

Student Assistant Employee Handbook



MULTICULTURAL STUDENT LIFE

Office of Multicultural Student Life
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The MSL Student Employee Handbook is for information purposes only and is not intended to be a legal contract between student employees and the Office of Multicultural Student Life.

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ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is provided for the use of the Office of Multicultural Student Life (MSL) student employees as a ready reference and summary of most personnel policies. While MSL believes in the policies described here, the office is not bound by the contents of this handbook. MSL reserves the rights to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate, or change any or all such policies, completely, or in part, at any time, with or without notice. This handbook is a guide and is for information only, so that all student employees may operate as a team with the understanding of general MSL expectations. This handbook is in no way a contract, and is not to be considered as such for any purpose.

MSL MISSION

Multicultural Student Life contributes to an inclusive learning environment by enhancing institutional efforts in retaining and graduating students prepared for a diverse global society. We promote the academic success, equality, and leadership development of students through programs and services that holistically address cultural, educational, and civic growth.

Multicultural Student Life resides in the Frieson Cultural Center, which boasts over 13,700 square feet. This facility is conveniently located at 1800 Melrose Avenue. The Frieson Cultural Center (BCC) is a unique landmark structure that opened in June 2002, and features a library, state-of-the-art computer lab, student lounge, gallery, multipurpose rooms, student organizational suite, conference room, tutorial suites, and administration offices. The BCC is a place to gather, learn, and share ideas and experiences.

General Information

Eligibility and Hours of Work

Only currently enrolled UT students are eligible for employment. The Office of Multicultural Student Life (MSL) recognizes the importance of a student's responsibility to his/her academic curriculum. All MSL student employees must hold a GPA of 2.5 or higher, for undergraduate students, and 3.0 or better for graduate students when hired, and must maintain at least a 2.5 GPA for undergraduate students and 3.0 for graduate students during his/her employment with MSL. Students should carry a minimum of six (6) credit hours during employment. It is the responsibility of the student employee to notify the Program Resource Specialist immediately, if he/she is not enrolled in at least six credit hours.

Student employees may work a maximum of up to twenty hours per week, and a minimum of 10 hours during the fall and spring semesters. Student employees who are employed by other University departments must adjust their schedules so that the total work week is a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week. No student will be eligible to work for the University of Tennessee more than 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. The MSL staff recommends no more than 15 hours per work in order to maintain a healthy balance of work, academic and other involvement.

Work Schedule

Student assistants are assigned a certain number of hours per week and have a weekly schedule. You are responsible for working those hours. It is important to organize your studying and other activities around your work schedule. *Exams, social events, and other University and personal activities are not considered emergencies and should be planned for in advance.

*Note – this includes other jobs outside of the University. Outside interests that conflict with your MSL work schedule are not considered emergencies. Emergencies are classified as illness, family emergencies, transportation issues, family member illness and/or death, and household emergencies (e.g. flooding, fire.)

Training

In addition to the MSL Student Orientation and leadership and development workshops, each area of assignment has its own training program. Supervisors will initiate individualized on-the-job training upon employment. Failure to attend the required meetings may result in disciplinary action.

MSL Student Wages and Job Classification

The wage for student employees is based on the overall complexity and scope of assigned duties, or on funding sources (e.g., regular student employment vs. Work Study). It is MSL's responsibility to establish job duties and ensure that student employees are properly compensated for the work performed. Typically, new student employees will start at the entry-level rate for the corresponding level. Supervisors may recommend that a student employee start at a higher rate based on specialized experience related to position.

Equity Review Method

MSL's philosophy is to ensure fair and competitive compensation for all student positions. In order to maintain this philosophy, MSL shall review student positions annually, as required by the Director of MSL. Student positions will be reviewed based on classification and position requirements to ensure comparable wages, title appropriateness, and job level.

Payroll Procedures

MSL employees must utilize the time clock to track their hours. Student employees who do not utilize the time clock method for recording hours will have a delay and possible deduction in pay. If a student is scheduled to work more than 2 hours and he/she fails to clock in or out, he/she will only get paid for 2 hours. If he/she is only scheduled to work 2 hours, and failed to clock in or out, he/she will receive no compensation. If there are questions about time worked and payroll, the time clock records will be the records from which students will be paid.

