



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3342-6-21 University policy regarding consensual relationships and other relationship-based conflicts of interest.

Effective: July 1, 2018

(A) Policy statement. This policy concerns consensual relationships between members of the university community also engaged in a pedagogical or other relationship where there exists a power differential (i.e. unequal authoritative, societal, or social power) between the individuals as provided herein. It is the policy of Kent state university that consensual relationships between faculty and students in a teaching, evaluation, or advising relationship constitutes a potential for a conflict of interest.

(B) Definitions. For purposes of this policy, the terms Kent state university, student, faculty, and consensual relationship are defined as follows:

(1) Kent state university means all eight campuses of Kent state university and related entities operating under the auspices of Kent state university at any location.

(2) Student means all who are enrolled or participating in any offering provided by Kent state university.

(3) Faculty means all full-time and part-time employees with appointments for providing academic instruction.

(4) Familial Relationship includes, but is not limited to, those between mother, father, brother, sister, child, spouse, domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, legal guardian, or other person who stands in place of a parent.

(5) Consensual relationship means dating, romantic and/or sexual relationships willingly undertaken by all involved parties, including marital relationships.

(C) Policies regarding potential conflicts of interest. Consensual relationships between individuals in



a teaching, evaluation, or advising relationship constitutes a potential for a conflict of interest and is subject to the following:

(1) Faculty-student consensual relationships. Faculty members and students shall not enter into consensual relationships with each other if the faculty member is in the position to directly teach, evaluate, supervise, or advise the student. However, even when a faculty member is not directly evaluating, supervising, or advising a student with whom they are in a consensual relationship, the faculty member must be cognizant of and sensitive to the potential for the perception of favoritism by others. In all cases, the faculty members academic unit or campus administrator shall be informed by the faculty member in writing of the consensual relationship with a student so that appropriate measures may be taken to prevent exploitation, favoritism, or other conflicts of interest, actual or perceived.

(2) Faculty-faculty consensual relationships. In all cases in which the work relationship is such that one or both parties have the potential to influence material outcomes for the other, the immediate supervisor/department head(s) of both faculty members shall be informed in writing of the consensual relationship so that appropriate measures may be taken to prevent exploitation, favoritism, or other conflicts of interest, actual or perceived. Under all circumstances, faculty in consensual relationships with other faculty shall recuse themselves from decisions regarding the others job performance, salary adjustments, and/or other conditions of employment. Faculty members will recuse themselves from renewal, reappointment, tenure, promotion, and merit deliberations regarding their relationship partners.

(3) Familial relationships. Familial relationships are a special source of potential favoritism or conflicts of interest. Except in rare or unavoidable cases, faculty members shall not directly teach, evaluate, supervise, or advise a relative in the normal course of university study. Further, except in rare or unavoidable cases, a faculty member shall not hire or cause to be hired, evaluate, or supervise a relative. In all cases, the appropriate supervisor shall be informed in writing so that appropriate measures may be taken to prevent favoritism and other conflicts of interest, actual or perceived. This policy is not intended to prohibit or in any way discourage the practice of spousal hiring.