

# Student Employee Handbook

This handbook has been prepared by the Financial Aid Office, Office of Student Employment, to assist you as a student employee. Please read it carefully, since it contains important information about participation in the Student Employment Program at Cleveland State University.

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The Financial Aid Office of Cleveland State University administers the Student Employment Program. Student employment is designed to assist matriculating students in financing their education, developing essential job skills, and enhancing their University experience and success at CSU.

Each year there are some 2,000 student positions and students earn over \$3 million in wages. It is our goal to contribute to your overall career development and facilitate degree-related work experiences where ever possible.

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## Why Work On-Campus?

Research shows that students who work on-campus:

- enjoy greater academic success,
- are more connected to the University,
- develop strong relationships with members of the University community who can help them deal with a variety of questions and concerns,
- Have employers who support their educational endeavors and coordinate work schedules with academic schedules.

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## How Will Student Employment Help Prepare Me For My Career?

Participants in the student employment program have the opportunity to develop essential career skills including:

- technical skills,
- communication and decision making skills,
- team building and interpersonal skills,
- personal responsibility and professional maturity.

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### **What Are The Basic Rules Of Student Employment?**

In order to be eligible to participate in the CSU Student Employment Program, students must observe the following basic guidelines:

- Students are eligible to work as student employees when they are enrolled for at least 6 credit hours in a degree seeking program during the regular academic semesters (fall and spring).
  - Please see the [Summer Semester Guidelines](#) for information about working during the summer term.
  - A one-time exemption is allowed if less than 6 credit hours are needed to graduate. Please provide a letter of documentation from your academic office.
  - Graduate students conducting thesis or dissertation research may also be exempt from the 6 credit hour rule. Please provide a letter of documentation from your academic office.
- Students may not work more than 20 hours per week, during regular academic terms. This includes a combination of hours for all CSU positions you may have: student employment, graduate assistantship, tuition waiver, stipend position, lecturer, continuing education, etc. Students who work two or more jobs should notify each of their supervisors, and students must take responsibility to ensure that they do not violate the work hour student employment rule. If in doubt, call the Student Employment Office at 687-5577.
- Students generally may work up to 40 hours a week during breaks between semesters, if they met the criteria during the preceding semester and have their supervisor's approval.
- Newly admitted students may begin work during the break before their first semester, including during the summer prior to their first fall semester of classes, if they have registered for at least 6 credit hours for the upcoming term.
- Student employees may not work during their scheduled class times.
- Student employees may **never** work more than 40 hours in a week.
- It is the student's responsibility to understand and abide by the student employment regulations and the policies of the employing department.

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### **What Happens If I Violate Student Employment Regulations?**

Students who violate the student employment regulations

- may be terminated or lose their tax advantage of being exempt from OPERS deduction.
- will not be permitted to participate in the student employment program during breaks; including the entire summer semester (unless enrolled).
- decisions are based on additional guidelines and a determination by the Student Employment Program Manager.

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## International Students Take Note. . .

To avoid any conflicts, international students should confirm permission to work through the Center for International Services and Programs.

UC302  
216-687-3910  
[intadvisor@csuohio.edu](mailto:intadvisor@csuohio.edu)

While most of the student employment regulations are not different for national and international students, there are some differences:

- International students are mandated by their visa status to maintain full-time enrollment each academic semester. Student employees must get approval for any exemption to this regulation from both the Center for International Services and the Student Employment Office.
- You will need to apply for a U.S. Social Security number in order to begin your employment. The closest office to apply is at the Federal Building, located at 1240 East Ninth Street in Downtown Cleveland. It is suggested that you take the following with you:
  - Passport,
  - I-20,
  - Work authorization letter from Center for International Services and Programs
- Ask the social security administrator for a letter stating that you have applied for your number. Keep a copy of the letter and give the original to your employer to attach to your hiring information that will be sent to the Student Employment Office.
- Make an appointment with the Payroll Office (687-3611) to complete tax forms required of international students.
- All new student employees are required to complete an I-9. It is also important that you be able to verify eligibility to work by providing information relative to the following:

### I attest, under penalty of perjury, that I am (check one of the following):

- A citizen or national of the United States  
 A Lawful Permanent Resident (Alien # A \_\_\_\_\_)  
 An alien authorized to work until \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Alien # or Admission # \_\_\_\_\_)

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## What Is Federal Work-Study (FWS)?

Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a federal financial aid program designed to help students meet educational expenses. Students earn this award by working in the student employment program. Only students who are citizens or resident aliens can receive a federal work-study award, which is based on financial need.

Each year, students indicate on their FAFSA if they are interested in receiving a FWS award. The Financial Aid Office selects as many participants for this program as funding allows.

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## How Does FWS Work?

Students who receive a FWS award in their financial aid package may earn up to the amount of the award during a given academic year or semester.

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## **If I Receive A FWS Award, Am I Obligated To Participate In The Work-Study Program?**

No, students who receive a FWS award are not obligated to participate in the student employment program. However, if you have a FWS award and work in a student employment position, the award will automatically be utilized.

Please note that the Financial Aid Office may adjust or cancel a student's Work-Study award if it is not being utilized. Unused FWS is returned to the Federal Government.

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## **Why Is FWS Important To Me?**

- Students with a federal FWS award are in demand by the University because wages paid to students with a FWS award are reimbursed to the University by the Federal Government up to the full amount of the award.
- FWS reduces reliance on student loans and helps to reduce debt upon graduation.
- FWS earnings do not increase taxable reported income which could otherwise reduce future student aid or other assistance which may be received.

For specific questions about your FWS award and other financial aid questions, please contact the Financial Aid Office at (216) 687-3764, or go to UC560.

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## **What Is A Non-FWS Student Job?**

A non-FWS job is any student position for which wages paid to that student come directly from the department's budget. The Federal Government does not reimburse wages for a non-FWS job.

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## **What Are The Basic Rules Of Student Employment?**

Student employees who are also registering for the cooperative education work experience (CSC 300 or CSC 400), must secure the permission of their Cooperative Education Counselor. This permission can be in the form of an email or memorandum from the Counselor to the Student Employment Office.

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## **GETTING A STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POSITION**

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## **How Do I Find A Student Position?**

- Student positions are posted only on the web at <http://www.csuohio.edu/fao/jobpostings.htm>
- Check the jobs frequently as these are updated regularly.
- Please apply directly to the hiring department and follow their guidelines. You will be contacted if an interview is to be scheduled.

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### **How Do I Find a Graduate Assistantship?**

Graduate assistantships and tuition waivers are not handled through the Student Employment Office. Please contact the [College of Graduate Studies](#) for information on assistantships and waivers.

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### **How Do I Find A Cooperative Education Position?**

Students must contact their Career Coordinator for participation in our Cooperative Education Program. Call the Financial Aid Office, (216) 687-2233 to schedule an appointment or [read more about the co-op program](#).

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### **How Do I Find A Reading Tutor Position?**

Students with a FWS award can contact Financial Aid Office at 687-2233 to get additional information or visit the [America Reads web page](#).

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### **Will I Be Able To Find A Student Position Related To My Field Of Study?**

It is our hope that you may be able to secure a position that is related to your academic program and career goals. However, a student position can be enjoyable and beneficial even if it is not significantly related to your field of study. Keep an open mind when choosing a job. All student jobs will help you gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the working world and most will help you to develop these essential job skills:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Computer Skills         | Communication Skills                      |
| Writing Skills          | Problem Solving Skills                    |
| Decision Making Skills  | Team Member Skills                        |
| Customer Service Skills | Personal Responsibility & Time Management |

Even if your job does not relate directly to your career interests, you should try to make the most of your student position. Many supervisors will offer students the opportunity to expand routine jobs to encompass new responsibilities and areas of interest. The more initiative you demonstrate on your job, the more likely it is that your supervisor will assign you higher level tasks and/or promote you.

There are a wide variety of positions available each year. Job categories include:

|                      |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Athletics/Recreation | Communications                     |
| Computer             | Customer Service/Front Desk        |
| Financial            | General Office/Business Management |
| Laboratory/Technical | Library                            |
| Research             | Residence Life                     |
| Security/Maintenance | Special Projects                   |

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### **Can I Have More Than One Student Position?**

Yes, you may have more than one on-campus job. Students who work two or more jobs should notify each of their supervisors, and students must take responsibility to ensure that they do not violate the work hour student employment rule of not working more than 20 hours per week during academic terms. This includes a combination of hours for all CSU positions you may have: student employment, graduate assistantship, tuition waiver, stipend position, lecturer, continuing education, etc. (See [What Happens if I Violate Student Employment Regulations?](#))

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### **What Can I Expect From The Student Employment Interview?**

The interview process differs from department to department. Some supervisors may request that you send a resume and/or cover letter prior to the interview or you may need to complete a simple student employment application when you arrive for the interview.

Student employment job interviews are often fairly informal. However, while on an interview, you should always:

- dress appropriately,
- conduct yourself in a professional manner, and
- provide accurate information regarding your skills and past work experiences.
- Supervisors usually address the following topics during a student job interview:
  - responsibilities of the job;
  - skills required; i.e., good communications skills, computer skills, etc.;
  - start date, length of employment, and hours needed;
  - pay rate for the job.

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### **What Do I Need To Do To Complete The Hiring Process?**

Once you are hired for a student job, you and your supervisor will complete your Student Employment Form (SEF).

- Students who have not worked on campus before will need to complete other tax forms that your supervisor will provide.
  - International students need to contact the Payroll Office (687-3611) and make an appointment to complete their payroll taxes relative to their home country. (See [International Students Take Note](#))

- All new hires are required to complete an I-9 form and to provide original documents as required. This form is used for proof of eligibility to work in the U.S. It needs to be completely and accurately filled out.
- Students have the option of participating in or being exempted from participating in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). Both the enrollment and exemption forms will be provided. Students should complete only one of the OPERS forms. (See [Summer Semester Guidelines](#) and [What happens if I Violate Student Employment Regulations?](#) for additional information on OPERS regulations)
- All employment and tax forms should be attached to the Student Employment Form and forwarded to the appropriate Student Employment Office RW 280.
- The Affirmative Action Office invites all students with disabilities, Vietnam-era or other protected Veterans to be included in the University's Affirmative Action Program. If you are interested in self-identifying, please complete the invitation to self identify located at: [http://www.csuohio.edu/affirmative\\_action/index.htm](http://www.csuohio.edu/affirmative_action/index.htm)
- **Students who have worked on campus within the past three years** will generally not be required to complete forms other than the Student Employment Form.

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### **Very Important Student Employment Issues**

**Confidentiality** - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that guarantees the confidentiality of student records. As a student employee of Cleveland State University, FERPA violations may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the loss of your job. You must not, under any circumstances, release student information to anyone (including parents and employers), unless your position specifically requires you to do so and you have been instructed to do so by your supervisor. Otherwise, refer any requests for information about a student to your supervisor. All student employees who work on campus must read and sign an agreement not to violate the confidentiality of any student or the University. Your supervisor will ask you to sign this agreement when you begin working.

Additionally, do not discuss student information with family or friends and never check into student records as a favor.

**Discrimination** - As a member of the student employment program, it is essential that you respect the diversity that every individual brings to the University. Cleveland State University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in employment and education. No person at the university will be denied opportunity for employment or education or be subject to discrimination in any project, program, or activity because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, handicap or disability, disabled veteran, Vietnam era veteran or protected veteran status. If you encounter such treatment, contact the Affirmative Action Office at 687-2223 for additional information.

**Sexual Harassment Policy-** As a member of the student employment program, it is essential that you understand this sensitive issue. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is both reprehensible and unlawful. It is the policy of Cleveland State University that no member of the university community shall engage in sexual harassment. The university community will not tolerate sexual harassment because it creates an unacceptable or injurious working or educational environment. Members of the university community who believe that they have been sexually harassed should seek resolution of the problem through the University's informal and formal grievance procedures. If you encounter such treatment, contact the Affirmative Action Office at 687-2223.

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**Student Conduct Code-** All students should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code which can be found at [http://www.csuohio.edu/student-life/student\\_handbook/index.html](http://www.csuohio.edu/student-life/student_handbook/index.html)

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### **Student Employee Responsibilities**

Taking a job involves a commitment. When you accept employment, you become a member of a working unit that depends on you. As a student employee, you are expected to:

- Take the job seriously and perform at the highest level of your ability,
- Treat your supervisor and fellow employees with respect,
- Dress appropriately for the job location,
- Personal conversations need to be limited. When you are off duty, do not congregate in the work area. Your work station is not a social setting.
- Homework, studying or any other non-work or personal activity should be done on your own time. When assigned tasks are completed, consult your supervisor for your next assignment.
- Help to keep the desk and work area where you are assigned free of clutter. Return equipment and supplies to their proper places after use. Work areas should present a neat and orderly appearance to the public.
- If you must leave the work area, notify your supervisor before you leave.
- Eating or drinking beverages in work areas unless it is permitted by your supervisor.
- Computers, copiers, and other office equipment and supplies, are for work assignments only and not for personal use.
- Personal phone calls, including calls on your personal cell phone, are discouraged. Please ask your friends and family to call you at home.
- If you have children, please do not bring them to stay with you while you are working. If you cannot get a baby sitter, make arrangements with your supervisor to have someone else work your assigned hours.

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### **All About Work Schedules**

- Establish a work schedule with your supervisor that does not interfere with your classes and one that you can commit to keep.
- If for any reason you cannot work your scheduled shift, you must notify your supervisor before your work shift begins.
- Regulations prohibit students from working during their scheduled class times.

- Students can work their normal schedule (up to 20 hours) during finals week. Please see your supervisor about any schedule changes you may need to make during this week to study for exams.
- Student employees in good standing may be scheduled to work up to 40 hours per week between semesters. Your supervisor will decide on times and hours needed.

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### **What About Breaks?**

Meal Breaks - Many of our student employees work 4 to 6 hour shifts and they would rather work straight through and go home earlier, rather than taking a meal break. Students working more than 4 hours must be offered a meal break. Students scheduled to work more than 6 hours straight must be provided at least a ½ hour unpaid break.

Comfort breaks - Most students work in areas where they are free to use restroom facilities at their convenience. In situations where students aren't free to take periodic comfort breaks without some work coverage being provided, supervisors will arrange such coverage.

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### **What If Problems Arise Between My Supervisor And Me?**

You should first attempt to discuss your concerns with your supervisor and try to mutually agree on a resolution of any problem(s). If this approach does not work, you may contact the student employment department for additional assistance.

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### **Can I Quit My Student Job?**

Most supervisors hope that student workers will remain throughout the academic year or summer term. However, changes in class schedule, academic pressures, or other factors may make such a commitment impossible. If you must terminate your employment, discuss this decision with your supervisor. Whenever possible, give your supervisor at least two weeks' notice.

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### **Can I Be Terminated From My Student Job?**

Student employment positions are considered "at-will" employment. However, most student positions are terminated for:

- poor performance,
- violation of student employment regulations,
- graduation or academic dismissal,
- budgetary reasons

If your supervisor is not satisfied with your performance, he or she is encouraged to discuss the concerns with you and to specify a period of time in which you are expected to improve. If you are unable to meet the supervisor's expectations, you may anticipate being terminated.

In extreme cases--such as gross misconduct--your supervisor may terminate your employment immediately. Gross misconduct includes, but is not limited to, theft of University property, harassment, violation of computer security policies, violation of confidentiality, and fraudulent reporting of hours worked.

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## **Do I Have To Reapply For My Student Job Every Semester?**

Your supervisor is the person who can approve your continued employment. Be sure you have a clear understanding about your status.

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### **Maintaining Time Sheets**

You will be provided with bi-weekly time sheets. Please keep careful track of your time, noting that student workers are only paid for time worked. At the end of the pay period, sign and submit the time sheet to your supervisor. Your supervisor will verify the hours worked and will submit the time sheet to the Payroll Office, which will authorize payment.

Partial hours should be reported in the following way:

| <b>Minutes Worked</b> | <b>Report as</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 6                     | 0.1              |
| 12                    | 0.2              |
| 18                    | 0.3              |
| 24                    | 0.4              |
| 30                    | 0.5              |
| 36                    | 0.6              |
| 42                    | 0.7              |
| 48                    | 0.8              |
| 54                    | 0.9              |
| 60                    | 1.0              |

Please note that holidays may result in a need to submit time sheets earlier than usual. Late timesheets may result in delays in receiving your paycheck.

Fraudulent reporting of hours worked is categorized as gross misconduct and will result in termination of your student position.

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## When And How Will I Receive My Paychecks?

Checks are issued every other Friday. You should begin receiving your paycheck no later than the Friday of your fourth week of work, provided your paperwork was all processed before the weekly payroll deadline.

All student workers are encouraged to have paychecks directly deposited in their bank account. Click here for a copy of the [direct deposit form](#).