Employees must record every start and stop time as it occurs; it is not acceptable to go back and make adjustments the following day. Employees cannot allow anyone else to clock in or out for them. Allowing someone else to clock in or out for you will result in immediate termination for all parties involved.

Employees must not clock in until ready to begin actual work, unless otherwise approved. If an employee must leave work during scheduled work hours, they must notify their supervisor, clock out when leaving and clock back in upon return. When an employee forgets to clock in or out, an Error Memo must be obtained from their supervisor (or an MSL staff member who is present and can verify they worked their assigned shift and sign the Error Memo.) The Error Memo must be completed and then signed by both the employee and supervisor.

Error Memos must be filled out, signed and submitted prior to the end of the pay period. If a student fails to clock in or out within any given pay period, and an Error Memo is not submitted to the Accounting Specialist prior to the pay period ending, a hold will be placed on the paycheck until the employee and his/her supervisor takes appropriate action to correct the problem. These payroll procedures must be strictly adhered to and no exceptions will be made. Repeated problems with failure to clock in or clock out will be addressed by your supervisor, documented, and may result in termination.

Change of Address or Personal Information

Any change in status, which includes name, address, phone number, additional job etc., should be promptly reported to the Program Resource Specialist. It is advisable that employees periodically review information currently on file.

Attendance

You are expected to be reliable and punctual in attendance. MSL has a procedure regarding absences and may require you to find a replacement if you are unable to work your scheduled hours. If you foresee your absence and/or would like to make up your hours, it is your responsibility to complete a "Request to Alter Work Schedule" form (RAWS) and submit it to your supervisor at least 48 hours in advance, as well as following up with an email to back up your request, and inquire about approval. Excessive tardiness or absenteeism will subject employees to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you are going to be late, you must contact both the Program Resource Specialist and your supervisor. Excessive absenteeism is defined as a minimum of three (3) instances of unapproved absences during a regular semester period.

1. First offense - verbal counseling and warning that continued excessive absenteeism will lead to subsequent disciplinary action.
2. Second offense - written counseling session and warning that continued excessive absenteeism will lead to termination.
3. Third offense - termination.

No-Call/No-Show

No-Call/No-Show is a situation in which a student misses an entire shift and fails to call in to report the absence. The Program Resource Specialist and your supervisor must be informed of an absence. Informing another student assistant of that absence is not sufficient.

Absenteeism

If an employee is absent and does not notify his/her supervisor for three (3) consecutive work days, MSL will assume the employee has abandoned their job and termination papers will be processed accordingly. Any employee who has taken unauthorized leave for three (3) consecutive workdays, even with notice to the MSL, will automatically be deemed to have resigned and termination will be processed.

Clock Out Policy

It is the employee's responsibility to clock out upon completing his/her shift. If an employee forgets to clock out, he/she will receive a warning and will be paid for two hours of work (if scheduled to work more than two hours) or will be paid nothing (if scheduled to work only two hours). If this offence is committed three times, the individual will be terminated from his/her position.

Leave of Absence Policy

If an employee needs to take a leave of absence for competitions, internships, etc., a Leave of Absence request form must be completed and approved prior to the leave of absence. The form may be obtained from the Program Resource Specialist and must be signed by your supervisor. When an employee is placed on a leave of absence, an effort will be made to hold the employee's position open for the period of the approved leave. However, due to business needs, there may be times when a position cannot be held open. If the employee's former position is unavailable when the employee is ready to return from an approved leave, MSL will make reasonable efforts to place the employee in a similar position for which the employee is qualified. If such a position is not available, the employee may be laid off for lack of available work. If an employee accepts other employment or for any reason fails to return to work on the next regularly scheduled work day following the expiration of an approved leave of absence, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Performance Evaluations

Employees should meet with supervisors periodically to discuss the performance standards expected of them. Performance evaluations by supervisors are conducted at the end of each semester.

