination statements must be specific, justifying such outstanding performance. With the criteria mentioned above, statements must reflect accomplishments projecting an attitude of teamwork, innovation, and commitment to excellence. Statements must demonstrate that the nominee/nominees exceeded expectations. This award is not intended to recognize an employee only for performing an increased volume or scope of work for which they are already receiving additional compensation.

### **Professional Contributions**

Demonstrated professional contributions to students, staff, community organizations, University employee councils (e.g., Civil Service, A & P), or relevant professional organizations, outside of their direct job assignment. This work could include state or national level contributions to advance NEIU or their profession in relation to higher education and learning. In addition, the University should have some demonstrated benefit for this professional involvement.



**University Community Contributions**

Student Success – exceptional and/or innovative efforts to improve student success or service to students.

Outstanding Service – exceptional and/or innovative efforts that promote innovation, quality improvement, productivity, or human relations to enhance and support the University’s mission.

Diversity – modeled behavior by a person or a team that embraces and supports the University commitment toward a diverse campus and a diverse learning environment.

**AUTHOR REFERENCE**

This policy is based on input from the Civil Service Council, Administrative and Professional Council, and the President’s Council.

**HISTORY**

- 11/14/2024 – updated award payment structure to one-time payment
- 03/23/2021 – Comprehensive 5-year review. Replaced nomination form with nomination process, organized regulations and procedures sections, determined annual nomination and award period.
- 08/27/2013 – Revised; revised policy code number

**RELATED POLICIES, DOCUMENTS, AND LINKS**

Collective bargaining unit agreements which can be located on <http://neiuport.neiu.edu> under the Employee Tab

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please direct questions or concerns about this policy to:

Contact	Phone	E-Mail
Office of Human Resources	773-442-5200	hr-office@neiu.edu

**DISCLAIMER**

The University reserves the right to modify or amend sections of this policy at any time at its sole discretion. This policy remains in effect until such time as the Responsible Officer calls for a review. Requests for exception to any portion of this policy, but not to the policy statement, must be presented in writing to the Responsible Officer.