



Proposal to Establish a Consensual Relationships Policy

Table with 4 rows and 2-4 columns containing contact information for Steve Rolston, including name, email, phone, unit, and constituency.

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE

A conflict of interest arises when faculty develop amorous/sexual relationships with students in their classes, in campus organizations, or in any situation in which the student might fear reprisals or expect special treatment.

The University's Sexual Misconduct Policy includes a section on Consensual Relationships and Professional Conduct (XIII) as follows:

Sexual relationships that occur in the context of educational or employment supervision and evaluation present potential conflicts of interest. Relationships in which one party maintains a supervisory or evaluative responsibility over the other also reflect an imbalance of power...

Because of the potential conflicts of interest, persons involved in consensual sexual relationships with anyone over whom they have supervisory and/or evaluative responsibilities must inform their supervisor(s) of the relationship(s). Supervisory or evaluative responsibilities may be reassigned, as appropriate.

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

The University's Sexual Misconduct Policy "discourages" but does not prohibit these types of relationships between faculty and students. There have been cases where these types of relationships have been problematic...

SUGGESTION FOR HOW YOUR PROPOSAL WOULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE

Develop a specific policy to prohibit consensual relationships between faculty and the students that they supervise or instruct, because of the inherent conflict of commitment and power imbalance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

University of Maryland Sexual Misconduct Policy & Procedures VI-1.60(A)

Sample Policies at other Institutions:

http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/dean/report-archive/consensual-relationships-policy-committee/final-6-x/

http://policies.cua.edu/eo/sexharass.cfm

http://counsel.cua.edu/fedlaw/nacuanoteamorousrelationships.cfm

<https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/consensual-relationships#responsibilities-procedures>

<https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/consensual-relationships/>

[https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/Consensual\\_Relations\\_011314.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/Consensual_Relations_011314.pdf)

<https://provost.illinois.edu/about/committees/advisory-to-vice-chancellor-for-academic-affairs-and-provost/consensual-relationship-policy-task-force/>