

UAM OPERATING PROCEDURE 460.1

CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS

There are inherent risks in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals in unequal positions (such as faculty and student, or supervisor and employee). These relationships may be less consensual than perceived by the individual whose position confers power. The relationship also may be viewed in different ways by each of the parties, particularly in retrospect. Furthermore, circumstances may change, and conduct that was previously welcome may become unwelcome. Even when both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic or sexual involvement, this past consent may not remove grounds for a later charge of a violation of Policy.

The University does not wish to interfere with private choices regarding personal relationships when those relationships do not interfere with the goals and policies of the University. However, for the personal protection of members of this community, relationships in which power differentials are inherent (faculty-student, staff-student, administrator-student/employee) are regarded as inappropriate, are strongly advised against, and are inherently suspect in the event of a dispute.

Consensual romantic or sexual relationships in which one party maintains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party are unethical. Therefore, persons with direct supervisory or evaluative responsibilities who are involved in such relationships must bring those relationships to the timely attention of their supervisors. This will likely result in the necessity to remove the employee from the supervisory or evaluative responsibilities or will shift the student or employee out of being supervised or evaluated by someone with whom a consensual relationship is established.

Failure to self-report such relationships to a supervisor as required can result in disciplinary action for an employee, up to and including termination.

March 7, 2022