7.00 FAIR TREATMENT PRACTICES POLICY

The fair treatment practices process is initiated by the employee as a means to assist in problem resolution with a supervisor or co-worker.

Consistent with its vision to be the best, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology strives for a workplace where accountability, diversity, opportunity, openness, professionalism, teamwork, and a sense of purpose combine to create a rewarding work experience that promotes fairness and respect for all employees.

However, it is inevitable that in any workplace problems may arise. The Institute recognizes the right of each employee to seek solutions concerning disagreements arising from workplace relationships, working conditions, employment practices, or differences of interpretation of policy. The Institute believes it is essential that those disagreements be resolved in an effective and timely manner that is fair to the individuals involved.

To assure fair consideration of all employee problem(s), a process for review and appeal has been established. The Fair Treatment Practices Policy will be revised and updated periodically.

- Employees are encouraged to use the Fair Treatment Practices Policy and must not, under any circumstances, be penalized for doing so.

- Rose-Hulman encourages the use of an open door practice which establishes a complaint resolution process and fosters an atmosphere of goodwill and cooperation.

- To ensure a fair and open workplace, the Institute requires that all employees follow the policies outlined in this Handbook.

Problem Resolution Procedure

Step 1
When an employee has a question or concern, it is important that the situation be known immediately. When a problem arises, it should be resolved on an informal basis within the employee’s department or office if at all possible. The employee is encouraged to discuss his/her concern with the person causing the difficulty. If the employee is uncomfortable with this process or if he or she has used this process and is not satisfied with the result, the employee should discuss the issue with his/her immediate supervisor.

Step 2
Employees are encouraged to use the services provided by Human Resources. If the employee is uncertain about how to approach a co-worker, supervisor, or staff in Human Resources, he/she may first seek counsel from a member of the Ombudsman Committee. This counsel is available at any step in the process.
Human Resources provide a confidential channel through which to address workplace concerns and explore ways to address those concerns. The Director of Human Resources serves as a neutral mediator to encourage discussion among the parties involved in a dispute. The goals of the mediation are to find a mutually acceptable solution to the problem and to improve the working relationship. The Director of Human Resources will also determine whether Institute policies have been followed.

The Ombudsman Committee consists of the elected faculty and staff representatives to the Board of Trustees. The President may appoint additional persons to the committee to ensure diversity. This committee serves as a confidential and informal channel through which to address workplace concerns. Committee members will help the employee express needs, identify issues, and explore possible solutions to their concerns. If no resolution is reached, all other channels remain available.

**Step 3**
If discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the problem to the employee’s satisfaction, or if the concern involves the immediate supervisor, the employee should discuss the matter with the next level supervisor. The employee is encouraged to inform his/her supervisor of the intention to discuss the issue with the next level supervisor. If necessary, this process may continue until the employee receives a decision from the area Vice President.

**Step 4**
The employee may appeal a decision reached in the earlier steps to the Employee Relations Committee. However, the committee has only recommending authority. Among its responsibilities are to provide “a suitable forum for mediating conflict and for facilitating change” and “advocating for a fair and supportive workplace worthy of Rose-Hulman.” The Employee Relations Committee will schedule meetings with the individuals involved in the dispute and may request information to assist in the process. If information or records requested violate the privacy of an employee or another person, the person’s permission must be obtained. Once the committee has reviewed all of the information necessary to make a decision, it will meet and discuss the problem in a closed meeting. Following this discussion, the committee will make a recommendation regarding the dispute. A majority vote is required. The committee will report its recommendation to the parties involved and to the President.

**Step 5**
If the employee does not consider the matter satisfactorily resolved, he/she may request a meeting with the President to discuss the issue. After reviewing the information related to the complaint or dispute, the President will make a final decision and notify those involved.
FAIR TREATMENT PRACTICES POLICY FLOWCHART

Step 1
Resolve concern within Department/Office
• Discuss concern with person causing difficulty
• If issue not resolved, discuss with immediate supervisor

Step 2
Use Services of Human Resources and/or Seek Counsel from Ombudsman Committee Member. All Discussions are Confidential.
• Human Resources serves as a confidential mediator for employees to express concerns and explore solutions to problems.
• Human Resources will determine whether Institute policies have been followed.
• Ombudsman Committee serves as an informal, confidential resource for employees to seek advice and counsel during any step in this process.

Step 3
If Immediate Supervisor is the one with whom the employee is having the problem, or if Problem is not Resolved by the Immediate Supervisor, Employees Should Discuss Concerns with the Next Level Supervisor up to the Vice President
• This step may continue until the employee receives a decision from the area Vice President.

Step 4
Appeal Process to the Employee Relations Committee
• Employee Relations Committee reports its recommendation to the President

Step 5
Employee May Request Meeting with the President
• President’s decision is final