



**Policy Title: Policy on Romantic and/or Sexual Conduct with Students and Supervisees**

**Policy Number: BU-PP 036**

**Date Issued: May 22, 2012**

**Responsible Executive: Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer**

**Date Last Revised: November 12, 2020**

**Responsible Office: Human Resources**

## **Policy on Romantic and/or Sexual Conduct with Students and Supervisees BU-PP 036**

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### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Baylor University (the “University”) that faculty, staff, and graduate students recognize and respect the ethical and professional boundaries that they must maintain in their relationships with students and supervisees. Attention to these principles is essential to safeguarding the welfare of persons in subordinate positions.

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### **Reason for the Policy**

Employees of Baylor University are expected to conduct themselves and their activities in an ethical and moral manner that is a positive reflection on Baylor University and consistent with the stated Christian aims and mission of the University. Baylor University places a high value on human relations and human rights. Therefore, the University strives to maintain a learning and working environment that is based on mutual respect for all students and employees.

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### **Individuals/Entities Affected by this Policy**

Faculty, staff, and graduate students

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### **Exclusions**

Marital relationships

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### **Related Documents and Forms**

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#### **University Policies and Documents**

[Standards of Personal Conduct](#)

[Code of Ethics](#)

[Baylor Civil Rights Policy and Procedures](#)

1. Policy on Romantic and/or Sexual Conduct with Students and Supervisees (BU-PP 036)

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## Forms and Tools

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Forms and tools are available at [Report It](#) and [EthicsPoint](#).

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## Contacts

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Subject	Contact	Telephone	Office email/web site
Policy Questions	Human Resources	254-710-2000	<a href="mailto:askHR@baylor.edu">askHR@baylor.edu</a> <a href="http://www.baylor.edu/hr">www.baylor.edu/hr</a>
	Office of General Counsel	254-710-3821	<a href="https://www.baylor.edu/ogc/">https://www.baylor.edu/ogc/</a>
	Office of the Provost	254-710-3601	<a href="https://www.baylor.edu/provost/">https://www.baylor.edu/provost/</a>

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## Principles

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Persons with direct teaching, coaching, supervisory, advisory, or evaluative responsibility over employees, students, or student employees shall recognize and respect the ethical and professional boundaries that must exist in such situations.

It is the responsibility of the University employee (faculty, staff, graduate student) to determine the status of the Baylor student prior to engaging in behaviors that are covered in this policy. Negligent or willful lack of knowledge is not a defense to a policy violation.

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## Undergraduate Students

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Because of the inherent differential in authority and the potential for abuse or the appearance of abuse, the University prohibits any member of the faculty or staff from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any student currently enrolled as an undergraduate at Baylor University.

The University also prohibits any graduate student from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any undergraduate student whom he or she educates, advises, coaches, supervises, or evaluates in any way.

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## Graduate Students

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Because of the potential for abuse or the appearance of abuse and the inherent differential in authority between graduate students and their faculty members, advisors, and others holding positions of authority over them, the University prohibits any member of the University community from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any graduate student whom he or she educates, advises, coaches,

supervises, or evaluates, or whom he or she has previously educated, advised, coached, supervised, or evaluated, in any way. This policy also prohibits any member of the University community from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any prospective Baylor graduate student whom the member of the University community is involved in recruiting as a graduate student, or for whom the member of the University community has a role in the decision-making process regarding admission and/or related awards as a graduate student.

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## **Supervisees**

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Because of the potential for abuse or the appearance of abuse and the inherent differential in authority, the University prohibits any member of the University community from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any employee whom that person supervises or evaluates in any way. This policy also prohibits any member of the University community from engaging in romantic and/or sexual conduct with or directed toward any job applicant when the member of the University community serves on a search committee or is influential in the selection process for the position for which the applicant is applying.

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## **Exceptions, Accountability, and Reporting**

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These prohibitions do not apply to marital relationships. However, the existence of a marital relationship may have implications for the propriety of one of the working and/or educational relationships discussed above, as, for example, addressed in the [Nepotism Policy](#), or as might arise in the case of a person who contemplates enrolling for a class taught by his or her spouse.

Exceptions to any of these prohibitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Vice President and Provost (or his or her designee) or by the Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer (or his or her designee).

The individual with the power or status advantage in the relationship must request the exception in writing. The Vice President and Provost (or his or her designee) or by the Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer (or his or her designee) shall respond in writing.

The individual with the power or status advantage in the relationship will bear the burden of accountability, though this does not preclude disciplinary action for other parties. Individuals who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment from Baylor University.

Individuals who are aware of any violation of this policy are obligated to report this violation to the Office of Human Resources, to the Office of the Vice President and Provost, or through [EthicsPoint or Report It](#).