Breaks and Meal Periods

Student employees are allowed a 15-minute break for every four hours worked. Student employees assigned to a work period of more than six (6) hours are entitled to a meal period of at least 30 minutes. Meal periods are not paid time; therefore, students must clock out. Students must notify their respective supervisor before and after each break.

Dress Code

All employees are expected to dress appropriately. MSL provides polo shirts and nametags, and requires that all other clothing is neat, clean and in agreement with the dress code. MSL does not permit employees to wear transparent or revealing clothing, torn clothing, overly tight clothing, pants, and skirts that are particularly short or high cut, nor hats. In respect of

each individual's culture and wish for expression, appropriate piercings are allowed, and head attire, i.e., babushka.

Appropriate attire

- Shirts and blouses
- Open Sweaters (to reveal MSL Logo)
- Open Jackets (to reveal MSL Logo)
- Tailored slacks, jeans or khakis
- Knee-length skirts
- Knee-length dresses
- Tailored Bermuda-length shorts
- Closed-toe shoes/sandals/sneakers

Inappropriate Attire

- Skull caps, beanies, or any other head attire (hats, ball caps, visors, etc.)
- Short shorts, tank tops, miniskirts or short sundresses
- Tops with exposed midriff, cleavage
- Tight or revealing clothing (i.e. leggings, unless under a knee-length skirt/dress)
- Bare feet or flip-flops/ open-toed shoes/sandals/high heels
- Any garment that is skimpy, baggy, ragged or torn

MSL reserves the right to request changes in clothing or grooming that may be offensive, distracting, or otherwise inconsistent with the appropriate image of MSL. Employees may be sent home from work, without pay, to change into appropriate attire.

Equal Employment Opportunity

MSL believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate against its employees or applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other status protected by law. Equal Employment Opportunities will be extended to all persons in all aspects of the employment relationship. Any employee who needs reasonable accommodation for a disability should submit a request to the MSL Director.

Release of Information

Personnel records are confidential. Nevertheless, MSL is required to comply with valid court orders and government requests directing provision of information from personnel files. This includes work dates, work hours, Department of Human Resource letters, etc. Calls from prospective employers or any other individual for information regarding a current or former employee must be directed to the Program Resource Specialist without any comment to the caller. The Program Resource Specialist will only provide verification of an employee or former employee's job title and employment dates.

Cell Etiquette

Cell phone etiquette (cell etiquette) is common courtesy that should be observed by all employees. Cellular phone usage is not allowed during normal work hours (phone calls – incoming or outgoing, watching movies/videos, playing games, etc.) and phone's ringers should be turned off or set to vibrate.

Downloads

Employees are not allowed to download any kind of media (music, games, apps, movies, etc.) onto any computers in the computer lab or any other computers in the Frieson Cultural Center.

Resolving Work Related Problems

If you have difficulty learning your job, following procedures, or are consistently late or absent, your supervisor will discuss the problem with you and employ a course of action. You will receive a memo outlining needed improvements and expectations. Continued

unacceptable behavior or performance will lead to dismissal if satisfactory improvement is not demonstrated in a reasonable length of time as determined by the supervisor.

Employment as a student assistant in Multicultural Student Life can be challenging and rewarding; however, various pressures on students and employers can occasionally result in conflict. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to notify the student of any dissatisfaction with the students' job performance, to initiate a conference to discuss the situation with the student, and to record the problem and results.

Responsibility of student employees

MSL employees are expected to use initiative and good judgment in performing their jobs.

Among other things, they are also expected to:

- Report and be ready to work at the scheduled time
- Contact your supervisor immediately after clocking in
- Attend to assigned duties on the job and refrain from conducting personal business while at work
- Display a positive and cooperative attitude
- Notify supervisor and Program Resource Specialist as soon as possible if an occasional change in work schedule is expected due to projects and exams
- Keep an accurate record of all hours worked by remembering to clock in and out
- Notify the supervisor of any job-related accidents
- Wear attire appropriate for the position employed as identified by the supervisor
- It is mandatory to read the Weekly Student Assistant Update emails. This communication is to ensure you are aware of changes and updates in the MSL.

