

Faculty-Student Consensual Relationships Policies

WKU's Current Policy

https://www.wku.edu/senate/archives/archives_2016/c-2-1-1012-consensual-relations-between-faculty-and-students.pdf

Basically, faculty must to notify their department chairs, etc. if they are involved in a consensual relationship with a student. Faculty are not permitted to advise, grade, supervise any student with whom they have an intimate relationship with.

Appalachia State University—Amorous Relationships Policy

http://policy.appstate.edu/Improper_Relationships_between_Students_and_Employees

Zero tolerance policy. This policy also prohibits faculty from supervising, grading, advising, etc. anyone considered a blood relative.

Ball State University—Policy on Consensual or Sexual Relationships

<http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/legal/policyrelationships>

This policy uses legal language and discourages relationships of a sexual/dating nature between staff, faculty, and students. The policy makes it clear that these relationships are permitted but that there is to be no instructional or supervisory relationships if there is a dating/sexual connection between parties. If you fail to remove yourself from a supervisory/instructional role then you have violated your ethical obligations to the university.

Bowling Green State University—Consensual Amorous Relationships Policy

<http://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/human-resources/documents/employment/approved-policies/consensual-amorous-relationships-policy.pdf>

This policy is similar to the one WKU is currently using. BGSU discourages amorous relationships between faculty and students but has certain policies in place in the event that such a relationship should develop. BGSU faculty are required to report to their immediate supervisor who will then take steps to remove the faculty from having supervisory authority over the student. Failure to report these relationships may result in disciplinary actions—but does not mean automatic dismissal.

Central Michigan University—Consensual Relationships

https://www.cmich.edu/office_provost/facit/new_faculty_orientation/Documents/consensual%20relationships.pdf#search=consensual%20relationships

CMU's policy prohibits faculty from having authority over anyone they have or have/had a sexual/romantic relationship with. CMU requires employees to disclose these relationships (between student OR employee) so they can find an alternate supervisor.

Note: the have/had language might be something we should discuss

East Carolina University

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/facultymanual/newmanual/appendixu.pdf>

ECU prohibits relationships in two specific instances 1) when there is supervisory/evaluation authority; 2) if the student is a minor. Again, this uses amorous to define a non-married language relationship between parties.

East Tennessee State University

<http://www.etsu.edu/violencefree/definitions.aspx>

Intimate relationships between supervisors and their subordinates and between faculty members and students are strongly discouraged due to the inherent inequality of power in such situations. These relationships could lead to undue favoritism or the perception of undue favoritism, abuse of power, compromised judgment or impaired objectivity. Engaging in a consensual relationship with a student over whom the faculty member has either grading, supervisory, or other evaluative authority (i.e., member of dissertation committee, thesis director, etc.) constitutes a conflict of interest. The faculty member must take steps to remove the conflict by assigning a different supervisor to the student; resigning from the student's academic committees; or by terminating the relationship at least while the student is in his/her class. Likewise, it is a conflict of interest for a supervisor to engage in a consensual relationship with a subordinate over whom he or she has evaluative or supervisory authority. The supervisor must take action to resolve the conflict of interest by, for example, assigning another individual to supervise and/or evaluate the subordinate.

Florida Atlantic University—Consensual Relations

<http://www.fau.edu/artsandletters/new-pdfs/Policy%20on%20Consensual%20Relations.pdf>

You are barred from having an amorous or sexual relationship with a student whom you are supervising, advising, etc. If you are having a relationship you must disclose the relationship to your immediate supervisor. In addition, if your relationship becomes problematic because of university re-structuring etc. you must also disclose this relationship to your chair, dean, etc. The University will work to help relocate faculty etc.

Illinois State University

<http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/employee/3-1-44.shtml>

This policy is one we might look at a little more closely. ISU distinguishes between instructional context and outside of instructional context. In many ways it is reflective of our current policy but there are a few elements that we might discuss adapting to ours—addressing the issue of sexual harassment specifically, language of “conflict of interest,” and supervisor is responsible for finding an alternative grader, etc.

Indiana State University—Amorous and Familial Relationships

<https://www.indstate.edu/sites/default/files/media/Documents/PDF/adminaff-Proposed%20POLICY%20ON%20AMOROUS%20AND%20FAMILIAL%20RELATIONSHIP%20S.pdf>

Similar to ours—relationships must be reported to supervisors. One of the ways this diverges is the element of determining on a case by case basis whether or not to re-assign grading responsibilities. Failure to report—written up ranging from reprimand to termination.

James Madison University—Faculty Student Relationships

<http://www.jmu.edu/facultysenate/facultyhandbook/iii-policies-procedures/a-rights.shtml#IIIA6>

The university prohibits intimate relationships between faculty members and students in their classes or under their supervision, e.g. teaching or graduate assistants. Such relationships raise the specter of exploitation and/or sexual harassment. A faculty member has a responsibility to avoid any apparent or actual conflict between his or her professional responsibilities and personal interests in dealings or relationships with students.

Note: This is included in the Faculty Handbook. This is something to consider

Middle Tennessee State University—Consensual Relationships

<http://www.mtsu.edu/policies/general-policies/I-01-23.php>

This one was very hard to find. It was buried in their sexual harassment/Title IX materials. Their Title IX information was actually pretty thorough. They also include language about supervisory capacity.

Engaging in a consensual relationship with a student over whom the faculty member has either grading, supervisory, or other evaluative authority (i.e., member of dissertation committee, thesis director, etc.) constitutes a conflict of interest. The faculty member must take steps to remove the conflict by assigning a different supervisor to the student; resigning from the student’s academic committees; or by terminating the relationship at least while the student is in his/her class.

Northern Illinois University—Faculty-Student Relationships

<http://facdevblog.niu.edu/relationships>

A lot of language about why Faculty-Student relationships are inherently a bad idea because of the power dynamic and the requirement that you report such relationships to the appropriate supervisors.

Ohio University—Part of the Policy on Consensual and Familial Relationships Within the Instructional Setting

<https://www.ohio.edu/facultysenate/resolutions/upload/resolution-to-revise-sexual-misconduct-sections-second.pdf>

Note: this is a draft of a senate resolution, but it does give us a sense of what they are thinking about and considering.

OU argues that faculty are not permitted to argue into a consensual or sexual relationship with a student because, in part of the unfair advantage. This policy also argues that it is inappropriate for relatives to grade work of other relatives because of the unfair advantage it can give.

Towson University—Policies Concerning Students

<http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/>

Prohibits relationships between faculty and students especially those in a supervisory context because the issue of consent is dubious—basically do students feel pressured to agree because of the power dynamic? This policy is very explicit about who exactly is included in this policy and identifies graduate students, administrators, faculty, etc.

University of South Alabama—Located in Faculty Handbook

<http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/resources/2015%20-%20NFO%20Handbook.pdf>

Faculty are prohibited from having amorous relationships with students in their class, students they supervise, and students for whom they assign grades. Faculty must report any kind of relationship to their supervisor or risk being charged with sexual harassment and could possibly be fired.

University of Kentucky

