

Personal/Professional Relationships

Introduction

The educational mission of James Sprunt Community College is promoted by professionalism in student-faculty relationships and in supervisor-subordinate relationships. Professionalism is fostered by an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Taking note of the respect and trust accorded a faculty member by a student, and a supervisor by a subordinate employee, faculty, staff, and administrators recognize that they are presumed to make decisions regarding their relationships with students and subordinate employees which will not endanger this atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

Faculty, staff, and administrators should be aware of the possibility that a consensual sexual relationship with a student or a subordinate employee may be interpreted, either at the time or at a later date, as non-consensual and, therefore, that sexual harassment or preferential treatment has occurred. The power differential inherent in faculty-student and supervisor-subordinate employee relationships may compromise the student's or the subordinate employee's ability to make decisions, and thus may call into question the bona fide consensual nature of the relationship.

Statement

A consensual sexual relationship between a faculty/staff member and a student or between a supervisor and a subordinate employee is a conflict of interest when the faculty/staff member or supervisor has direct evaluative professional responsibility over the student or the subordinate employee.