

**Follow Up to April 23, 2019 Question
From Trustee Menon**

Re: Proposed Consensual Relationship Language

Question:

Dr. Menon questioned whether the proposed consensual relationship language in DJ(Local) should include peer relationships.

Answer:

The additional language approved by the Board of Trustees in DJ(Local) in the Consensual Relationship section focuses on an employee in a consensual relationship with a difference in power, such as when one employee is in a position of authority over the other employee or student and thus creates a conflict of interest.

An employee in a consensual relationship cannot influence pay, responsibilities, grades, or discipline, etc., for a peer and would not likely have a conflict of interest in the context of this policy. In addition, one of the ways identified in the policy to resolve a conflict of interest in a Consensual Relationship at Work situation would be to move one of the employees to a different department at the college. As such, the college would not be able to exclude all consensual relationships at the college, but rather only those that meet the definition in the policy. *(Over the years, we have had several employees in consensual relationships.)*

If, however, an employee or student is sexually harassed by another employee or a student (regardless of whether they have a relationship that meets the definition of a Consensual Relationship at Work), policies DIAA(Local) and FDAA(Local) would help address the concerns.

DBD(Local) Conflicts of Interest includes the following language that may address concerns expressed about peer relationship conflicts of interest:

"Disclosure General Standard

An employee shall disclose to his or her immediate supervisor a personal financial interest, a business interest, or any other obligation or relationship that in any way creates a potential conflict of interest with the proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or with the best interest of the College District."

Resource:

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