

 CAPILANO UNIVERSITY		POLICY	
Policy No.	Officer Responsible		
B.311	Vice President, Finance and Administration		
Policy Name			
Employee-Student Relationships			
Approved by	Replaces	Category	Next Review
Board	S2003-05	C	June 2020
Date Issued	Date Revised	Related Policies, Reference	
June 13, 2017		B.311.1 (Employee-Student Relationships Procedure) E.501, E.702, B.310, B.401, B.506	

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. Capilano University is committed to ensuring a fair and equitable learning environment for all students, therefore, conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest must be avoided. Employees must avoid conflicts of interest that may impede or compromise their responsibility to instruct, supervise, evaluate, or make decisions about students in a fair and equitable manner. It is important to ensure fair methods of instruction, supervision, evaluation and decision-making in relation to students, and to eliminate any actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest arising out of relationships between employees and students.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Policy is to provide a reporting mechanism for students and other members of the University community.

2. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

- 2.1. This Policy is specifically to address relationships between employees and students.
- 2.2. For the purposes of this Policy and its associated procedures:

“**employee**” means any person employed by the University, and

“**student**” means an individual enrolled in any course (credit or non-credit) at the University.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1. Conflict of Interest – Employee – Student Relationships

- 3.1.1.A conflict of interest exists in any situation where an employee has non-professional

interests that conflict, or could be perceived to conflict, with the employee's professional responsibilities to a student.

3.1.2. When an employee can be rightly accused of actual or perceived conflict, or using his/her position of authority to inappropriately advance, protect, influence, or harm the interests of a student with whom he/she has a relationship, there exists a conflict of interest. Such conflicts have the potential to harm the integrity and fundamental mission of the University. Thus, the issue of conflict of interest needs to address situations where there is a reasonable apprehension that a relationship between an employee and a student may confer or may be perceived to confer upon a student an unfair advantage or to subject a student to an unfair disadvantage.

3.1.3. Employees are responsible for seeking guidance from the Dean, the senior administrator responsible for the employee, or the Associate Vice President, Human Resources before engaging in any activities that might be perceived as involving conflict of interest.

3.1.4. In addressing such conflicts of interest, the University seeks to protect both the institution and all members of the University community who could be impacted.

3.2. The Limitations of the Policy

3.2.1. It may not be possible to document every instance in which a conflict of interest might occur or be perceived to occur. Since such instances are extensive and cannot all be covered by policy, employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times with the highest of ethical standards and in a manner which will bear the closest scrutiny. For instance, faculty members and students should be aware that relationships between faculty members and students involve trust and disparities in power, and may give rise to perceptions of bias, unfair advantage, or unfair treatment. All employees must recognize the power they have in relation to students (for example, in grading, practicum supervision, academic advising, counselling, awarding of scholarships, and the provision of references for graduate and professional schools, or employment). This power imbalance between an employee and a student must not be used for the personal benefit of either.

4. DISCLOSING AND REPORTING

4.1. Identifying a Professional Relationship between an Employee and a Student

4.1.1. A professional relationship exists between an employee and a student when the employee has or might logically be expected to have a direct supervisory, evaluative or decision-making role with regard to a student.

4.1.2. A professional relationship also exists when an employee is undertaking tasks associated with his/her professional role (e.g. program admission, registration, placement testing

etc.) and the employee has the ability to act in a manner that would appear to a reasonable person to benefit or disadvantage a student.

4.2. Identifying a Relationship between an Employee and a Student

4.2.1. For the purposes of this Policy, relationships include, but are not limited to:

- Family relationships such as those between spouses or spousal equivalents, parents and children, siblings, in-laws, grandparents and grandchildren, and close relatives of spouses, including step- or in-law relatives;
- Friends or their relatives;
- Commercial or business relationships;
- Relationships between persons whose economic interests are closely interrelated;
- Present or previous romantic or sexual relationships; and,
- Other significant relationships.

4.2.2. If an employee is in doubt about whether a particular relationship could be viewed as creating a conflict of interest, he/she must consult with the Dean, the senior administrator responsible for the employee, or the Associate Vice President, Human Resources before engaging in professional activities that might be perceived as involving conflict of interest.

4.3. Obligation to Disclose

4.3.1. Just as employees have a responsibility to instruct, advise, supervise, evaluate, and make decisions about students in a fair and equitable manner, they also have a duty to avoid conflicts of interest and to disclose situations that have a potential for conflict of interest and that may impede or compromise the fulfillment of their responsibility.

4.3.2. The University expects employees to assess their own interests, involvement and activities and to disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest as described in this Policy in accordance with the procedures set out in B.311.1 Employee – Student Relationships Procedure.

4.3.3. The University requires prior disclosure of any circumstance in which an employee's professional judgment may be called into question because of a conflict of interest or the potential for conflict of interest.

4.3.4. Failure to disclose an actual or potential conflict of interest is a serious matter and a breach of trust and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from

employment.

4.4. Opportunity to Report

4.4.1. Students and third parties may report concerns about a potential conflict of interest in accordance with the procedures set out in B.311.1 Employee – Student Relationships Procedure.

4.5. Protection from Reprisal

4.5.1. The University will not tolerate any reprisal, either direct or indirect, against any student or third party who, in good faith, reports or discloses a concern about a potential conflict of interest under this Policy. A member of the University community who retaliates against a student or a third party is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment or expulsion from the University.

5. DESIGNATED OFFICER

5.1. The Vice President, Finance and Administration is responsible for the administration of this Policy and the development and subsequent revisions of any associated procedures.