

**CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS**

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There are inherent risks in any sexual or amorous relationship between individuals in unequal positions (such as instructor and student, or supervisor and employee). These relationships may be less consensual than perceived by the individual whose position confers power. The relationship also may be viewed in different ways by each of the parties, particularly in retrospect. Furthermore, circumstances may change, and conduct that was previously welcome may become unwelcome. Even when both parties have consented at the outset to sexual or amorous involvement, past consent may not remove grounds for a later charge of a violation of policy.

Students are particularly vulnerable to the inherent, unequal power present in the employee-student relationship and the potential for coercion because of position with the College, age, and/or relative lack of maturity. Therefore, no employee shall have a sexual or amorous relationship with any student, regardless of whether the employee has or expects to have any authority or responsibilities over that student (except under unusual circumstances, i.e., spouses are employee-student before being hired or enrolled, etc...).

When a consensual sexual or amorous relationship occurs between employees where one party maintains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party, those relationships must be reported to the appropriate supervisor(s) and Human Resources. This may necessitate removal of the employee from the supervision and evaluation of the other party involved in the relationship. Should this change cause undue hardship on other employees or divisions, the parties involved in the consensual relationship may be terminated.

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**Policy History:**

January 9, 2023

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