



1. Consensual Relations with Students Policy

2. Contact information

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3. Where does this policy reside?

Website: <https://my.hamilton.edu/offices/afs/policies>

4. Purpose - a brief description of the purpose of the policy in 2-3 sentences.

Romantic and sexual relations between employees (faculty and staff) and students is unethical and antithetical to the mission of the College. The unequal power dynamic between employees and students makes romantic and sexual relationships susceptible to misunderstood motives and the actuality of consent. For these reasons romantic and sexual relations between employees and students are prohibited. Exceptions are noted.

5. Scope – who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all employees and students of Hamilton College. Exceptions where a pre-existing relationship existed is noted.

6. Update history – dates when the policy was updated or changed.

Initial – 9/14/2018

7. Contents

Consensual Relations with Students Policy

For the purpose of this policy, “faculty and staff” represent all working groups at Hamilton – faculty and instructional staff, administrators, hourly staff, and part-time and temporary staff. Faculty and staff are collectively referenced herein as “Employees.”

Romantic and sexual relationships between employees of the College and students are inherently unethical, interfere with the educational mission of the college, and impede the culture of trust and respect at Hamilton and are strictly prohibited; violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action. The employee is accountable for violations of this policy even if the relationship began consensually or was not initiated by the employee.



Exceptions

Employees in a romantic or sexual relationship with a student at time of hire will not be required to terminate it, but faculty must disclose the relationship to the Dean of the Faculty, and staff must disclose the relationship to the Office of Human Resources. Employees in this situation must agree to refrain from supervising or serving in a position that directly impacts the student.

Student workers who are in a romantic or sexual relationship with another student over whom authority is exercised as a part of work must disclose the situation to their supervisor and recuse themselves from decisions about the fellow student worker, as appropriate. Student workers should familiarize themselves with this policy and seek to uphold the culture of trust and respect that prevails at Hamilton.

The Authority of Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff members possess an authority over students, which, if inappropriately used, may be harmful to the atmosphere of respect upon which the community and classroom rely. The esteem and trust accorded by students to them, as well as the influence exercised by faculty in assigning grades, awarding honors and fellowships, providing academic advice, evaluations, and recommendations, greatly diminish the student's freedom of choice. This power differential varies by the individuals involved, but it always exists.

Consent

Given this power differential, romantic and sexual relationships between students and faculty and staff of the College put understanding of consent into question. It is often difficult for a student to be certain of the motives of an employee. It is also difficult for a person in a position of authority to be certain that a student's consent is genuine, rather than motivated by an unspoken concern of the consequences of not consenting. Therefore, all romantic and sexual relationships between employees and students are regarded as prohibited, even when both parties say that the relationships are consensual.

Contact

If you have general questions about this policy, please contact the Office of Human Resources. If you have concerns about a past or on-going relationship, please contact Human Resources, the campus Title IX coordinator, or the chair of Hamilton's Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Board.