



Northern Illinois University

GENERAL COUNSEL

Opportunity and Position Summary

Northern Illinois University (NIU), a student-centered, research focused public institution located in DeKalb, Illinois, seeks applications for General Counsel. The General Counsel reports directly to the President, serves as chief legal counsel for the university and Parliamentarian to the Board of Trustees. The General Counsel is the principal legal advisor to the President, Board of Trustees, and executive officers of the university. The General Counsel is a member of the President's Senior Roundtable, supervises the Office of General Counsel, and provides legal guidance for all aspects of university operations. Further information about the Office of the General Counsel can be found at <http://www.niu.edu/generalcounsel/> or in [Appendix I](#).

Overview of Campus

Chartered in 1895, Northern Illinois University is a comprehensive institution in one of the most diverse and dynamic regions of the country. The main campus in DeKalb is 65 miles west of Chicago with outreach locations throughout northern Illinois. With 19,015 students, NIU attracts students from across Illinois, the country and the world. The university includes seven degree-granting colleges: Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts. NIU offers its diverse student body an education that is nationally recognized in quality, nationally ranked in value and aimed at providing a transformational experience in support of personal, career and life success. Further information about Northern Illinois University can be found at www.niu.edu or in [Appendix II](#).

Summary of Essential Duties and Responsibilities

The following describe the general nature and level of work, other duties may be assigned:

- Represent the university, President, and Board of Trustees on all legally related matters. Manage university responses to litigation, legal investigations, and other legal proceedings.
- Advise the President, Board of Trustees, Vice Presidents, and senior administrators on all matters pertaining to applicable litigation, laws, regulations, and other duties under the law.
- Serve as Parliamentarian to the Board of Trustees, oversee rules of order for Board meetings and actions, interpret and maintain Board Regulations, and advise Trustees on corporate procedures and obligations.

- Maintain expertise and provide legal guidance, updates, reviews, and recommendations to the President and senior administrators on existing and evolving laws (including statutes and regulations) and legal trends involving all aspects of university academic and non-academic operations. Such areas include, but are not limited to, labor and employment law, administrative and constitutional law, contracts, privacy, academic and research regulations, construction and real property regulations, intellectual property, and applicability of state and federal laws.
- Communicate and confer with external entities, such as legal venues, agencies, university organizations, and other legal consortia that represent the interests of universities, on national legal trends for colleges and universities and the development of specific university legal matters.
- Supervise the Office of General Counsel, including assigned staff and attorneys.
- Conduct legal research and prepare documents including opinions, memoranda, briefs, reports, and correspondence.
- Prepare and review reports and correspondence for the President and senior administrators.
- Supervise and coordinate the engagement and work product of outside counsel, appointed Attorney's General, and designated legal representatives.
- Provide interpretations of existing and emerging laws and regulations, for litigation prevention and other purposes.
- Assist with risk assessments and other aspects of university compliance.
- Represent the university in hearings, court proceedings, other legal proceedings, and meetings.
- Prepare presentations, as needed, for the President, meetings of the Board of Trustees, and other settings.
- Serve as a liaison for the President on legal matters. Advise the President on campus issues and communications.
- Track public policy issues involving new and evolving laws, including statutes and regulations.
- Recommend policy updates and assist with policy development.
- Manage and coordinate special projects on behalf of the President that have both legal and strategic importance to the university.
- Performs other duties as assigned by the President and/or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Qualifications

Required

- Law degree from an ABA-accredited law school;
- License to practice in the State of Illinois: *Candidate must be a member in good standing of the State Bar of Illinois or be eligible for and achieve admission to the State Bar of Illinois within one year of the date of appointment;*
- A minimum of 10 years of law practice experience;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate complex issues and legal concepts to non-lawyers;
- Demonstrated ability to navigate effectively through and successfully work with the different departments and constituencies within a university community;

- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple priorities and work under deadlines;
- Excellent presentation and project management skills;
- Excellent leadership and managerial skills, including the ability to effectively lead and manage the staff, attorneys and activities of the office; and
- Excellent judgment and interpersonal skills.

Preferred

- Preference for candidates with substantive experience in the legal representation of academic institutions, including (i) 10 years+ in practice and 6+ years of experience advising academic institutions, either in an in-house or outside counsel capacity, (ii) deep knowledge of laws and regulations applicable to academic institutions, and (iii) good familiarity in general with the operational and organizational environment of undergraduate or graduate institutions;
- Demonstrated ability to gain trust and inspire confidence at all levels of an academic institution.

Core Competencies

- Commitment to the highest standards of quality, integrity, ethics, fairness and public responsibility.
- Commitment to the diversity that characterizes the university setting and to furthering diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Superior knowledge and experience with the broad spectrum of statutes, regulations, and legal procedures relevant to university operations.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills necessary to effectively represent the university, President, and Board of Trustees in all legal matters.
- Leadership qualities and expertise necessary to manage the full range of legal functions.
- Superior managerial skills demonstrating leadership, creativity, negotiation skills, as well as the ability to adapt and continuously improve the effectiveness of university legal services.

Application/Nomination Process

To apply for this position, please submit your cover letter, resume/curriculum vitae, and three professional references to <http://employment.niu.edu/postings/32265> by February 26, 2018. The review of applications will begin following the February 26, 2018 priority deadline and the position will remain open until filled.

For additional information about the General Counsel position, you may contact Dr. Gerald C. Blazey, Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships, at gblazey@niu.edu or 815-753-1883.

The appointment of the General Counsel is subject to Board of Trustees approval. Criminal background check, educational, licensure, and employment verifications required.

In accordance with applicable statutes and regulations, NIU is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, age, physical and mental disability, marital status, veteran

status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, or any other factor unrelated to professional qualifications, and will comply with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations and orders pertaining to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action.