

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Subject: Consensual Relationships Policy Reference: F-V-b

Source: President Eff. Date: June 01, 2018

Approval Auth.: President Approved: _____

Remarks: Replaces previous policy dated February 21, 2011

Date: June 01, 2018

For purposes of this policy, consensual romantic relationships exist when two individuals mutually and consensually understand a relationship to be romantic and/or sexual in nature. Direct evaluative or supervisory authority exists when one participant is personally involved in evaluating, assessing, grading, or otherwise determining the other participant's academic or employment performance, progress or potential.

McLennan Community College promotes an atmosphere of professionalism based on mutual trust and respect. The integrity of interaction among faculty, staff and students must not be compromised. When individuals involved in a consensual romantic relationship are in positions of unequal power at the college, there is a potential for a conflict of interest, favoritism, or exploitation. These relationships may be less voluntary than the person with greater power perceives, or circumstances may change and conduct that was once welcome may become unwelcome. The fact that a relationship was initially consensual does not insulate from a later claim of sexual harassment. Moreover, such relationships may lead to restricted opportunities, or the perception thereof, for others in the work or academic environment.

In light of the foregoing, and to protect the integrity of the college academic and work environment, consensual romantic relationships between members of the college community are prohibited when one participant has direct evaluative or supervisory authority over the other because such relationships create an inherent conflict of interest, and may result in favoritism or exploitation. Examples of such relationships that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, employee (faculty, staff or student)/student and supervisor (faculty, staff or student)/subordinate, when those relationships involve direct evaluative or supervisory authority. In such cases, the

individual in the evaluative or supervisory position has an obligation to immediately disclose the consensual romantic relationship to the individual's administrative superior and to cooperate with the administrative superior in removing himself or herself from any such evaluative or supervisory activity in order to eliminate the existing or potential conflict of interest.

Students or employees who believe in good faith that a violation of the foregoing policy has occurred are encouraged to promptly report the violation to the College. Students or employees who believe that such a violation has occurred may:

1. Report the perceived violation to an appropriate college official;
2. File a grievance, under the appropriate college grievance procedure; and/or
3. In the event the reporting party believes one has been discriminated against based upon one's sex, file a complaint with the campus Title IX Coordinator.

The College will promptly investigate and appropriately resolve all such reports.

A violation of this policy, regardless of the manner in which it is brought to the attention of the College, may lead to disciplinary action as appropriate, up to and including termination of employment, following appropriate processes for such discipline.

For Assistance: Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Human Resources or the Vice President of your choice.