

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

ADMIN 009

Policy on Consensual Relationships

Policy Statement & Purpose

The University is committed to creating an institutional environment free from discrimination and harassment for students and employees. Thus, Consensual Relationships between students and employees, and Consensual Relationships between employees where one employee has a position of power or authority over another employee in the relationship, are prohibited. A Consensual Relationship is any romantic, dating or sexual relationship between a student and an employee, or an employee and another employee who has position of power or authority over an employee in the relationship, that is willingly undertaken by the parties. This includes relationships that occur only once, intermittent relationships, and/or relationships based on-line.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to conduct committed by students, faculty, (union and non-union) employees, administrators, trustees, volunteers, independent contractors, and visitors.

Prohibited Consensual Relationships

No employee shall enter into a consensual romantic and/or sexual relationship with any student, whether the relationship is long-term or short-term or deemed serious or casual. Employees may not accept authority over a student with whom they have had a previous consensual romantic and/or sexual relationship without first disclosing the relationship and obtaining prior agreement from their supervisor.

Situations of authority can exist, but are not limited to, a student taking a course taught by the employee, a student who is the advisee of the employee, or a student in an employment position or Graduate Assistantship with the employee. In such instances, the employee and student must disclose the prior relationship to the employee's supervisor and obtain approval for the authoritative situation.

Written notice of this approval must be provided to the Provost and Vice President of Human Resources by the appropriate supervisor. Determination of whether an individual is considered an "employee" or a "student" will be based upon the person's primary role at the University. For

example, a full-time employee who is taking a course would be considered an employee for purposes of this prohibition, and a full-time student who is a part-time employee would be considered a student for purposes of this prohibition.

Examples of Prohibited Relationships

The following examples are intended for illustrative purposes only. ***This is not, and is not meant to be, an exhaustive list of instances where this policy applies.***

- Professor A in Department Z and undergraduate Student B in Department Y meet at a social event sponsored by the University. This policy prohibits a romantic or sexual relationship between the two parties until either Professor A is no longer an employee at Point Park or Student B is no longer enrolled as a student at Point Park University.
- A romantic relationship develops between Assistant Coach A and graduate Athlete B. This relationship is prohibited by this policy because an instructive relationship exists between the parties. Assistant Coach A is required to disclose the relationship to his or her supervisor and terminate all instruction and supervision of graduate Athlete B.

Exceptions to the Prohibition of Consensual Relationships

In some instances, exceptions to prohibited consensual relationships may exist or be created. This prohibition will not apply to situations of “Pre-Existing Relationships.” A “Pre-Existing Relationship” is a relationship between an employee and a Point Park student that existed (a) before the student enrolled at Point Park or (b) before the employee became employed by Point Park.

Pre-Existing Relationships must be disclosed promptly to the Vice President of Human Resources and to the Provost. In these situations, employees should review the University’s Nepotism Policy (Section 1.12) to avoid conflicts with University policy.

Consensual relationships between graduate students and undergraduate students are not prohibited by this policy. However, graduate students who become employed by the University, such as through a teaching role or as a Graduate Assistant, must take measures to avoid or terminate any instructive or supervisory roles with undergraduate students where a relationship exists or develops.

Undergraduate students who also hold student-only employment positions at Point Park are excluded from this policy. Some examples of these excluded positions are Resident Educators, Office Assistants, and Apprenticeships. The University reserves the right to intervene if any relationship between an employee and a student has the potential to compromise the University’s academic or professional integrity. Any questions about the applicability of this Policy to a particular relationship should be addressed to the Title IX Coordinator, Provost, or the Vice President for Human Resources.

Other Policies and Procedures

- Point Park University Code of Conduct
 - Point Park University Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Relationship Violence and Stalking
 - Point Park University Student Handbook
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Policy Owner: Vice President of Human Resources

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