

Title:	Consensual Relationships Policy
Effective Date:	09/01/2023
Date of Last Revision:	08/17/2023
Review Date:	
Cancellation:	
Responsible Office:	Human Resources

## Consensual Relationships Policy

### ***Definition:***

Consensual Relationships for the purpose of this policy are defined as: Romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships where one party has institutional responsibility of authority (includes all levels of management), whether the other party is an employee or a student.

### ***Policy:***

Consensual romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships are of concern for South Louisiana Community College when one of the parties has any institutional responsibility of authority or the relationship creates a conflict of interest. Consensual relationships in this context can compromise the integrity of the exercise of institutional responsibility, create the potential for abuse of authority, or cause problems due to the perceptions of third parties. In addition, interest in consensual relationships can impair the judgment required for the exercise of institutional responsibility or authority.

All employees should recognize the possible negative consequences of romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships in the workplace and the college at large in respect to all faculty, staff, and students. This policy prescribes actions required to remove conflicts of interest and avoid adverse effects in third parties and further specifies the situations where consensual relationships are prohibited.

Sexual harassment is distinguishable from situations covered by this policy in that sexual harassment always involves conduct that is unwelcome, is a clear abuse of authority, or produces defined negative effects on individuals. South Louisiana Community College's Policy on Harassment should be consulted regarding such situations.

### ***Prohibitions:***

In order to minimize the risk of conflict of interest and promote fairness, SLCC maintains the following with respect to romance in the workplace: An employee shall not exercise academic responsibility (instructional, evaluative, or supervisory) for any student with whom the employee has a consensual relationship.

No person in a management or supervisory position shall have a romantic or dating relationship with an employee whom they directly supervise or whose terms or conditions of employment may influence decision-making. An employee shall not conduct performance evaluations, make salary decisions,

decisions regarding promotion, decisions regarding discipline, or decisions on continuation of employment for a person with whom he or she has a consensual relationship.

The maintenance of such intimate personal relationships must be resolved by terminating the direct supervisory or instructional relationship when it involves students. In accordance with SLCC and LCTCS policies and procedures, either reassignment of the subordinate or the supervisor without any loss of salary or benefits to either party will be effectuated to resolve supervisor-subordinate relationship conflicts of interest. Consensual relationships are prohibited when effective arrangements to remove conflict and mitigate adverse effects on third parties cannot be made.

To the extent possible, a supervisor or manager who has had a previous romantic or dating relationship with a subordinate or employee whose terms or conditions they may influence will not be involved in decisions relating to that individual's promotions, raises, termination, discipline, or other terms and conditions of employment.

### ***Professionalism in the Workplace***

Employees are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner. Workplace dating or romantic relationships must not interfere with any employee's professionalism, including upholding confidentiality agreements, treating others with respect, and refraining from behavior that may make others feel uncomfortable (for example, overt physical displays of affection and using sexual language). Management personnel are expected to set a high standard of professional conduct both at work and in any social setting at events sponsored by SLCC. For this reason, management personnel are prohibited from social interaction with subordinates that is or might be perceived as inappropriate (for example, unwanted flirting, touching, or inappropriate discussion, or other behavior that may be regarded as sexual harassment).

### **Requirements:**

A current employee actively holding a position or prospective employee accepting a position that is currently in or entering a consensual relationship as defined by this Policy, shall immediately:

Report the relationship to a higher-level administrator, to the hiring official, or to an administrator above the hiring official such as the respective Vice Chancellor or Chancellor.

Complete the Consensual Relationship Agreement

Cooperate in actions taken to eliminate any actual or potential conflicts of interest and to mitigate the adverse effects on third parties.

The administrator who receives official notice shall treat the information confidentially and promptly consult with the Executive Director of Human Resources, Vice Chancellor of the respective area and the Chancellor to ensure proper actions are taken to remove any conflict of interest.

### ***Policy Consequences and Protocols:***

**Failure to comply will result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination.**

### **Attachments:**

Consensual Relationship Agreement

**Review Process: HR-525 Consensual Relationships Policy**

Reviewing Committee/Entity	Review Date(s)	Approval Date	Effective Date
Responsible Office	Init. 08/17/2023		
Committee for Institutional Policy Review	Init. 09/19/2023	09/19/2023	
Executive Leadership Team	Init. 10/19/2023	10/19/2023	09/01/2023

**Chancellor's Signature/Approval**

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Vincent G. June, Ph.D.  
Chancellor

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

10/19/2023

**Final Distribution:**

Electronic: posted to College's website and sent via email to college personnel

Hard copy: Original to Executive Assistant to the Chancellor for Master Policy Binder, copy to Chair of Committee of Institutional Policy Review