

## **Interactions with Enrolled Relatives**

**Issuance Date: September 8, 2016**

**Effective at the Start of the Spring 2017 Semester**

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### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this Statement of Practice (SOP) is to avoid actual or perceived preferential treatment or conflicts of interest when relatives of all College Employees are enrolled at the College. Since all College Employees are focused on Student success and may interact with Students, all Employees and Students who are their relatives should not create situations in which there is the appearance of an actual or perceived preferential treatment or conflict of interest because of the potential negative effects on such individuals or on the Faculty and Staff relationships with other students that they serve. While serving Students, all College Employees should avoid all situations that may cause a question as to their actions, integrity, or motives.

### **II. Scope**

This SOP applies to all Faculty, both Teaching Faculty and Academic Professionals, all Staff, and their relatives who are enrolled at the College. Interactions between Faculty or Staff and their relatives away from the College and College activities are beyond the scope of this SOP.

### **III. Definition**

Relatives: The term relatives and related are hereby defined as: current spouse, current domestic partner, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepmother, stepfather, stepchild and/or any other person living in the immediate household.

### **IV. General**

In order to avoid actual or perceived preferential treatment, the following requirements must be followed by ALL Faculty, both Teaching Faculty and Academic Professionals, and ALL Staff.

#### **A. Teaching Faculty**

1. Teaching Faculty may not teach any class section in which their relative is enrolled, unless an exemption is timely approved by the Dean under the following procedure:
  - a. No later than sixty days prior to the start of the semester, or as soon as the Teaching Faculty becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest, the instructor of record will request an exemption to this policy to allow a relative to enroll in that Teaching Faculty's assigned class section by submitting a written request to the responsible Dean and Administrative Supervisor. This request must explain why there are no other reasonable alternatives, such as enrolling in a section not taught by the individual, taking the course from someone else during a subsequent term, etc.
  - b. The Dean may request a meeting with the Teaching Faculty and her/his Administrative Supervisor. If the Dean, Administrative Supervisor, and Teaching Faculty agree that an exception to this SOP is warranted, the Administrative Supervisor and Teaching Faculty must design a plan to address any perceived or actual preferential treatment concerns, subject to the approval of the Dean. The plan must include arrangements for someone other than the Teaching Faculty to evaluate the work and decide the grade of the student involved in the situation.
  - c. Such plan(s) must be submitted to the Dean, in writing, no later than thirty days prior to the start of the semester.
  - d. The Dean will make a written decision within two weeks of receipt of the initial request or plan to address potential concerns, and that decision will be final.
2. If the relative of a Teaching Faculty enrolls in a course section in violation of this SOP, or if the prohibited classroom relationship develops due to circumstances beyond the Teaching Faculty's control (e.g., contractually required workload revision), the instructor of record must immediately notify the responsible Dean and Administrative Supervisor, in writing. Thereafter, the Teaching Faculty and her/his Administrative Supervisor must design a plan to address the conflict of interest concerns, subject to the approval of the Dean. The plan must include arrangements for someone other than the Teaching Faculty to evaluate the work and decide the grade(s) of the student involved in the situation, or for the performance data and the grading decision to be reviewed by a Teaching Faculty colleague.
  - a. Such plans must be submitted to the Dean, in writing, no later than one week after the written notice from the instructor of record is received.

- b. The Dean will make a written decision within one week of receipt of the plan, and that decision will be final.
3. Untimely submissions for an exemption or to address conflicts of interest will not be considered.

#### B. Academic Professionals

1. Academic Professionals may not provide direct<sup>1</sup> professional services to a relative who is enrolled at the College, unless an exemption is timely approved by the Dean under the following procedure:
  - a. As soon as the Academic Professional becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest, and prior to providing professional services to a relative, the Academic Professional must request an exemption to this SOP, by submitting a written request to the responsible Administrative Supervisor. This request must explain why there are no other reasonable alternatives, such as assigning another Academic Professional to provide the required services.
  - b. The Dean may request a meeting with the Academic Professional and her/his Administrative Supervisor. If the Dean, Administrative Supervisor, and Academic Professional agree that an exception to this policy is warranted, the Administrative Supervisor and Academic Professional must design a plan to address the conflict of interest concerns, subject to the approval of the Dean. If applicable, the plan must include arrangements for someone other than the Academic Professional to evaluate the work of the student involved in the conflict of interest situation or for the performance data and the evaluation decision to be reviewed by an Academic Professional colleague.
  - c. Such plans must be submitted to the Dean, in writing, prior to providing such service.

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<sup>1</sup> Direct professional services include all of those in which there is person-to-person interaction between the faculty member and a relative. The term does not include situations where such personal interaction does not occur, such as a librarian providing non-personal services (e.g., cataloging, or posting a learning resource) that might indirectly benefit a relative.

- d. The Dean or designee will be make a written decision within one week of receipt of the initial request or plan to address conflicts of interest concerns, and that decision will be final.

2. If the relative of an Academic Professional enrolls in a course section or otherwise seeks services in violation of this SOP, or if the prohibited relationship develops due to circumstances beyond the Academic Professionals control, (e.g., unanticipated assignment, no one else available to serve the student's needs, etc.), the Academic Professional must immediately notify the responsible Dean and Administrative Supervisor, in writing. Thereafter, the Academic Professional and her/his Administrative Supervisor must design a plan to address the conflict of interest concerns, subject to the approval of the Dean. If applicable, the plan must include arrangements for someone other than the Academic Professional to evaluate the work of the student involved in the conflict of interest situation, or for the performance data and the evaluation decision to be reviewed by an Academic Professional colleague.

- a. If possible, such plans must be submitted to the Dean, in writing, prior to providing such service.
- b. The Dean will make a written decision within one week of receipt of the initial request or plan to address conflicts of interest or other concerns, and that decision will be final.
- c. Untimely submissions for an exemption or to address conflicts of interest will not be considered.

### C. Staff Employees

- A. Staff are expected to be fully aware of their professional responsibility to avoid perceived or actual conflicts of interest and preferential treatment of relatives enrolled at the College.
- B. Staff are strictly prohibited from involvement in College activities or discretionary decisions regarding enrolled relatives, including but not limited to, Student enrollment, records, overrides, discipline, financial operations, and financial aid.
- C. If the possibility of prohibited involvement arises, Staff must recuse themselves and refer the activity or decision to their Administrative Supervisor or a Staff colleague.

Failure to follow this SOP may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

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