

OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Consensual Relations Leading to Conflicts of Interest OIT-22-055

The mission of the Oregon Institute of Technology is promoted by an atmosphere of professionalism, mutual respect and trust. This trust is put at risk when members of the University community engage in romantic or sexual relationships that involve persons with unequal power; i.e., administrator and faculty, faculty and student, supervisor and employee, coach and athlete. The power differential inherent in such relationships makes any apparent consent invalid.

Amorous relationships that might be appropriate in other circumstances are imprudent when they occur between a member of the University community and a person for whom he/she has a professional responsibility at Oregon Institute of Technology. The individual in authority bears the primary responsibility for any negative consequences resulting from a romantic or sexual relationship. Such consequences may include, but are not limited to, subsequent assertions of a coerced relationship, sexual harassment, discriminatory favoritism, or existence of a hostile learning or working environment.

If any party involved in a romantic or sexual relationship with another member of the campus community is in doubt as to whether a power differential does exist or whether the relationship violates this policy, he/she is strongly encouraged to consult in confidence with his/her academic advisor, the academic Department Chair, the administrative department supervisor or the Affirmative Action Officer.

Any employee involved in a consensual romantic or sexual relationship is required to advise his/her direct supervisor, the academic or administrative department head, or the appropriate Vice President of the relationship. The employee is further required to cooperate in eliminating any actual or potential conflict of interest resulting from the relationship.

Amorous Relationships in the Instructional Context

Commonly accepted standards of professional behavior and ethics require that faculty members not hold evaluative power over any student with whom they have a romantic or sexual relationship. Evaluative power includes, but is not limited to, decisions concerning grades, degrees, evaluations, and awards. Should such a relationship exist between a faculty member and a student, the faculty member is required to make immediate and formalized arrangements through his/her Department Chair to eliminate the conflict of interest.

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Recommended by:

Faculty Senate – 12/1/05
Administrative Council – 11/16/05
ASOIT – 12/05
President's Council – 1/25/06

Approved: /s/ *Martha Anne Dow*
Martha Anne Dow, President

Date: