



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

University Policy 7010

Consensual Relationships

Effective Date

August 2004

Last Revision Date

July 2012

Responsible Party

Human Resources, (208) 426-1616

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all University employees.

Additional Authority

- University Policy 7050 (Nepotism)
 - University Policy 7015 (Faculty/Staff and Student Consensual Relationships)
 - University Policy 1110 (Conflict of Interest and Commitment)
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1. Policy Purpose

To establish a policy governing the supervision or evaluation of employees where a consensual relationship exists between the parties, creating a conflict of interest.

2. Policy Statement

The University's success in its educational mission depends on the professionalism of its employees. Maintaining professional relationships and mutual respect and trust between

supervisor and subordinate, and in all relationships involving authority or influence over another person, is key to this success.

Employee consensual relationships give rise to conflicts of interest, favoritism, and bias, and therefore undermine the real or perceived integrity of the evaluation or supervision given. An employee consensual relationship where one party has administrative, supervisory, evaluative, or other authority or influence over the other party raises concerns with respect to objectivity, fairness, and exploitation. These relationships harm or injure others in the work environment, providing grounds for complaints by third parties when that relationship gives undue access or advantage, restricts opportunities, or creates the perception of these problems. Such employee consensual relationships impair or otherwise undermine the ongoing trust needed for an effective and professional work environment. Therefore, no University employee shall exercise any supervisory, advisory, evaluative authority or influence over an employee with whom the employee has a consensual relationship.

3. Definitions

3.1 Employee Consensual Relationship

A mutually acceptable current or former romantic or sexual relationship between an employee with supervisory, advisory, or evaluation authority and an employee who is directly supervised, advised, or evaluated by that employee.

This policy addresses only consensual relationships. Nonconsensual relationships are addressed in University policies prohibiting sexual harassment and discrimination. Additional governance for consensual relationships between faculty and students is found in University Policy 7015 (Faculty/Staff and Student Consensual Relationships).

4. Responsibilities and Procedures

4.1 Accountability/Responsibility

- a. If an employee consensual relationship exists, has existed, or arises, the relationship of authority must be eliminated.
- b. Where an employee consensual relationship exists, has existed or arises, the person in the position of greater authority, power, or influence, will bear the primary burden of accountability and must ensure that he or she does not exercise any supervisory, advisory, evaluative function, or influence over the other person in the relationship.

- (i.) In the event that the employee consensual relationship is not terminated, the unit administrator or supervisor must contact Human Resource Services and take prompt and appropriate action to end the relationship of authority.
 - (ii.) Appropriate actions may include but are not limited to: appointment of a qualified alternative supervisor, advisor, or evaluator to the position of authority; or assignment transfer of the student or employee to another advisor, supervisor or evaluator, or the transfer of the supervisor.
- c. In the event that a University employee not involved in the employee consensual relationship believes an employee consensual relationship is occurring, the University employee shall disclose such knowledge to either the relevant unit administrator and/or Human Resources Services.

4.2 Compliance with Policy

- a. To encourage reporting of relationships governed by this policy, disclosures and actions taken shall be considered confidential, and they will be treated as protected personnel information under the public records statutes.
 - b. Actions in violation of this policy may constitute adequate cause for discipline up to and including dismissal.
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Revision History

July 2012