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## WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY/PRACTICE

**Policy Title:** Consensual Relationships Policy  
**Effective:** Spring 2013 (Admin Council Approved Spring 2012; Public Comment Solicited Summer and Fall 2012; Finalized Spring 2013)  
**Scope:** All Willamette University Faculty and Staff

Willamette University prohibits the establishment of consensual romantic or sexual relationships between any Willamette employee (faculty, administration or staff) and any Willamette University student. Further, consensual romantic or sexual relationships between two Willamette University employees in a supervisory relationship are prohibited.

Romantic or sexual relationships where an academic or supervisory relationship<sup>i</sup> exists may give rise either to impropriety or an appearance of impropriety, including but not limited to sexual harassment, reduced educational opportunities for students, or reduced collaboration and productivity in the workplace. Violations are considered a breach of professional standards.

Requests for exceptions to the Consensual Relationships Policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the responsible dean or vice president in consultation with the Director of Human Resources, and when appropriate, the University's Title IX Coordinator. Both parties to the consensual relationship must submit written requests to their dean or vice president for an exception and will be required to meet with the responsible administrator(s). Exceptions will only rarely be granted. Student-employee relationships that exist prior to enrollment of the student are not prohibited, however, it will be necessary to ensure that conflict of interest is avoided relative to academic benefits.

If a faculty member, staff member, other employee or student is in a consensual relationship as described in this policy and unsure whether the relationship is subject to this prohibition, both parties must submit a written inquiry to their dean or vice president. Failure to submit a request for an exception to the policy, or a written inquiry regarding whether the consensual relationship is subject to the policy, may result in disciplinary action. The University will make every effort to keep requests for an exception and written inquiries confidential.

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<sup>i</sup> "Academic or supervisory relationship", for the purpose of this policy, means the ability by faculty or staff to extend, influence or affect academic or employment benefits to a student or employee. Academic benefits include, but are not limited to grades, financial aid, and admissions. Employment benefits include, but are not limited to, employment itself, wages, promotions, and performance appraisal.