

Frequently Asked Questions: Interactions with Enrolled Relatives

Q1: Unlike Teaching Faculty, the nature of services provided by Academic Professionals and all Staff to students are not evaluative. Why are Academic Professionals and all Staff included in this SOP?

A1. Regarding Academic Professionals, the point is well taken with respect to librarians. Teaching clinicians and lab instructors routinely engage in student evaluation/assessment/grading as part of their core responsibilities. Lab assistants are also responsible for assessment/evaluation of skills. It should be noted that there are a wide variety of other academic professionals at the College, with many opportunities for the perception or reality of favoritism/preferential treatment. Licensed professional counselors, academic advisors, professional tutors, supplemental instruction leaders, and staff members do not engage in grading (unless they are teaching) but may show preferential treatment by giving more, or more conveniently scheduled, attention or services to relatives at the expense of other Students. Counselors and advisors may also show preferential treatment in waiving prerequisites, dealing with issues inhibiting satisfactory academic progress, etc. Additionally, staff members may be able to provide other preferential treatment, such as for enrollment access or academic or financial overrides. It is therefore appropriate to include everyone in the policy.

Q2. How can Academic Professionals working alone, such as Librarians assigned to the Reference Desk after 5:00 pm or on weekends, comply with this policy without turning away a student who happens to be a relative? How can Staff working alone comply with this policy without turning away a student who happens to be a relative?

A2. Librarians and Staff should be able to determine when covered relatives are attending LCC and to work out a plan in advance for referring them to others if (1) the circumstances create a the appearance of possible preferential treatment and (2) other qualified Academic Professionals are readily available to help. If such referrals are not possible, contingency approvals may be requested in advance. Counselors might also make such arrangements to address potential emergencies but should otherwise avoid providing services to family members. Advisors can certainly arrange to have relatives assigned to others. Teaching Clinicians, Lab Instructors, and Lab Assistants can and should deal with conflicts in essentially the same way as Teaching Faculty.

Q3. What is meant by “discretionary services” provided by Staff?

A3. These are services that are not provided to all Students, regardless of the circumstances, such as a waiver.

Q4. Why is the reference to discipline up to and including termination necessary?

A4. Consistent with all of our collective bargaining agreements and applicable College policies, the College subscribes to the principles of progressive corrective discipline. Under the provisions of these agreements and policies, minor violations of this SOP, absent prior disciplinary actions, will likely result in informal counseling or disciplinary action without loss of scheduled work time. Additionally, in accordance with these collective bargaining agreements and College policy provisions, termination is a last resort, which would only be considered for serious infractions, or cases in which, based on prior repeated violations, it does not appear that corrective discipline likely would result in correction of the misconduct.

Q5. This SOP only addresses Students. What about preferential treatment of employees?

A5. The College policy, "Employment of Relatives – Nepotism" addresses conflicts of interest and preferential treatment when relatives of Employees are employed at the College.

Q6. The communication states that the date of issuance of this SOP is September 8, and the effective date is start of the Spring 2017 semester. What exactly does this mean for Teaching Faculty, Academic Professionals, and Staff?

A6. The intent is that all potential conflicts of interest must be addressed by the start of the Spring 2017 semester, as specified in the SOP. For example, if a Teaching Faculty knows now that her/his relative has enrolled in her/his Spring 2017 semester class, she/he must submit exemption requests, by no later than November 10, 2016, which is sixty days prior to the start date of the semester, as soon as the Faculty member becomes aware of the potential conflict of interest, whichever is earlier.

For Academic Professionals and Staff, exemption requests should be submitted as soon as the employee becomes aware of the potential conflict of interest.

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