Relationships at Work between Faculty and Staff

Otis College of Art and Design encourages faculty and staff to socialize and develop professional relationships in the workplace provided that these relationships do not interfere with the work performance of either individual or with the effective functioning of the workplace. Faculty and/or staff who engage in personal relationships with colleagues (including romantic and sexual relationships) should be aware of their professional responsibilities and will be responsible for assuring that the relationship does not raise concerns about favoritism, bias, ethics, and/or conflict of interest that may undermine professional achievements or career advancement for those involved. The College has a policy against discrimination and harassment including, without limitation, sexual harassment. Dating, sexual, or intimate relationships between faculty and/or staff may result in claims of sexual harassment and questions about the voluntariness of the relationship. Please refer to College policies on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Non-Retaliation for more details. In cases of doubt, advice and counsel should be sought from next level management, the Title IX Coordinator, or Human Resources.

Romantic or sexual relationships between staff and/or faculty members are discouraged. However if such a relationship exists or develops, the College does prohibit relationships where one individual has influence or control over the other’s conditions of employment. These relationships, even if consensual, may ultimately result in conflict or difficulties in the workplace. If such a relationship currently exists or develops, it must be disclosed to management. Management will review the context of the relationship in collaboration with Human Resources and will then take appropriate actions. Management who believes that a faculty/staff member under his or her direct authority or supervision is involved in a consensual relationship with a colleague is required to report the relationship to Human Resources.

Administration

If a relationship is deemed to be inappropriate under these guidelines, Human Resources in collaboration with management will take action which may include, but is not limited to, a transfer, a change in shift, or a change in reporting structure so that the individual in authority does not evaluate or participate in discussions and decisions that affect the compensation, evaluation, employment conditions of the colleague involved.

Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The College considers the existence or pursuit of a dating, sexual, or intimate relationship under the circumstances described above to be a breach of professional ethics. This policy applies to all Otis employees, temporary/interim employees, independent contractors and external vendors.