

POLICY ON CONSENSUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS

I. Rationale

The integrity of the University's Academic Mission is founded on the mutual trust and respect in faculty-student relationships. Similarly, the University is committed to the principle of protecting the integrity and objectivity of its faculty in the performance of their University duties. It is, therefore, essential that the University's Mission be carried out in a manner that supports the educational process and is free of conflict of interest.

Sexual relationships in which one member of the University community has supervisory or other evaluative responsibility for the other create the appearance of favoritism, the potential for actual favoritism and the potential for sexual harassment. This is also true of faculty conduct that may reasonably be perceived as inviting or encouraging a sexual relationship. Such relationships can raise serious concerns about the validity of consent, conflict of interest and unfair treatment of others. They may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the evaluation and supervision provided and the trust inherent in such relationships.

II. Definitions

- A. For the purposes of this policy, faculty or faculty member includes all persons who teach, supervise, or evaluate students at Hofstra University. This term includes faculty, administrators, staff members, and graduate students whose duties and responsibilities include supervision or evaluation of students' academic work.
- B. Instructional context is broadly defined and includes academic instruction as well as evaluation or supervision, direct or indirect, of a student's academic work. It also includes employment situations in which students are supervised by faculty, e.g., teaching assistantships, research assistantships.

III. Guidelines for Conduct

- A. Within the instructional context, no faculty member shall engage in sexual relationships or conduct that may reasonably be perceived as inviting or encouraging a sexual relationship, with a student over whom the faculty member has supervisory or evaluative responsibility.

- B. Outside the instructional context, the aforementioned conduct or relationships between faculty and students are discouraged although not expressly prohibited by University policy. Faculty considering or engaged in such relationships should be sensitive to their potentially exploitative nature and the possibility that the faculty member may unexpectedly be placed in a position of responsibility for the students' instruction or evaluation.

IV. Complaints

Members of the University community who discern that violations of this Policy have occurred may initiate a complaint to the Equal Rights and Opportunity Officer (EROO). The EROO will investigate the complaint made and will speak to all parties involved. Complaints must be filed promptly and in no case later than one semester after the end of the semester or session in which the alleged violation occurred. Substantiated complaints will be forwarded to the appropriate Dean or the Provost for action.

V. Sanctions

Violations of this policy will be considered misconduct on the part of the faculty. Any faculty wishing to appeal his or her sanction can do so via the Senate Grievance Committee whose recommendation shall be sent to the Provost for final determination. The "Faculty Dismissal Proceedings" as outlined in the AAUP "Redbook" (2001) shall govern in any situation where dismissal is the final determination.

VI. This policy is independent of Hofstra University's Sexual Harassment Policy.