



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

500 WEST MADISON ST., SUITE 1475  
CHICAGO, IL 60661-4544

REGION V  
ILLINOIS  
INDIANA  
IOWA  
MINNESOTA  
NORTH DAKOTA  
WISCONSIN

April 27, 2018

Lisa C. Freeman  
Acting President  
Northern Illinois University  
Office of the President  
Altgeld Hall 300  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

*Via electronic mail only: president@niu.edu*

Re: OCR # 05-18-2035

Dear President Freeman:

This is to advise you of the disposition of a complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), in November 2017 against Northern Illinois University (University). Specifically, the Complainant alleged that the University discriminated against her in October 2017 when the student teaching field rotation site where the University placed the Complainant for TLEE 385 terminated her placement because of the Complainant's disability.

OCR is responsible for enforcing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. § 794, and its implementing regulation, at 34 C.F.R. Part 104, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12134, and its implementing regulation, at 28 C.F.R. Part 35. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of Federal financial assistance and Title II prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities. As a recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Department and a public entity, the University is subject to these laws.

On April 26, 2018, the University submitted the enclosed, signed resolution agreement (Agreement) to OCR. When fully implemented, the Agreement will address the allegation. OCR will monitor<sup>1</sup> the University's implementation of the Agreement. When OCR concludes the University has fulfilled the terms of the Agreement OCR will close the case. The complainant may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

Please be advised that the University may not harass, coerce, intimidate, discriminate or otherwise retaliate against any individual because he or she asserted a right or privilege under a law enforced by OCR or filed a complaint, testified, or participated in the complaint resolution process. If this happens, the individual may file a retaliation complaint with OCR.

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 501: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrcpm.pdf>

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. In the event that OCR receives such a request, OCR will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personally identifiable information that could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy if released.

OCR thanks your staff, especially Mr. Tom O’Grady, Assistant General Counsel, for the cooperation extended to OCR in resolving this complaint. We look forward to receiving the University’s first report about its implementation of the Agreement by September 30, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact me at 312-730-1613 or by email [Aleeza.Strubel@ed.gov](mailto:Aleeza.Strubel@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

Aleeza Strubel  
Supervisory Attorney

Enclosure

cc: Gregory A. Brady, Acting Vice President and General Counsel  
Via electronic mail ([gbrady@niu.edu](mailto:gbrady@niu.edu))  
Tom O’Grady, Assistant General Counsel  
Via electronic mail ([togrady1@niu.edu](mailto:togrady1@niu.edu))