

	POLICY ON CONSENSUAL STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS	
	Adopted: June 14, 2024	EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2024
Warning: This policy formally prohibits staff members from engaging in romantic relationships with students enrolled at Alabama A&M University		

Purpose:

and learning as free as possible from conflicts of interest, favoritism and exploitation. Where an individual exercises direct supervision to coerce another person to enter into a non-consensual relationship, the harm to that person and to the institution is evident. Even where the relationship is consensual, there is significant potential for harm when there is a power difference between the parties involved - - for example, between a supervisor and an employee or between a staff member and a student. Any evaluation or supervision provided may be suspect in view of such relationship.

A consensual relationship with a subordinate is likely to interfere with the ability of a superior to act and make decisions fairly and without bias. Even if the superior is able to avoid showing favoritism, the other individuals in the learning or workplace environment are likely to see themselves as being less favored and disadvantaged by the personal relationship. Additionally, the damage can continue long beyond the consensual relationship and can make people suspicious of any future professional interactions between the individuals.

The following policy addresses appropriate staff/student relationships.

Policy:

The work and/or educational relationships between employees, volunteers, and students must remain professional at all times. Romantic and/or sexual relationships may create an appearance of impropriety that is contrary to the interests of the University. Even though a relationship may have been consensual at its inception, a significant power differential exists when one party to the relationship has the authority to influence the academic progress, aid, benefits, or services of a student. These are just some examples of influence and in no way is this intended as an exhaustive list. Such relationships are particularly vulnerable to exploitation as well as to claims of exploitation.

Prohibited Relationships:

Employees and/or volunteers shall not engage in or solicit consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships with any student.

funding or other resources, clinical supervision, and recommending for admissions, employment, fellowships, or awards.

Sanctions/Intent:

University responses to violations of this Policy will vary as appropriate to the facts and circumstances of each case and persons in violation of this Policy shall be subject to sanctions ranging from verbal warnings to dismissal or termination. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action against members of the University community who make false allegations of unreported consensual relationships. This Policy is not intended to intrude on the privacy of members of the University community but is intended primarily to be instructive and corrective.

A staff member who engages in a prohibited relationship and/or fails to report will be subject to