

## **Policy Prohibiting Consensual Relationships with Students**

Dating, romantic, or sexual relations between College employees (faculty, staff, and administrators) and students, even if consensual, can negatively affect the educational environment for students, and are therefore not permitted. Members of the faculty and staff are expected to maintain professional relations with all students, act in accordance with standards of professional conduct and avoid conflicts of interest, favoritism, bias, or creation of a hostile environment for students.

A consensual romantic and/or sexual relationship between an employee and a student enrolled at the College can compromise professional standards and expose both the employees and the College to claims of harassment or unlawful discrimination – for example, from the student involved or from other students who allege they are disadvantaged because of the employee’s unprofessional relationship with one of their peers.

Accordingly, the College prohibits consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between employees (faculty, staff, or administrators) and students. An employee found to be engaged in a romantic and/or sexual relationship with a student will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or release.

An employee may eliminate exposure to possible disciplinary action and potential legal liability by not entering into a romantic and/or sexual relationship with a student, by terminating the relationship, or by exploring other remedies with the appropriate Dean or College official. If necessary, the College may take action to terminate any supervisory or educational relationship between an employee and a student who are in a romantic and/or sexual relationship, pending resolution of any violation of this policy.

Entering into a romantic and/or sexual relationship with any student is outside the bounds of an employee’s assigned duties, and he/she may not be eligible for the College’s liability insurance protection should he/she incur civil or criminal liability as a result of his/her actions.

Employees who are married to or are a domestic partner of a student (as defined under the Domestic Partnership Benefits) are exempt from this policy. In situations where such a pre-existing relationship exists, the individual with the supervisory, teaching, advisory or evaluative position over the student must inform his/her supervisor, Chair, Dean, or the Director of Human Resources of the conflict of interest immediately. Necessary steps will be taken to resolve the conflict and eliminate any appearance of favoritism or advantage and/or inconsistencies with any other College policies.