Guidelines for the Employee Suggestion Program

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Athens State University Employee Suggestion Program is to encourage employees to be proactive in performing their duties and in strengthening the University's ability to fulfill its mission. The Program's goal is to promote development of creative solutions and suggestions that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the University's operations, and to foster a culture of reward and recognition for those who develop beneficial suggestions.

The Employee Suggestion Program is open to all full-time faculty and staff employees, and to permanent part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week.

II. Procedures

The Employee Suggestion Program is administered through the Office of Human Resources. Human Resources personnel receive written suggestions, oversee the evaluation process to ensure fair and consistent criteria are used, and, based on the evaluations, forward recommendations for awards to the President for approval.

Generally speaking, suggestions must be specific, unique, and constructive, and most often should be related to functions of the area or department in which the employee works. To be considered for adoption, a suggestion should:

- Increase productivity and/or efficiency;
- Lead to improved and safer working conditions;
- Reduce costs; or
- Increase revenue.

Written suggestion statements should include three elements:

- A statement of the problem or area for improvement;
- The specific proposed solution for the problem or area; and
- The possible benefits, including cost savings or revenue when applicable.

Suggestions may be submitted at any time using the standard suggestion form; however, an employee would normally submit only one suggestion per month. The suggestion will be reviewed for the required elements by Human Resources personnel. If the suggestion is considered eligible, it will then be forwarded to the appropriate area or department supervisor for evaluation. The supervisor will complete the evaluation portion of the form within the required time frame, and will return the form and any supporting documentation to the Office of Human Resources. The evaluation should include a recommendation on whether the suggestion can and should be implemented, effort and/or costs involved with implementation, projected cost savings, revenue, and/or improvements in efficiency or operations if implemented, and the estimated time frame required for implementation.

Suggestions which are recommended for implementation by the evaluator will then be forwarded to the Vice President overseeing the area of implementation. If the Vice President concurs with the recommendation of the evaluator, the form will then be forwarded to the Vice President for Financial Affairs for the approval of the award as appropriate (see below).

III. <u>Awards</u>

Monetary Awards

Monetary awards may be authorized by the Office of Financial Affairs and approved by the President when an employee's suggestion is adopted, implemented and results in <u>measurable</u> cost savings or revenue gains.

Monetary awards are based on savings and/or revenue generated in the **<u>first year</u>** of implementation or until final disposition of the suggestion, if more than one year is needed in the opinion of the evaluator. However, under no circumstances will the active life of a suggestion considered for monetary award exceed two years. Timing of the awards will be ongoing and be a result of measurable savings or gains.

Monetary awards are based on a calculation of cost savings or revenue by the department or area supervisor where the suggestion is implemented. Monetary awards will consist of 25% of the actual savings or revenue, up to $5,000.

Nonmonetary Awards

Nonmonetary awards, including time off with pay, certificates of recognition, and gift cards or gift memberships with values generally ranging from $25 to $100, may be awarded when an employee's suggestion results in improved processes, services, or safety for which benefits are **<u>not</u>** readily quantifiable. In some circumstances, suggestions for improvements related to normal safety practices and routine maintenance might be recognized with nonmonetary awards.

IV. <u>Exclusions</u>

The following types of suggestions **will not** be considered for the Program:

- Suggestions currently under consideration;
- Suggestions considered within the preceding two years;
- Suggestions that are not the Suggester's own idea; however, the suggestion may be considered if a different solution is proposed;
- Complaints, grievances or other proposals that do not include a constructive and specific means for improving operations or efficiency;
- Suggestions to correct typographical or factual errors in documents or web pages;
- Suggestions that are clearly within an employee's job responsibilities and which can be implemented by the employee without higher-level approval, unless the suggestion(s) is so unique and/or creative that it warrants special consideration.