



Texas Christian University Policy

Policy Number: 1.006

Subject: Consensual Relationships

Effective Date: December 1, 1994

Revised: August 1, 2017
February 6, 2007

I. Applicability

This policy applies to all employees of Texas Christian University

II. Policy Statement

TCU's mission is to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community. This mission is promoted through our core values of academic achievement, personal freedom and integrity, the dignity and respect of the individual, and a heritage of inclusiveness, tolerance and service.

For the reasons outlined in this policy employees shall not enter into or continue a consensual romantic or intimate relationship with another student or employee over whom they exercise academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling or other authority, all of which are sometimes referred to as a power differential. Consensual relationships existing between individuals – neither of whom has direct professional or academic influence or authority over the other – are not prohibited by this policy.

A consensual relationship is defined as a relationship between individuals who have or have had a continuing relationship of a romantic or intimate nature.

TCU prohibits the following behaviors by employees:

- An employee initiating or consenting to a romantic or intimate relationship with a student or employee who is under the direct or indirect supervision of the faculty or staff member. This is also considered a violation of the university's [Code of Conduct Policy 2.070](#).
- A romantic or intimate relationship between a faculty member and a student enrolled in a course taught by the faculty member, or who is an advisee of the faculty member, or whose academic work is otherwise influenced by the faculty member, or who is a degree seeking student in the major taught by the faculty member.

- An employee holding a position in which the employee would reasonably be expected to make an employment (i.e., compensation, tenure, performance), academic, and/or audit/investigatory decision, recommendation, or approval concerning their relative, an employee residing in the same household, or regarding an employee with whom they currently or formerly have a romantic or intimate relationship. (Exceptions to the application of this policy may occur under the [Nepotism Policy 2.050](#).)

These prohibitions apply regardless of whether both parties appear to have consented to the relationship.

Complaints alleging sexual harassment may manifest from situations where one or both of the parties believed their relationship was welcome or consensual. In the event of an allegation of sexual harassment, the University will be less sympathetic to a consensual relationship defense when the facts establish the existence of a professional or academic power differential within the relationship. Complaints by third parties alleging unfair treatment or conflicts of interest may occur as a result of these relationships. Further, such relationships can undermine the atmosphere of trust essential to the academic process and civility in the workplace.

III. Policy Violation

Violation of this policy may result in reassignment, transfer, or disciplinary action up to and including separation from employment.

IV. Administrative Responsibility

The Office of Human Resources is responsible for administering and interpreting this policy.