



Policy Directory

Responsible Division: Finance and Administrative Services
Responsible Office: Human Resources
Issue/Revision Date: 12/01/2017

Amorous Relationships

Policy:

Professionalism in interpersonal relationships between University employees and between employees and students is important to the mission and proper functioning of Alcorn State University. Consensual romantic and/or sexual relation between individuals in such groups can present conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. Although not strictly prohibited, consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between employees or between an employee and student are discouraged. Should such conditions arise, the principals involved must take steps immediately to eliminate any appearance of or potential conflicts of interest.

Amorous or sexual relationships in which one person has a position of authority over another employee or student present conflicts of interest even when the relationships are consensual and have the potential to lead to undesirable and, in some instances, unhealthy consequences. A position of authority is defined as, but is not limited to, the authoritative capacity in which an individual has the potential to, in his/her professional capacity, evaluate or supervise the reporting employee or student. This type of romantic relationship is referred to as a power-differential amorous relationship.

No Alcorn State University employee or student in a position of authority shall enter into or continue a power-differential amorous relationship with another employee or student at the University. If one exists or develops, it is the responsibility of the employee or student to report that relationship to his/her immediate supervisor and/or the Office of Human Resources. Failure to report such a relationship may result in disciplinary action.

Once a power-differential amorous relationship is reported, the following actions must be taken:

1. The position of authority must be eliminated or transferred to another appropriate person.
2. Alternatively, the amorous relationship can be ended.
3. Documentation of any action taken related to a power-differential amorous relationship must be reported to the Office of Human Resources.

For individuals in non-power-differential amorous relationships, it is each party's responsibility to monitor the circumstances so that neither an appearance nor an actual conflict of interest is created. Individuals involved in such relationships should be sensitive to the constant possibility that he/she may unexpectedly be placed in a position of responsibility or evaluation. Should a conflict of interest or its appearance arise, it is each party's responsibility to take immediate steps to remove the conflict consistent with the above actions.