

CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Romantic/sexual relationships that might be appropriate in other circumstances present serious difficulties within the University community. Relationships between individuals in inherently unequal positions (such as teacher and student, supervisor and employee) undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation process, as well as affect the trust inherent in the educational environment. Consensual romantic or sexual relationships in which one party is in a position to review work or influence the career of the other provides grounds for complaint when that relationship gives undue access or advantage to, restricts opportunities of, or creates a hostile, unethical and unacceptable environment for one of the parties to the relationship or for others. For these reasons, the University prohibits any employee of the University to engage in a consensual romantic or sexual relationship with any University student or any University employee under their supervision. Consent will generally not be considered a defense against a charge of sexual harassment in violation of this Policy. The determination of what constitutes sexual harassment depends on the specific facts and the context in which the conduct occurs.