

FACULTY-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP POLICY

Rationale

The Board of Visitors has a substantial and compelling responsibility to prohibit conduct by members of the University community which adversely affects the learning process, the unique academic working environment, or the University's academic image and reputation. The University's educational mission requires that the relationship between the faculty of the University and the students of the University be professional in nature. To this end, the Board deems it necessary and appropriate that *every* instructional faculty member and *every* administrative/professional faculty member have a *professional* relationship to and responsibility toward *every* student of the University. The Board deems such professional relationships to be incompatible with intimate relationships. The Board deems such intimate instructional faculty-student and administrative/professional faculty-student relationships to have the potential to subvert the educational mission of the University; to have the potential to affect adversely the educational experiences of students; to have the potential to affect adversely the effectiveness of both instructional and administrative/professional faculty in the discharge of their professional responsibilities; and to have the potential to affect adversely the mental, physical and/or financial well-being of faculty, staff, and students—including in all instances instructional and administrative/professional faculty, staff and students who may not be direct parties to the relationship itself.

Prohibited Acts

No instructional or administrative/professional faculty member shall have an amorous relationship (consensual or otherwise) with a student. However, nothing in this policy shall be construed as prohibiting the spouse of an instructional or administrative/professional faculty member from enrolling as a student. Moreover, nothing in this policy shall be construed as prohibiting the spouse of a student from accepting employment as an instructional or administrative/professional faculty member.

Sanctions

Violations of this policy by instructional or administrative/professional faculty members shall be considered cause for dismissal. In dismissing instructional faculty, the University will follow the Due Process procedures set forth in the *University Handbook*. However, the University may place the instructional faculty member on administrative leave with pay pending the completion of the dismissal process.

Complaints

Complaints involving violations of this policy shall be directed to the Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity for investigation.

False Charges

A student who knowingly brings false charges under this policy against an instructional or administrative/professional faculty member shall be considered in violation of the Honor Code and, upon conviction of the offense, shall be expelled. An instructional or administrative/professional faculty member who knowingly brings false charges under this policy against another instructional or administrative/professional faculty member shall be considered guilty of violating the “rights and freedoms of students, Board Members, or employees of the University.” Under these by-laws, violation of the “rights and freedoms of students, Board Members, or employees of the University” constitutes cause for termination of employment. A classified employee who knowingly brings false charges under this policy against an instructional or administrative/professional faculty member shall be considered to have lied to their employer and shall be subjected to appropriate discipline under the Commonwealth of Virginia State Classified Employee system.