

**CAROLINAS COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

HUMAN RESOURCES

SUBJECT: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEAMMATES AND STUDENTS

REVIEWER: Provost*
Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

POLICY

Carolinas College of Health Sciences (CCHS) is responsible for providing an environment in which all interactions between college teammates and students are guided by mutual trust, confidence, respect, and professional ethics. Personal relationships between teammates and students have the potential to compromise the objectivity and integrity of academic and administrative decisions and processes, may create the perception of bias, and may create opportunities for the abuse of, or the perception of abuse, of a position of authority. Thus, relationships between college teammates and students are to be avoided when reasonably possible. When a relationship cannot reasonably be avoided, it is to be reported and scrutinized. In all cases, teammates are expected to avoid conflict between their professional responsibilities and their personal relationships with students.

College teammates are to avoid relationships with students over whom they have a "position of authority" such as teaching a course or evaluating, supervising, or advising a student as part of an administrative or academic process, or as part of a college-sponsored activity or program. College teammates are strongly cautioned against establishing relationships with students via social media or other social contexts. Should a personal relationship exist, develop, or appear likely to develop, the college teammate shall disclose the relationship to the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management who, together, will review the situation and determine actions to be taken to appropriately manage the situation. Even when the college teammate has no professional responsibility for a student, the college teammate should be sensitive to the potential perceptions of others concerning bias in treatment of that student.

Gifts from students given to a college teammate in their working role are allowed if:

- The gift cannot or cannot appear to influence a decision of the teammate, and
- The gift is low in value (under \$25 as advertised), and
- The gift is not cash or a gift card.

The following terms are defined for purposes of this policy only:

- A. College teammate -- all college teammates except federal work-study teammates.
- B. Student
 1. Individuals enrolled in a course and/or program.
 2. Individuals who are applicants for any of the college's courses or programs.
- C. Position of authority -- includes but is not limited to the following college teammate responsibilities:
 1. Delivery of course content, evaluation for admission, grading, or advising
 2. Provision of formal mentoring or tutoring.
 3. Supervision or evaluation of a formal project or ongoing research.
 4. Determination or award of any type of financial aid, including scholarships.
 5. Determination or award of academic honors or other college awards.
 6. Determination of administrative actions (e.g., action plan development, course or program dismissal, appeals)

D. Relationship

1. Family: immediate family members, including spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, corresponding in-law, or "step" relatives.
2. Non-family: dating, romantic, or intimate relationship.
3. Business associates for private advantage.
4. Consensual and business relationships are different from those that are purely personal and unstructured such as a friendship.

PROCEDURE

- A. When a relationship exists or develops with respect to a student, the personal relationship is to be disclosed by the college teammate and will be managed as follows:
1. Family relationship -- the relationship will be reported to the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management at the time of the student's first application to the college.
 2. Non-family relationship – the relationship will be disclosed to the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management when a relationship has developed or upon the student's first application to the college, whichever occurs first.
 3. In cases A1 and A2 above, the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management will review the situation and with counsel from the teammate's supervisor and department manager, determine appropriate action.
 4. Actions may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Transfer of the student to another course or section taught by a different faculty member.
 - b) The student not enrolling in a course.
 - c) Assignment or transfer of the student to another faculty advisor; or
 - d) Assignment of a qualified alternative college teammate for the required position of authority.
- B. Noncompliance with Policy
Any credible allegation of a college teammate's failure to avoid an improper teammate and student relationship obligates the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management to conduct a prompt and thorough inquiry to determine whether the allegation is true. Where it is concluded that a relationship exists, and the college teammate involved did not appropriately report and/or terminate the relationship, the appropriate college administrator shall remove the college teammate's position of authority over the student and may initiate the teammate disciplinary continuum.
- C. Sanctions
Persons in violation of this policy shall be subject to the teammate disciplinary continuum ranging from a verbal and or written warning to termination. Persons who knowingly make false allegations regarding a college teammate's relationship with a student shall also be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.
- D. Due Process
Any student, faculty member, or staff member who believes he or she has received inappropriately favorable or unfavorable treatment as a result of a relationship between a college teammate and a student or who feels has been mistreated due to a relationship that has been mischaracterized may file a complaint or appeal as outlined in the Complaints and Appeals policy or the Atrium Health Resolution Procedure Policy.
- E. Confidentiality
College administrators will respond appropriately to all instances of non-compliance with this policy. Every reasonable effort will be made to preserve confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties in the course of investigating a potential conflict of interest, administering appropriate actions relating to an existing conflict of interest, and in attempting to remove the teammate's position of authority.

- F. The Relationships between Teammates and Students policy and procedure will be reviewed bi-annually.

Note: This policy is adapted, with permission, from Cabarrus College of Health Sciences, (2008), College Teammate and Student Relationships Policy.

REFERENCES

Related Policies to Consult

CCHS:

ADMINISTRATIVE - [Acceptable Use of Information Technology](#)

BOARD - [Conflict of Interest and Freedom from Undue External Influence](#)

HUMAN RESOURCES - [Termination - Involuntary](#)

STUDENT AFFAIRS - [Complaints and Appeals; Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation & Sexual Misconduct](#)

Atrium Health:

[CHS 30.00 CHS Organizational Ethics Statement](#)

[COR 40.06 Non-Retribution/Non-Retaliation](#)

[COR 40.17 Conflicts of Interest](#)

[HR. 5.05 Team Member Gifts, Awards or Prizes](#)

[HR 5.07 Protection from Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation](#)

[HR 5.09 Personal Relationships at Work](#)

[HR 5.11 Solicitation and Distribution](#)

[HR 5.16 Resolution Procedure](#)

[HR 5.20 End of Employment](#)

Related 2018 SACSCOC Standard

- 5.5 Personnel appointment and evaluation