



## Policy # 53034.9

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(related policy #53034.8 Consensual Relationship between Employees and Students)

### CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIP POLICY BETWEEN EMPLOYEES

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**Effective Date:** January 13, 2026

**Responsible Office:** Human Resources, Title IX, University Compliance

**Division:** Administration & Business Affairs

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#### I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Grambling State University is committed to maintaining a professional, ethical and respectful work environment that is free from conflicts of interest, favoritism, coercion, or the appearance of impropriety. Amorous, consensual, romantic or intimate relationships between employees may undermine workplace integrity when a power imbalance exists or when professional judgment may be compromised. This Policy establishes clear expectations, prohibitions, and disclosure requirements to protect the integrity of the University's academic and employment environments.

#### II. APPLICABILITY

This Policy describes the expectations and responsibilities of Grambling State University employees regarding amorous relationships between other Grambling State University employees. It applies to all full and part-time faculty (including adjunct, special or visiting faculty) and staff, administrators, unclassified employees, classified employees, student employees or volunteers acting in an employment capacity ("University employees"). Policy #53034.8 addresses consensual relationships between employees and students.

#### III. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Amorous relationships between individuals of different status are prohibited when a direct supervisory, evaluative, or administrative relationship exists.
- B. Where no such direct authority exists, such relationships must be promptly disclosed so that the University may assess and manage any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- C. University Employees will be subject to disciplinary action for failing to promptly disclose a consensual, intimate, personal, romantic or sexual relationship as described in Part B of this Section.
- D. Disciplinary action for failing to promptly disclose may include, but is not limited to, a verbal warning, written warning, suspension without pay, termination and/or other disciplinary measures in accordance with university policy.
- E. Prompt disclosure is an effective method of adhering to this policy but does not alone ensure that the policy has not been violated.
- F. Policy violations will be determined on a case-by-case basis after considering the facts of each relationship, incident, evidence, and/or supporting documentation.

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**IV. DEFINITIONS**

1. **Amorous relationship:** Shall include but is not limited to any personal, intimate, romantic, dating, or sexual relationship, conduct, or electronic communication to which the parties have given valid consent.
2. **Athletics Employee:** Any University employee or volunteer serving in the Department of Athletics. Student-athletes who are assigned departmental work on a temporary and volunteer basis are not considered athletics employees for the purposes of this Policy.
3. **Different status:** Any individual who has a position of greater authority, by virtue of their professional responsibilities over another individual, such as a subordinate, student, or student-athlete.
4. **Direct Supervisory Authority:** A direct line of authority in which one individual:
  - a. Is in the other individual's formal reporting chain;
  - b. Conducts or formally contributes to performance evaluations;
  - c. Has authority to hire, discipline, promote, demote, terminate, or set compensation; or
  - d. Controls day-to-day work assignments, schedules, or workload.
5. **Indirect Supervisory or Evaluative Authority:** Authority exercised outside the direct reporting line, including the ability to influence, recommend, or participate in decisions affecting another individual's employment status, compensation, promotion, tenure, or professional opportunities.
6. **Evaluative, administrative, or supervisory:** Related to assessment, determination or influence over (1) one's academic performance, progress or potential or (2) one's entitlement to or eligibility for any institutionally conferred right, benefit or opportunity or (3) management, oversight or direction of one's academic or other institutionally prescribed activities.

**V. PROHIBITED RELATIONSHIPS**

- A. **Direct Authority Prohibition:** Amorous relationships are strictly prohibited where a direct supervisory or evaluative relationship exists, regardless of whether the relationship began before or after the authority relationship was established.
- B. **No Waiver:** Prohibited relationships may not be approved, waived, or cured through disclosure or conflict-management plans.

