



EMERSON COLLEGE

Consensual Relations Policy for Faculty

Emerson College is committed to maintaining an environment where the education of students is of the greatest importance. Dating, romantic, or sexual relationships between College faculty members and students, even if consensual, can negatively affect the educational environment for students. Power differentials, real or perceived, can diminish a student's ability to give meaningful consent to such a relationship. A faculty member's ability to teach, evaluate, or advise a student without partiality is suspect when the faculty member and the student have a dating, romantic, or sexual relationship. Even when the faculty member and student act with integrity, others may perceive bias, partiality, or influence. Furthermore, the dissolution of these relationships can create discord and significantly impair the normal operations of the College.

For these reasons, dating, romantic, or sexual relationships between students and faculty members, including relationships that occur when College is not in session or students are on leave, are prohibited.

On occasion, a faculty member will have a dating, romantic, or sexual relationship, or a marriage, with an individual who then becomes a student, or an individual with a pre-existing relationship with a student will join the faculty. It is the obligation of the faculty member to disclose that relationship or marriage to the Dean of the School (or Executive Director of the Institute for Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies) in which the student is enrolled. It is the obligation of that Dean or Executive Director to take the steps that he or she deems necessary to insure that the educational experience of the student, and other students in the School or Program, is not materially affected by the dating, romantic, sexual, or marital relationship. Since individual cases may vary, the Dean or Executive Director has discretion to consider specific circumstances—the nature of the relationship, the specifics of the student's academic program and the faculty member's responsibilities, and constraints on the School or Program—in fashioning these steps. The steps can range from no action, to the recusal of the faculty member from matters involving the student, to changes in the faculty member's teaching, advising, service, or other duties.

Faculty members who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Complaints of violation of this policy should be made to the Dean of the School (or Executive Director of the Institute for Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies) in which the student is enrolled.