Reasons for possible dismissal

The following represent some areas of job performance failures or policy violations that could lead to job termination:

- Inability to perform the job to MSL's standards
- Chronic or excessive tardiness and absenteeism
- Revealing information about a patron
- Poor work habits
- Unauthorized or inappropriate use of Multicultural Student Life materials, computer accounts, supplies and/or facilities
- Unauthorized loading/downloading of software onto computers
- Discourteous treatment of the public, students, or other employees
- Racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious intolerance
- Use of abusive/offensive language
- On the clock yet cannot be found in the Frieson Cultural Center
- Insubordination

Developing Good Work Habits

Please follow the expectations outlined below:

- Common Courtesy
 - Be courteous and respectful to patrons, faculty, staff, students, and your co-workers.
- Punctuality

- Be responsible and arrive on time. Plan your arrival time carefully. Take care of your personal business before your starting time. Stay for your scheduled work time unless other arrangements have been made in advance.
- Professional Ethics: Privacy and Confidentiality
 - One responsibility of working in Multicultural Student Life is to protect each individual user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought, consulted or borrowed. Revealing to others what items patrons have acquired or what topics they are researching is a serious matter and may be cause for dismissal. Likewise, any other records and files which you may view at work are considered confidential and should not be discussed outside of the office.
- Leaving Your Work Area
 - You must remain in your assigned work area. If you need to leave your work area for any reason, be sure to notify your supervisor for permission. When not actively working on an assignment, you may study in the Student Organization Suite or Computer Lab. Do not "hang out" in the lounge, at the front desk, in the conference room, in tutoring rooms, in the BCPC or ASU offices, or leave the building, while on the clock.
- Eating and Drinking
 - Food or drink is not allowed at public service desks, or on any desk, table, or shelf which houses materials, computers, printers, or other equipment that could be damaged by a spill. You may eat in the student lounge during your break. The second floor break room is for full time MSL Staff and graduate assistants *only*.
- Personal Phone Calls/Visitors While on Duty
 - Multicultural Student Life telephones are for business calls only. Personal conversations need to be limited while on duty.
- Telephone Etiquette
 - Telephone communication can be as crucial as face-to-face interaction. Your voice and attitude are your tools for enhancing phone conversations. **Voice** – pay attention to your enunciation, courtesy, audibility, friendliness, pitch, and rate of speech. **Attitude** – have a positive mental attitude that makes the caller realize you are willing to help. Also **smile** so the caller will be able to hear it. A smile makes you sound cheerful even when you're not.
- Housekeeping
 - Keep your assigned desk and work area uncluttered and clean/sanitized. Return equipment and supplies to their proper places after use. Work areas and service desks should present a neat and orderly appearance AT All TMES.
- Front Desk
 - The Front Desk should be covered at all times. ONE person is allowed behind the front desk – the receptionist. Loitering at the front desk will not be tolerated.

Harassment Policy

MSL takes all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment from occurring. Sexual harassment in employment violates MSL policy and is prohibited under Title 9 of the federal Civil Rights Act. The following policy applies to all employees and to independent contractors providing services to MSL.

Employees who believe they have been harassed on the job, including harassment by persons doing business with or for MSL, should provide a written complaint to your supervisor. The complaint should include details of the incident, names of individuals involved, and names of any witnesses. Supervisors must immediately refer all harassment complaints to the Director of MSL.

All reported incidents of sexual or other harassment will be investigated. The Director will immediately undertake or direct an effective, thorough, and objective investigation of the harassment allegations. The investigation will be completed and a determination regarding the alleged harassment will be made and communicated to the employee(s) who complained and the accused harasser(s).

Employee Conduct

No form of harassment is appropriate behavior on the job. It creates a hostile work environment for the victim, and distracts both the victim and the offender from important job duties. Even where conduct might not meet the above definitions of “harassment”, if the conduct is annoying or distracting to employees, and the conduct serves no legitimate purpose, good judgment requires that conduct be stopped.

General Separations

MSL student employment is “at will” which means either MSL or the employee may terminate employment at any time with or without cause or notice.