**VI. DUTY TO SELF-DISCLOSE**

- A. **Mandatory Disclosure** Where an amorous relationship exists or develops between employees and no direct supervisory or evaluative authority exists, the relationship must be promptly disclosed to the Supervisor of the individual of greater authority or to Human Resources.
- B. **Duty to Update** Disclosure must be updated if circumstances change such that a supervisory, evaluative, or administrative relationship is created or reasonably anticipated.
- C. **Confidentiality** Any such report constitutes confidential personnel information.

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- D. Failure to Disclose** Failure to make or timely update a required disclosure may itself constitute a violation of this Policy and other applicable University policies which may result in corrective or disciplinary action.

**VII. MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICTS**

Upon disclosure, the University will assess whether an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists and may implement measures including, but not limited to:

- a. Reassignment of supervisory or evaluative responsibilities;
- b. Modification of reporting lines;
- c. Transfer of one or both individuals, where feasible; or
- d. Other actions deemed necessary to protect institutional integrity.

The University is not required to accommodate the preferences of either party.

**VIII. CRIMINAL CONDUCT; OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR**

- A. Amorous or consensual relationships that involve conduct which is unlawful, results in arrest or criminal investigation, or otherwise raises concerns regarding abuse of authority, conflicts of interest, or the integrity of institutional responsibilities may constitute a violation of this Policy and other University policies, regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off campus.
- B. The University reserves the right to take immediate administrative action, including administrative leave, reassignment, or termination, where such conduct materially impairs an employee's ability to perform their duties, undermines public confidence in the University, or exposes the University to legal, regulatory, or reputational risk.
- C. Violation of this Policy may constitute "cause" for disciplinary action, including termination, notwithstanding any contract, appointment, or tenure status, subject to applicable law and due process requirements.

**IX. INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES**

Pending review or investigation of a potential violation of this Policy, the University may implement interim measures, including administrative leave with or without pay, temporary reassignment, or restriction of duties, as deemed necessary to protect the interests of the University and its community.

**X. DUTY TO DISCLOSE/CANDOR AND COOPERATION**

1. Employees are required to provide complete, accurate, and truthful information in connection with any disclosure, review, or investigation conducted under this Policy.
2. Failure to disclose an amorous relationship, providing misleading information, or failing to cooperate with an institutional review or investigation may constitute independent grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**XI. DUTY TO REPORT SUSPECTED POLICY VIOLATIONS**

- A. Any University employee who is aware of a possible violation of this Policy is required to report the matter to the Title IX Office. The identity of a reporting employee will be kept confidential and not disclosed except to the extent required to address a suspected policy violation. Any other person who is aware of a possible violation of this Policy may also report the matter to the Title IX Office.

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- B. Retaliation against any individual for disclosing an amorous relationship or participating in a review under this Policy is strictly prohibited.
  - C. Grambling State University is a community in which employees are encouraged to share workplace concerns with University leadership. Additionally, Grambling's Anonymous Reporting Hotline allows anonymous and confidential reporting on matters of concern through the GSAFE APP and/or the [GSU Online Complaint Form](#) by following the General Complaint Protocol.

## **XII. RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE**

The individual in the position of greater authority bears primary responsibility for compliance with this policy and for timely disclosure.

## **XIII. SCOPE AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

This policy governs consensual romantic or intimate relationships between employees where no other specific university policy applies.

This policy does not address or supersede:

1. Nepotism or familial relationships, including relationships involving married couples or individuals related by blood, marriage, or affinity, which are governed by the University's Nepotism Policy #53026 and other applicable employment policies;
2. Non-consensual conduct, including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or retaliation, which are governed by the University's Title IX Policy, Sexual Misconduct Policy #62002, and other applicable conduct policies #62003; or
3. Relationships involving students, which are governed by the University's Consensual Relationships with Students Policy #53034.8 and Title IX regulations.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to limit the University's authority to investigate or address conduct that may violate other University policies, state or federal law, or applicable ethical standards.

## **XIV. ACCREDITATION**

Grambling State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctorate degrees. GSU also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of GSU may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)).

## **XV. REVISION/REVIEWED**