



EMERSON COLLEGE

Consensual Relations Policy for Staff

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 employees 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. An employee's ability to provide College services without partiality is suspect when the employee and the student have a dating, romantic, or sexual relationship. Even when the employee 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 College employees, including relationships that occur when College is not in session or students are on leave, are prohibited.

On occasion, an employee 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 become an employee. It is the obligation of the employee to disclose that relationship or marriage to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources. It is the obligation of the Associate Vice President, in consultation with appropriate academic or administrative personnel, to take the steps that he or she deems necessary to insure that the educational experience of the student, and other students in the College, is not materially affected by the dating, romantic, sexual, or marital relationship. Since individual cases may vary, the Associate Vice President has discretion to consider specific circumstances—the nature of the relationship, the specifics of the student's academic program, the employee's duties, and constraints on the College—in fashioning these steps. The steps can range from no action, to the recusal of the employee from matters involving the student, to changes in the employee's duties.

Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Complaints of violations of this policy should be made to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources.