

Pennsylvania College of Technology

Policy Statement

Title: Consensual Relationships

Number: P3.02.20

Approved by:
Presidential Action

Approved Date: 02/1998
Implementation Date: 02/1998
Last Review Date: 09/2024
Last Revision Date: 09/2024

Persons/Departments Affected:
All employees

Responsible Department:
People & Culture

Policy:

- I. Faculty and supervisors should be aware that romantic or sexual relationships with students or subordinate employees have the potential for adverse consequences, including but not limited to the filing of charges of sexual harassment. Given the fundamentally asymmetric nature of the relationship where one party has the power to give grades, evaluations, recommendations, promotions, or performance evaluations, the apparent consensual nature of the relationship is inherently suspect. In such a situation, the person in the position of power assumes special responsibilities. Even when both parties have consented to the relationship, there may be serious concerns about conflicts of interest and unfair treatment of others.

Whenever such a relationship exists, the person in the position of power (including potential for perceived power) is responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor regarding the consensual relationship and, where appropriate, must relinquish decision-making relative to grading and all supervisory responsibility for the other person. In practice this means that when a consensual relationship exists between a supervisor and a subordinate employee, the supervisor must report the relationship to their immediate supervisor, and when a consensual relationship exists between an employee and a student, the employee must notify their immediate supervisor regarding the relationship. Failure to report the consensual relationship as described in this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Revision History:

Date: 09/2024 Edited pronouns

Date: 05/2013 Changed responsible department to Human Resources

Date: 03/2012 Added clarifying language, changed responsible department, added cross references, omitted reference to PSU Guideline ADG03.

Date: 11/2011 Revised to new format

Cross References:

Nepotism Policy, [P3.01.09](#)

Academic Nepotism Policy, [P4.46](#)