

Working Group on Faculty-Student Relationships (SPG 601.22) – Final Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

November 27, 2018

October 9, 2018 – Ann Arbor, Flint, and Dearborn provosts established the Working Group on Faculty-Student Relationships (the “Group”) to develop and make recommendations to the president for (1) revisions to SPG 601.22 (Faculty-Student Relationships) and (2) enhanced educational efforts intended to ensure adherence to the new policy.

November 16, 2018 – The Group submitted its final report.

I. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The Working Group relied on principles and values embodied in our Faculty Handbook and historic statements by our Senate Assembly, expressed by our peer institutions and other leaders in the field, and inherent in the collective responsibility that the faculty have to the student experience as members and representatives of the university community.

II. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO SPG 601.22

Supported by the Ann Arbor, Dearborn and Flint Provosts on November 20, 2018

Supported by the Executive Officers on November 27, 2018

A. Faculty-Student Relationships:

1. Undergraduate Students

- i. Presumptive ban on romantic, sexual, or amorous relationships (“relationships”) across all three campuses
- ii. Narrow possible exceptions

2. Graduate and Professional Students

- i. Presumptive ban for graduate or professional students...
 1. ...over whom the faculty member currently has, has had, or might reasonably be expected to have academic or supervisory authority; and/or
 2. ...who are in the same discipline or academic program in which the faculty member is appointed or teaches, regardless of academic or supervisory authority
- ii. Narrow possible exceptions

3. Postdoctoral Fellows – presumptive ban for any postdoctoral research fellow over whom the faculty member currently has, has had, or might reasonably be expected to have academic or supervisory authority

4. House Officers – Interim recommendation (pending outreach to Graduate Medical Education) that house officers be treated like postdoctoral fellows
5. Other Learners (enrolled in university programs and part of our university community in a learning capacity, but cannot be clearly defined as students who are earning a credential or otherwise being assessed):
 - i. Non-degree students – presumptive bans apply as described above
 - ii. Visiting students – presumptive bans apply as described above
 - iii. Executive education programs – where the faculty assess no grades, and have no authority over the student, recommendations do not apply
 - iv. MOOCs – where a person is not a Michigan student, but is taking a MOOC offered by UM, recommendations do not apply

B. Other Instructor-Student Relationships

1. Graduate Student Instructors – presumptive ban on relationships with any students (undergraduate or graduate) in the classes the GSI is teaching or grading, or over whom the GSI has academic or supervisory authority
2. Postdoctoral Fellows – presumptive ban on relationships with any student (undergraduate or graduate) under the postdoctoral fellow’s supervision, or over whom the postdoctoral fellow has academic or supervisory authority
3. Undergraduate Students Involved in the Delivery of Course Content – presumptive ban on relationships with any students in the classes for which they have any instructional, grading, or other academic authority
4. Other Instructors (e.g., internship instructors, university-vetted teachers in programs with which we have a study-abroad agreement, etc.) – presumptive ban – university-vetted teachers and mentors are prohibited from having relationships with any students (e.g., undergraduate and graduate) in their classes (courses they are teaching) or under their supervision

III. RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL (COMMUNICATION) EFFORTS

- A. Provosts’ offices will revise SPG 601.22, solicit input, identify/address implementation issues, develop “FAQ” and other communications, roll-out new policy, etc.
- B. Broad outreach (e.g., SACUA, deans, chairs, and student representatives)
- C. Collaborate with Staff HR regarding possible corresponding changes in SPG 601.22-1 (Employee-Student Relationships)