Reduction in Staff

It may be necessary or appropriate from time to time for MSL to reduce its staff, either due to lack of work, reorganization, to improve efficiency, or other reasons. Depending upon the circumstances that give rise to such a situation, MSL in its sole discretion may respond in several ways, including offering a voluntary reduction of hours or days of work, doing so involuntarily, or implementing a reduction in staff, i.e. layoff.

MSL reserves the right to transfer and reassign employees in any manner it deems appropriate in order to accomplish the net reduction in staff. MSL will try to provide advance notice of layoffs; however, notice may not be given if MSL deems notices to be detrimental to its interests.

Employees who are laid off are encouraged to reapply for employment when positions are available. Past performance with MSL will be considered when evaluating such applications.

Alcohol and other Drugs-Zero Tolerance Policy

MSL is dedicated to providing the best academic and professional experience that can be offered to its students, faculty and staff. The use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol are known to be at cross-purposes to this mission and are not tolerated on campus. MSL is fully committed to achieving an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) free environment for its students and employees.

Accommodation Request

NAME: _____ POSITION: _____

LIMITATIONS NEEDING ACCOMMODATION

Describe the nature of any limitations on activities (i.e., walking, seeing, use of hands), abilities, (i.e., speaking, reading), or environment (i.e., sensitivity to light, sound irritants to lungs or skin). Private medical information is not required.

Are these limitations or conditions permanent, chronic or long term? Yes No

Describe any locations you have difficulty accessing and the nature of the difficulty?

What job functions will be affected by your limitations?

Describe how your limitations impact your ability to perform those functions.

Describe any changes in your duties or environment you feel would be beneficial.

Signature

Date

Employee Complaint Form

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Name: | Position: |
| Immediate Supervisor: | |
| Department and Location: | |
| The reason for my complaint is as follows: | |
| Dates on or during which problem has occurred: | |
| Efforts I have made to resolve this problem are as follows: | |
| The following individuals are involved or may have information: | |
| Desired resolution: | |
| Date: | Employee Signature: |

RECEIPT OF STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Student Employee Handbook and understand that it contains important information on MSL's student employment policies and my obligations as an employee. I acknowledge that I am expected to read, understand, and adhere to MSL policies and will familiarize myself with the material in the handbook. I understand that MSL may change, cancel, or add any policies or practices described in the handbook from time to time at its sole and absolute discretion with or without prior notice. MSL will advise employees of material changes within a reasonable time.

I recognize that employment at MSL is "at will," which means either MSL or I can terminate my employment at any time with or without cause or notice. MSL retains the right to demote, transfer, change job duties at any time with or without notice and with or without cause at its sole discretion. I acknowledge that no binding MSL representations have been made concerning the length of my employment or limitations, and that there are no other agreements or understandings concerning my employment that are not superseded by this "at will" understanding.

Employee Signature

Date

INFORMATION FOR STUDENT DIRECTORY

FIRST AND LAST NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER _____

MAJOR _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

BIRTHDAY _____

STUDENT ASSISTANT EMPLOYMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Please be advised that all Student Assistants employed by the Office of Multicultural Student Life are subject to following the University of Tennessee's general guidelines for staff conduct and behavior.

One responsibility of working in Multicultural Student Life is to protect each individual user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought, consulted or borrowed. Revealing to others what items patrons have acquired or what topics they are researching is a serious matter and may be cause for dismissal. Likewise, any other records and files which you may view at work are considered confidential and should not be discussed outside of the office.

Other standards are as follows and detailed descriptions can be found at:

https://my.tennessee.edu/portal/page?_pageid=34,140536&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_policy=HR0580

Respect for Persons:

Prohibited behaviors:

- a. Disorderly conduct, to include but not limited to, using discriminatory, abusive, or threatening language, fighting, provoking a fight, or attempting bodily harm or injury to another employee or to any other individual, or threatening physical action or injury on university property or during university activities; or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health, safety, or well-being of any person.
- b. Sexual harassment of employees, students, donors, customers, visitors, patients, vendors or any other person on university property or during university activities.

Respect for Property:

The following activities are specifically prohibited:

- a. Willful or negligent damage to university property.
- b. Theft or dishonesty.
- c. Tampering with or wantonly destroying university data, records, or other information, gaining unauthorized access to such information; disclosing confidential information; or otherwise misusing university data or information.
- d. Unauthorized use of university vehicles, mail services, identification and credit cards, telephones, computers, or computer equipment, or other university equipment or materials. Computers and computer accounts are provided to employees to assist them in the performance of their jobs. Employees do not have a right to privacy in anything they create, send or receive on the computer. The university has the right to monitor, for business reasons, any and all aspects of any university computer system, including employee e-mail.
- e. Soliciting, collecting money, or circulating petitions on university property at any time without permission of the chief business officer or designee.

Standards of Safety

The university is committed to maintaining the safety and security of all persons on university property and during university activities and to maintain a safe and healthful working environment. Specific prohibited activities include:

- a. Possession of firearms, explosives, or other lethal materials on university property or during university activities, unless the employee falls within certain categories of employees who must use weapons in the course of their employment (such as police officers, R.O.T.C. personnel, etc.)
- b. Possessing, drinking, or being under the influence of intoxicants on the job; unlawful possession, use or distribution of alcohol on university property or during university activities; illegally using, manufacturing, possessing, distributing, dispensing, or being under the influence of controlled substances on university property or during university activities.
- c. Refusal to obey security officials, Civil Defense personnel, or other proper authorities in emergencies.
- d. Failure to comply with safety rules, regulations or common safety practices.
- e. Failure to report an accident involving on-the-job injury or damage to university property.
- f. Smoking in non-designated areas.

Work Performance

The university expects faculty and staff to make a commitment to quality job performance. Issues of poor performance or misconduct compromise both the employee and the organization. For this reason, the university expects work performance to meet high standards at all times. Prohibited behaviors include:

- a. Insubordination or refusal of an employee to follow instructions or to perform designated work or to comply with directives of authorized university officials.
- b. Failure to wear proper uniform or identification in the prescribed manner as may be required by the university.
- c. Sleeping on the job.
- d. Failure or refusal to maintain or obtain required licensure, certification or registration.
- e. Instigating or participating in deliberate low productivity and/or interfering with another employee's work.

Standards of Attendance

The university depends upon its employees to carry out the work of the institution; therefore, reliable, consistent attendance is an important requirement of all positions. The following behaviors are prohibited:

- a. Unexcused Absence. An absence without proper notification or satisfactory reason is unexcused. An absence for three (3) consecutive days without notification or satisfactory reason is considered a voluntary termination.
- b. Repeated Tardiness. Tardiness is defined as arriving at work past the appointed starting time without supervisory approval.
- c. Failure of employee to report to their work place at the beginning of the work period. Leaving work prior to the end of the work period. Failure to inform the supervisor when leaving the work area.

Should you have any questions, please contact a staff person within the Office of Multicultural Student Life. Please sign and return the bottom of this form stating that you have read and understand this policy.

=====

Student Assistant Name (print): _____

I have received and read, and agree to adhere to the requirements of the Code of Conduct listed above and in the Student Assistant Employee Handbook.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

MULTICULTURAL STUDENT LIFE



Mission:

Multicultural Student Life contributes to an inclusive learning environment by enhancing institutional efforts in retaining and graduating students prepared for a diverse global society. We promote the academic success, equality, and leadership development of students through programs and services that holistically address cultural, educational, and civic growth.

Vision Statement:

The Office of Multicultural Student Life will be a nationally recognized department that innovatively promotes diversity and inclusion to empower all university students in order to impact societal equality throughout the state of Tennessee and across the world.

Values:

- ❖ E - equality and social justice
- ❖ M - motivation
- ❖ P - progressive partnering
- ❖ O - opportunities and dialogue
- ❖ W - welcoming student-focused environment
- ❖ E - ethical leadership
- ❖ R - respect and civility
- ❖ M - mentorship and student success
- ❖ E - excellence in academics
- ❖ N - new and innovative practices
- ❖ T - transformative education