

## **Consensual Relationships Policy**

**A.** Although consensual relationships between persons of different power levels (e.g., between a faculty member and a student or between a supervisor and an employee) do not constitute sexual harassment, they raise serious concerns and may lead to difficulties. Such relationships may give rise to claims of sexual harassment in one or more of the following cases:

**1.** Third parties are adversely affected in their academic or employment opportunities because of a consensual relationship between others.

**2.** A consensual relationship creates a hostile, offensive, or intimidating work or learning environment for third parties.

**3.** A consensual relationship ends, but one of the parties continues to pursue the relationship after being notified repeatedly that such conduct is no longer welcome. According to legal precedent, mutual consent may not be an adequate or acceptable defense against a charge of sexual harassment.

**B.** In a relationship that involves a power differential, the person in power (e.g., faculty, supervisor, etc.) must do the following:

**1.** Distance himself/herself from any decision that may reward or penalize the other individual.

**2.** Disclose the nature of the relationship to the appropriate administrative supervisor, who then will take steps to ensure equitable treatment for all concerned.