Expectations for Student Employees

At Collins Memorial Library, there are certain expectations that all student employees are expected to adhere to. These expectations are in place to provide the most comfortable and productive environment possible for students, staff and patrons. If everyone adheres to them, the library will be a more pleasant place for us all.

Please read the following sections closely; understanding and following these expectations is a requirement for continued employment at Collins Memorial Library. Failure to adhere to them may result in disciplinary action and/or termination of employment.

Section I: Job Expectations

Employment as a student in Collins Memorial Library, whether in the federal work study program or in some other respect, is a real job; it is not volunteer work, nor is it a given that your job will be secure if you fail to live up to expectations. On the upside, being a good employee qualifies you for pay step increases, and allows you to use this job experience on your resume and use your supervisor as a reference for future employment. As such, use the following list as a guide to help you be successful and get the most possible benefit out of your job.

- **Be on time:** Punctuality is the most basic aspect of any job. If you cannot prove yourself to be reliable, you will be hard pressed to be successful in any job you find. Strive to be on time, or even a bit early if possible, every time you are scheduled to work. If for some reason you will unavoidably be late, try to call in and tell your supervisor so that she can plan accordingly. Note that calling in does NOT mean you can be consistently tardy; failure to show up on time on a regular basis is unacceptable behavior in the workplace.

- **Work your set schedule:** Your supervisor plans the tasks you will be assigned based on the schedule you work out with them ahead of time. If you are not able to be there, you may cause serious issues and damage the efficiency and
productivity of your department. Be certain that you are there to work whenever you are scheduled to do so. If you are ill, you MUST call your supervisor at least 30 minutes before you are scheduled to work to notify them as such. If you wish to take off a day you MUST notify your supervisor in advance and obtain her permission. If you wish to trade a shift with a co-worker, you MUST gain permission from your supervisor before you do so. Your supervisor works hard to make sure your shift is productive; don’t make her hard work a waste of time.

Section II: Professionalism

Being an employee in a service oriented workplace like Collins Memorial Library oftentimes calls for you to work outside of your assigned task in order to help our patrons. Because you are identified as an employee, patrons will often seek you out for help if they have a problem; even if your job does not normally involve such interactions, you should strive to maintain a professional and helpful attitude. Our goal here at the Library is to provide information to our patrons; everyone who is employed here is expected to take a role in that whenever necessary. The following points will help you be more comfortable and effective in a customer service position:

- **Be familiar with the Library**: The majority of questions asked by patron relate to the locations of people, items and resources in the building. Pay attention during the orientation walkthrough, explore the building on your own to be more familiar with the location of items and resources, and get to know the names and faces of staff and the locations of their offices.

- **Build up your relationships**: It’s a lot easier to ask someone for help if you know them. Because of this, building a good working relationship with the Library patrons, staff and your co-workers can help you and help THEM if there’s a question they can’t answer.

- **NEVER answer “I don’t know”**: If you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t say “I don’t know” and walk away. Instead, say “I’m not sure, but let me find you someone who will know.” Take the question to the Information Desk, or one of the staff. It makes the patron happy, makes you look good, and helps build a good relationship between the patron and the library.

Section III: Appropriate Behavior

In any work environment, some behaviors and attitudes are considered unacceptable, some behaviors are required in order to complete your job, and some restrictions in behavior are necessary for safety’s sake. The following items fall under one or more of these categories; follow them and enjoy many a happy and successful day on the job:

- **Attire**: Although there is no formal dress code for Student Employees, this is a public organization, and you are expected to dress neatly and maintain good
personal hygiene. For safety’s sake, you are also required to wear shoes at all times.

- **Nametags:** Your nametag identifies you as an employee of the Library, and as such, must be worn whenever you are on shift. It must be worn at chest level and be visible to patrons.

- **Have a good attitude at the workplace:** Having a good attitude makes the day go by faster, makes you more productive, and helps everyone else’s day be a little bit better. Try to show the following traits:
  - **Initiative:** Initiative, in the context of the workplace, means that you look for things that need to be done and work towards doing them, and that you anticipate the needs of patrons. If you see a patron struggling with something, offer to help them. If you see a job left unfinished by a co-worker and you aren’t busy, assist in finishing it. A worker who shows a lot of initiative shines in the eyes of any employer!
  - **Courtesy:** Be friendly and courteous to everyone. One time being rude can mar a relationship permanently.
  - **Confidence:** Always try to do your best, no matter what you are doing. Others take notice when you know you’re doing well.
  - **Be focused:** Once you start a task, do your best to see to it that it gets finished. Try to avoid unnecessary distractions and taking on too many tasks at once; fragmenting your day lowers the speed and quality of your work.
  - **Be professional:** As an employee of Collins Library, you are expected to demonstrate a positive attitude and conduct yourself in a professional manner. Goofing off, spending excessive time socializing, and playing computer games are not acceptable uses of your work time. Use your best judgment as to what behaviors are unprofessional.
  - **If you are unsure how to proceed, ASK don’t GUESS:** If you are doing detail-oriented work and are having difficulty or are unsure of how to do something, ask a staff member for help. Guessing wrong can have serious consequences. It’s better to be safe than sorry.
  - **Take responsibility for your actions:** Working in the adult world means that you are responsible for your own actions. Everyone makes mistakes, and most people understand and forgive you if you are honest and up-front about your mistakes. In then end, whatever consequences you face will likely be far less severe than those you will face if you try to cover up an error.