



GUIDELINES REGARDING CONSENSUAL AMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) strives to provide an inclusive, welcoming and supportive work and learning atmosphere for its faculty, employees, residents, fellows and students. Relationships between members of the UMMS community should adhere to the highest standards of ethical and legal conduct, without exploitation of relationships for personal gain or personal interest. As well, UMMS strives to promote an environment where all work/academic decisions are made professionally and fairly, unencumbered by the potential effects of personal relationships.

In any work or academic setting, consensual amorous relationships may develop. There are certain potential risks inherent in a workplace romantic relationship between individuals who may be in unequal positions within the institution, including but not limited to those such as a supervisor/employee or a faculty member/learner. Such unequal relationships may compromise or be *perceived* as compromising the fairness and impartiality of a supervisor's/faculty member's conduct toward the subordinate or to others in subordinate positions.

Given the power imbalance between such two individuals, it may be the relationship is far less voluntary for the subordinate than it appears to the supervisory individual. Also, circumstances in the relationship may change over time, and conduct that was previously welcomed by the subordinate party may in fact become unwanted and unwelcome.

For purposes of these guidelines, the term “consensual amorous relationships” covers existing marriages and/or domestic partnerships, in addition to relationships that may develop. The following guidelines apply to UMMS employees and students, where “employees” refers to faculty, staff, residents, fellows and post-doctoral students/fellows, and “students” refers to students enrolled in any of UMMS’ Schools.

EMPLOYEES

- UMMS *discourages* a consensual amorous relationship between manager/supervisor and subordinate where there is a direct line of reporting, indirect authority or the clearly *perceived* authority of one individual over the other.
- In view of the potential risks that may result from a consensual amorous relationship with power imbalance, any faculty, staff or student engaging in such a relationship should report same to UMMS' Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO), Office of Human Resources (HR), or the Director for a Positive Learning Environment, and following a review of same, it may be recommended that either or both of the involved individuals be moved into different areas of UMMS.
- It is also *strongly encouraged* that reports of any potential adverse impact or inappropriate work place or learning environment behavior relating to such relationships be submitted to their head or manager of the department, or to consult with the DIO, HR, or the Director for a Positive Learning Environment.

STUDENTS

- A UMMS faculty member should not date, or have a romantic relationship with, a student over whom s/he has a direct or indirect teaching/advisory/mentoring/evaluative responsibility, or over whom there may be a perception of such responsibility.
- A faculty member with questions/concerns about a relationship with a student should consult promptly with their department chair, dean, vice provost for Faculty Affairs, Human Resources or DIO. A student with questions/concerns about a relationship with a faculty member should consult with their dean, advisor, Director for a Positive Learning Environment or DIO.
- The Vice Chancellor, Diversity and Inclusion in consultation with the Vice Provost for Student Life and Enrollment and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs will recommend a resolution to the Provost.

Managers/supervisors, employees, students and faculty are encouraged to contact the Diversity and Inclusion Office (S1-710 or call 508-856-2179) with any questions about these guidelines.

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