

Northern Illinois University
Division of Student Affairs
Judicial Affairs
Assessment Summary Report for 2002-2006
January 19, 2007

I. Departmental Mission

The mission of Judicial Affairs is to protect the rights of community members. The Judicial System serves as a mechanism for encouraging compliance through discussion and understanding, and for helping individuals to become more cognizant of their role as members of an academic community.

To provide such an atmosphere, students, staff, faculty, and administrators will conduct themselves individually and collectively in ways that offer the opportunity for individual and group examination, study, and discussion which encourage the students' intellectual advancement. The right of each individual to peaceful and thoughtful pursuit of knowledge is a major premise of this institution. Each member of the community is expected to assume responsibility for creating such conditions in the residence halls, libraries, and all academic areas created for and dedicated to such purpose.

II. Program Description

Judicial Affairs is supported primarily through bond revenue and general revenue funds, and a student fine account (local funds). Services in Judicial Affairs are offered at no cost to students; however, fines may be levied for certain types of violations of *The Student Code of Conduct* (www.stuaff.niu.edu/judicial/ujohome.htm). Through the academic years 2002-2006, Judicial Affairs adjudicated, investigated, reviewed, or mediated over 7,500 disciplinary-related concerns. Approximately half of these Judicial Affairs contacts became actual cases that were resolved in the judicial system.

Judicial Affairs offers a range of services to all students enrolled at NIU: mediation, student advocates, judicial board experience, and "due process" hearings for students charged with *Student Code of Conduct* violations. The staff includes the Director of Judicial Affairs, an Associate Director, two Graduate Staff Assistants, one Mediation Coordinator, one Office Manager, and four Student Workers.

III. Program Objectives

- A. Provide a fair and efficient due process system for all NIU students and the university community.
- B. Be proactive in resolving town-gown issues, problems, and concerns.

IV. Methods

Method	Description of Method	Timeline	Person Responsible	Objectives Addressed
Survey	<u>Student surveys</u> : to assess user satisfaction with services (Appendix B) <u>Community Advisor training surveys</u> : to assess training effectiveness (Appendix C) <u>Residence Hall Judicial Program Feedback Survey</u> : to assess training effectiveness (Appendix. D) <u>Mediation Client Survey</u> : to assess user satisfaction with services (Appendix E)	Ongoing	Associate Director, Staff Assistants	1
External Evaluation	Professional review by outside evaluator	Pending (5 year cycle)	Director	1
Internal Procedures Review	<u>Quality of Service monitors</u> : ongoing observation of practices and procedures through unsolicited student feedback (App. F)	Ongoing	All Staff	1
Focused Discussion Groups	<u>Discussion meetings with NIU Police and local law enforcement officials</u> : to review offices processes and procedures (App. G-J)	Ongoing	Director	2
Reflective Papers	<u>Feedback from students in Civility Class</u> : to assess learning outcomes (App. K)	Ongoing	Director	1

V. Objectives by Method

	Survey	Focus Groups	External Review	Internal Procedures Review
Fair and Efficient Due Process System	X		X	X
Town-Gown Issues and Concerns		X		

VI. Evidence by Objective

Note: Many assessment data are confidential to Judicial Affairs and are not included in this report. Items marked with an asterisk (*) represent general data summaries for which specific data are not reported.

- A. Provide a fair and efficient due process system for all NIU students and the university community.** This objective addresses Student Affairs' goals 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 (Appendix A). Judicial Affairs has substantially met this objective during this assessment cycle, as indicated by the evidence presented below.

1. Survey

- a. *Student Survey.* (Appendix B). Ongoing survey of Judicial Affairs users to assess overall office services. **Findings*:** Data have shown generally favorable user satisfaction with Judicial Affairs processes and procedures, with occasional complaints about waiting time, individual case outcomes, or lack of parking. A recent student survey found that 60% rated their overall experience with Judicial Affairs as very agreeable. Data are from Fall 2005 to Spring 2006.
- b. *Community Advisor Training Survey.* (Appendix C). This is an ongoing, voluntary evaluation to assess training effectiveness for community advisors. **Findings*:** Data have shown favorable user satisfaction, with 80% of community advisors who found the training valuable, accurate, and appropriate. Eighty-six percent of these respondents found the presenters organized and prepared and, therefore, effective in their presentations. Data are from Fall 2006.
- c. *Residence Hall Judicial Program Feedback Survey.* (Appendix D). This is an ongoing, voluntary evaluation to assess training effectiveness for senior residence hall staff. **Findings*:** Data have shown that three main learning outcomes have resulted from the training: 1) "due process" governs the judicial system; 2) the difference between reasonable doubt and substantial weight of the evidence; 3) code provisions regarding the NIU alcohol policy. Data are from Fall 2006.
- d. *Mediation Client Survey.* (Appendix E). This is an ongoing, voluntary survey to assess overall user satisfaction. **Findings*:** Data have shown an 86% overall user satisfaction rate. Most respondents found the experience of mediation helpful and effective, with 100% responding that they learned tactics for conflict avoidance. Data are from Fall 2005 to Fall 2006.

2. External Evaluation

- a. *Outside Peer Review.* An outside evaluation is conducted in five-year intervals. **Findings*:** In Fall 2002, noted Judicial Affairs' professionals stated that Judicial Affairs showed "substantial compliance" with procedures, processes, and systems related to the

field. Recommendations for improvement were submitted and followed through on wherever possible. The overall evaluation was substantially favorable. Data are from Fall 2002.

3. Internal Procedure Review

The Student Code of Conduct. (Appendix F). This document is continually reviewed and monitored.