- **With Direct Deposit -**  
Students who choose the direct deposit option:
  - will have checks promptly deposited directly into their own account,
  - will not have to wait in line to pick up their paychecks,
  - will receive a pay stub detailing their earnings.
- **Without Direct Deposit -**  
Students who do not have the paycheck directly deposited will be required to go to the Bursar's office, UC460, each payday, with their student ID, to pick up their paycheck.

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## Are Taxes Withheld From My Earnings?

Yes, student employment earnings are subject to federal and state income taxes.

Each January, the University Payroll Office mails to all employees a W-2 form, which details earnings from the previous calendar year. Your W-2 will be sent to the address that appears on your paycheck, so it is essential that you keep your address updated with the Registrar's Office.

During the academic year, students who are enrolled for six or more credits and who are working on campus are exempt from FICA (Social Security and Medicare). See [Summer Semester Guidelines](#) and [What Happens If I Violate Student Employment Regulations?](#) for additional information.

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## How Much Will I Earn As A Student Employee?

Your earnings will depend on the number of hours you work each week and your hourly rate. Supervisors are asked to rate jobs based on the complexity and responsibilities of the job and the skills and experience required to perform the job. Student employees will generally be paid on an hourly basis. Holidays, snow days, sick days, break periods do not count as hours worked and are not compensated.

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## Will My Pay Rate Remain The Same Over Time?

- Students who continue to work in the same department and who maintain a satisfactory job performance may receive a merit increase.
- If a student's position is upgraded or responsibilities increase, a student may receive a promotion.
- Pay increases are dictated by individual departments. For more information you should contact your supervisor.

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## Will My Work Performance Be Evaluated?

Yes. The Student Employment staff requests that supervisors complete a written evaluation of your work every semester, at the time of any pay increases and/or promotions. We recommend to supervisors that they review the evaluation with their student employee.

We also ask that all student employees complete an assessment of their work experience. Click here for a copy of the [assessment form](#).

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## SUMMER SEMESTER GUIDELINES

### How Is Eligibility To Work During Summer Different From The Rest Of The School Year?

- Student workers in good standing who complete at least 6 credit hours in spring term and intend to return in the fall for at least 6 credit hours and who are not enrolled for any summer courses may during the summer term.
- During the summer term, student workers registered for less than 6 credit hours will be enrolled in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). For information on obtaining a refund of the OPERS deduction, please contact the Payroll Office (687-3611) at the end of the summer break.
- Work schedules and work hours are determined by the supervisor within these guidelines.
- Student workers who work more than 20 hours per week when they are not eligible to do so may lose their right to work on campus for the remainder of the term.
- The summer term work schedule is based on contact hours of enrollment (not credit hours). Below is a chart to help you calculate your contact hours of enrollment.
- When a student worker exceeds six contact hours in any given term, he or she can work up to 20 hours per week for the duration of that session.
- When a student worker in good standing is enrolled for less than six contact hours he or she can work up to 40 hours per week for the duration of that session.

6 week session.....multiply 2.2 x the number of credit hours = Total contact hours

8 week session.....multiply 1.3 x the number of credit hours = Total contact hours

10 week session....multiply 1.1 x the number of credit hours =Total contact hours

12 week session....multiply .8 x the number of credit hours = Total contact hours

**Example 1:** You are enrolled in a 6 week session, taking a 3 credit hour course:  
 $2.2 \times 3$  credit hours = 6.6 contact hours

If this student meets all other criteria, the student employee may work up to 20 hours per week during the 6 week session. When the session ends, the student may begin working up to 40 hours per week.

**Example 2:** You are enrolled in a 12 week session, taking a 3 credit hour course:  $.8 \times 3$  credit hours = 2.4 contact hours

If this student meets all other criteria, the student employee may work up to 40 hours per week even during this time of enrollment.

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### **NEED MORE HELP?**

The student employment staff would like to ensure that students have the best possible student employment experience. Feel free to contact us to ask for guidance or to offer suggestions on how we may better serve you. Contact the Financial Aid Office at 687-5577 for prompt service, or email [studentemploy@csuohio.edu](mailto:studentemploy@csuohio.edu).

**Financial Aid Office  
Student Employment Office  
University Center 560  
(216) 687-5577**

*Cleveland State University's policies provide for equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment and admission to all programs of the University.*