



Q: Life in the academy is quite consuming, wherein many of our relationships develop. Is this policy intending to discourage all consensual relationships?

A: Certainly, the intent is to eliminate any and all potential consensual relationships for faculty or staff with undergraduate students; otherwise the intention is only to bar consensual relationships where exercise of authority exists.

Q: A couple is hired into different divisions in the same School. One becomes Dean. What would happen under this policy?

A: The hire of the couple would not be a policy violation as, until one is appointed as Dean, there would have been no exercise of authority between the two. Assuming that, at that time, the division employing the partner/spouse falls underneath that Dean, the oncoming Dean has responsibility to disclose to the Provost's office, which will initiate a Management Plan (see policy definitions) to eliminate any exercise of authority.

Q: What if, for the above example, a person was being recruited to come in as the Dean and the partner/spouse would be co-recruited as a faculty member within the Dean's domain?

A: For this scenario, the policy would require the immediate consideration and creation of a Management Plan.

Q: A relationship develops between a staff member and faculty member. The staff member works for a division of a school that the faculty member is in. What happens under this policy?

A: Unless the staff member falls within the chain of exercise of authority by the faculty member, or vice versa, there would be no triggering of the policy.

If the positions are such that an exercise of authority would exist in either direction, then the individual with the authority must report immediately to the Dean (for faculty) or the Vice President HR (for staff) for appropriate steps to be taken under the policy.

Q: A couple is hired in the same department; is this allowed under this policy since it is likely at some point that one of them will become the department chair? What happens under this policy?

A: Hiring a couple within the same department is not prohibited under this policy. If one becomes Chair at some point, the Chair and the Dean must adopt a Management Plan before the Chair appointment begins.

Q: What if two individuals have decided to date but have not yet become a committed relationship?

A: Dating would be considered a consensual relationship under this policy.

Q: What if two individuals are in positions where exercise of authority exists, and they do begin to develop romantic feelings?

A: It is the clear intent of this policy to not allow any such consensual relationship to be initiated. If the two individuals believe that a relationship may be inevitable, then the individual with the authority must report to the Dean (faculty) or Vice President HR (staff) for remediation and resolution. One of the individuals may need to change positions in order to resolve a potential policy violation.

Failure to report the developing relationship would constitute a policy violation, as opposed to reporting immediately and seeking resolution.

Q: Does Exercise of Authority for academic oversight only involve teaching, grading, mentoring?

A: No, Exercise of Authority includes any influence on academic standing and progress. For example, voting to confer a degree for a graduate student degree candidate would constitute Exercise of Authority.