

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Policy on Consensual Relationships

Senate Policy 202.1

(University Policy [1.03](#))

(Senate Proposal [22-02](#))

Policy Statement

Employees of the University are prohibited from initiating or participating in evaluations and decisions related to any aspect of the employment or education of a person who is a student or employee of the University with whom the employee has any intimate or sexual consensual relationship. This policy also pertains to all volunteers acting on behalf of the University.

If the opportunity for any such prohibited conduct presents itself, the consensual relationship shall immediately be reported by the employee to their immediate supervisor if the employee has such decision-making responsibility, including but not limited to, supervision, evaluation, grading, advising, hiring, counseling, employment or terms of employment, coaching, or other supervisory, instructional, or educational activity with respect to the other employee or student.

Privacy regarding relationships will be maintained in so far as possible. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Nothing in this policy should be construed to override or alter Board of Trustees (BOT) 5.3

Discrimination Based on Sex and University policy 1.14 - Sex/Gender Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Sexual Misconduct.

Purpose

Michigan Technological University encourages respectful interactions among all members of the community and is committed to a policy of employment and advancement based on qualifications and merit. This policy is designed to provide guidance to employees involved in consensual relationships so that the University is able to maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment/misconduct, favoritism, and/or a conflict of interest.

Consensual intimate or sexual relationships between faculty and students, and/or between supervisors and their subordinates are inappropriate. Employees engaged in a consensual relationship, that are not in a supervisory role as described above, should be sensitive to and aware of the unequal institutional power inherent in these relationships and the potentially exploitative issues, including the ethical concerns, potential of conflict, validity of consent, now and in the future. There is also the possibility that others may be adversely affected and such relationships could diminish trust and respect.

Related Policy Information

- [BOT Policy 4.7 Conflict of Interest](#)

- [BOT Policy 5.3 Discrimination Based on Sex](#)
- [University Policy 1.14](#) and [Procedure 1.14.1 University Sex/Gender Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [University Policy 6.12 Supervision of Relatives](#)

Exclusions

Nothing in this policy should be construed to override or alter the Board of Trustees 5.3 Discrimination Based on Sex and University policy 1.14 - Sex/Gender Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Sexual Misconduct.

Contacts

Office/Unit Name Telephone Number

Human Resources 906-487-2280

Institutional Equity 906-487-3310

Definitions

Conflict of Interest - Conflicts of interest exists when an individual's personal, financial, or other interests could improperly influence execution of their University responsibilities. Conflicts are not inherently unacceptable, but must be identified and managed to prevent bias.

Intimate or Sexual Consensual Relationship - A relationship that includes some close personal intimacy, expression of romantic love, sexual involvement, and/or domestic element that includes clear, knowing, and voluntary words or actions that give permission for specific intimate or sexual activity. For more information on consent, see the full definition of consent in the [University Policy 1.14 University Sex/Gender Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Sexual Misconduct](#).

Employee - Person receiving compensation from the University.

Volunteer - A University Volunteer is defined as an uncompensated individual who performs services directly related to the business of the University, to support the humanitarian, charitable, or public service activities of the University, or to gain experience in specific endeavors.

Responsibilities

All members of the University are expected to familiarize themselves with this policy/procedure and follow it.

Employee - If an employee becomes willingly involved in a consensual relationship, including partner/spousal relationships, with a student or employee for whom they have responsibility as described in the Consensual Relations policy, the employee must immediately disclose in writing the circumstances to their immediate supervisor.

Immediate Supervisor - The immediate supervisor must promptly develop and implement a management plan to eliminate any decision making responsibility or conflict of interest between parties. This management plan shall be documented by the supervisor and placed in the departmental file. If there is a conflict of interest for the immediate supervisor, the supervisor's supervisor or the appropriate vice president will take the supervisor's place in this process. If immediate supervisor changes, the departmental file shall follow the Employee to their newly appointed supervisor.

Human Resources - Assist with Employee Status Change Form as needed.

Institutional Equity - Assist any person with a complaint concerning sex/gender discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct.

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Adopted by Senate through Proposal 22-02: 9 April 2003

Approved by President: 19 May 2003

University Committee on Consensual Relations Updated University Policy 1.03: 01 January 2019

Editorial Changes to Policy Approved by University Senate Executive Committee: 03 April 2019

Senate Policy Revised to Match Current University Policy 1.03 and Senate Procedure 202.1.1

Created: 08 April 2019