Faculty, staff, and students partner with the University Legal Counsel to conduct ongoing reviews of the NIU Judicial System in light of constant threat of litigation pertaining to case outcomes for individual students. **Findings*:** After review, all results are given to the Director of Judicial Affairs to be implemented as requested whenever possible. CAS standards are utilized daily to ensure that widely accepted processes and procedures in the field of Judicial Affairs are followed.

B. Be proactive in resolving town-gown issues, problems, and concerns. This objective addresses Student Affairs' goals 4, 5, and 6. Judicial Affairs has substantially met this objective during this assessment cycle, as indicated by the evidence presented below.

1. Focused Discussion Groups

Focus Discussion Group Meetings (Appendices G – J). These are ongoing meetings between the Director and local law enforcement agencies. **Findings*:** Data have shown generally favorable partnerships between Judicial Affairs and local law enforcement agencies. Data are from Fall 2006.

- 1) *Chief of Police, DeKalb* (Appendix). Meetings are ongoing any day or week when necessary. **Findings*:** Data have shown favorable user satisfaction with office staff and the NIU judicial system. Complaints are occasionally made related to individual student cases.
- 2) *Chief of Police, NIU* (Appendix H). Daily meetings are ongoing as needed. **Findings*:** Data have shown favorable user satisfaction with the office staff and judicial system. Individual staff members and the office as a whole recently received Civilian awards from the Office of Public Safety. Complaints are occasionally made related to individual student cases.
- 3) *DeKalb County Sheriff* (Appendix I). Weekly meetings are ongoing whenever necessary. **Findings*:** Data have shown favorable user satisfaction with the office staff and judicial system.
- 4) *North Central Narcotics Task Force* (Appendix J). These meetings are ongoing as needed. **Findings*:** Data have shown

favorable user satisfaction with the office staff, processes, and procedures.

VII. Use of Results by Objective

A. Provide a fair and efficient “due process” system for all NIU students and the university community.

1. Survey

- a. *Student Survey* (Appendix B). Positive and negative findings are communicated to staff members as appropriate; follow-up monitoring of issues has been implemented as indicated. All surveys have been reviewed by the Director and Associate Director, anonymously when possible (personal notes are sometimes included on surveys), and follow-up actions, studies, or monitoring have been undertaken as indicated.
- b. *Community Advisor Survey* (Appendix C). The objective was to effectively train the community advisors to understand *The Student Code of Conduct* and how to use it properly in doing their job in the residence halls. The survey feedback has been very favorable over the past five years; therefore, little change has been implemented.
- c. *Residence Hall Judicial Program Feedback Survey* (Appendix D).
 1. As a result of participant feedback on this survey, Judicial Affairs has improved the format of the training by streamlining the amount of material covered.
 2. Judicial Affairs has documented learning outcomes as stated by survey participants to assess the effectiveness of its training. Since the training achieved the identified learning objective of participants being able to explain judicial system functions, Residence Hall Judicial Program Training will continue as it is. Additional efforts will be made to identify the achievement of more specific learning outcomes in the future.
- d. *Mediation Client Survey* (Appendix E). The department has noted a need for more data; what has been collected so far has been very favorable.

2. External Evaluation

- a. Significant changes were made in judicial board hearings. The cross examination process was removed from the procedure, thus reducing the length of hearings and rude behavior by participants.
- b. Attorneys were removed from participation in NIU’s judicial hearings.

3. Internal Procedures Review (Appendix F)
 - a. These reviews will continue as procedures for assessing professional standards in the field of Judicial Affairs.
 - b. Procedures will continue to be monitored for the need to accommodate new laws and mandates for the state or federal government and generally accepted professional standards.
4. Reflective Papers (Appendix K)
 - a. The papers reflect how the students have reconsidered their negative behaviors in the NIU campus community, and what they will now do to put their lives back on a positive track in order to enhance their personal lives as they move toward graduation. This is the first year the Director has offered the Civility Class to students as a sanction of violations of *The Student Code of Conduct*. The learning outcomes, as stated by the participants, are very favorable, especially when participants state the reasons why their behavior was unacceptable on a college campus and what changes they plan to make in the future.

B. Be proactive in resolving town-gown issues, problems, and concerns.

1. Focused Group Discussions (Appendices G – J)
 - a. Meeting with local law enforcement officials has been invaluable to the Director in keeping the NIU campus community safe. Action taken as a result of these meetings has included the following:
 - 1) Drug dealers are identified and removed immediately from the campus.
 - 2) Dangerous threats to the campus community are closely monitored and neutralized whenever possible.
 - 3) Numerous crimes are prevented as a result of the information exchanged in these focused group discussions.

VIII. Further Information Needed

- A. Data regarding the effectiveness of mediation in our campus community.
- B. Information about additional assessment tools for mediation and the judicial system.
- C. Data to guide services and service delivery for minority student populations.

IX. Timeline

The following are estimated timelines for gathering additional data for purposes of Judicial Affairs' assessment and planning:

- A. Data regarding the effectiveness of mediation in our campus community: Spring 2008
- B. Information about existing assessment tools for mediation and the judicial system:
Fall 2007
- C. Data to guide services and service delivery for minority student populations: Spring 2008

X. Resources Needed

No resources are being requested of the University Assessment Panel at this time.

XI. Appendices

- A. Student Affairs Goals
- B. Student Survey
- C. Community Advisor Survey
- D. Resident Hall Judicial Program Feedback Survey
- E. Mediation Client Survey
- F. CAS Standards
- G. Letter from DeKalb Police Department
- H. Letter from NIU Police Department
- I. Letter from DeKalb County Sheriff
- J. Letter from North Central Narcotics Task Force
- K. Civility Class Reflective Paper