VI.COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND POLICIES: H. POLICY ON INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND FACULTY

A relationship between a faculty member and a student that is romantic or sexual is not in harmony with the values of the Denison community. Such an inappropriate relationship exploits the inherent inequality of power between faculty and students, creates a situation that inhibits the learning environment, and has a negative impact on the community. As such, it is incumbent upon faculty not to engage in such relationships; to do so will be considered the basis for disciplinary action.

This policy provides a process by which an allegation of an inappropriate relationship between a student and a member of the teaching faculty is investigated by a Preliminary Review Body (PRB). The purpose of the PRB is to attempt a resolution of the allegation that is in keeping with the values and responsibilities of the institution. In the case of an alleged inappropriate student/faculty relationship, the PRB takes the place of the informal hearing described in I.A.8 (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/personnel-policies/i-a-full-time-faculty/).1-2. If the allegation cannot be resolved through the Preliminary Review Body, resolution of the allegation will move to a formal hearing and the procedure outlined in I.A.8 (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/personnel-policies/i-a-full-time-faculty/).2c. shall be followed. In addition, the charged party may, at any time, request that the matter move to a formal hearing under the procedure outlined in I.A.8 (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/personnel-policies/i-a-full-time-faculty/).2c.

Allegations of an inappropriate relationship shall be made to the Provost, and may be brought by any member of the community. Within two weeks of the allegation being brought to the Provost, they shall notify the charged party in writing of the charges. Within 30 days of the written notification of the allegations being received by the charged party, the Provost shall convene a Preliminary Review Body. The membership of the PRB shall be comprised of the Provost and five former members of the President's Advisory Board. The Provost shall be a non-voting member of the PRB while the other members shall be voting members. No person shall serve as a member of the PRB when the allegation under consideration is (a) against them or (b) against a colleague whose primary affiliation is within the potential PRB member's department or program.

The PRB shall pursue an investigation of the allegations including gathering all information necessary to conduct a full review. Following the investigation, the PRB shall make one of three recommendations to the President:

1. If the PRB, by a majority vote, finds the charges to be unfounded, the PRB shall recommend that charges be dropped and the matter be considered resolved.
2. If the PRB, by a majority vote, finds that the charges are founded and, if the PRB determines that an institutional response other than the formal termination procedure is appropriate, the voting members of the PRB shall agree, by a majority vote, on suitable sanctions to recommend to the President. If the President proposes and the charged party agrees with these sanctions, the President shall have the responsibility to administer the sanctions. If the charged party finds the sanctions proposed by the President unacceptable, the matter will move to a formal hearing and the procedure outlined in I.A.8 (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/personnel-policies/i-a-full-time-faculty/).2c. shall be followed.
3. If the PRB, by a majority vote, finds that the charges are founded and that the appropriate institutional response is to proceed with formal termination procedures, it will recommend to the President that the matter move to a formal hearing and the procedure outlined in I.A.8 (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/personnel-policies/i-a-full-time-faculty/).2c. shall be followed.

If the President's recommendation differs materially from those proposed by the PRB, the President shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the difference to members of the PRB.

The filing of charges under this policy on relationships between students and faculty does not preclude the filing of charges under the Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom or Anti-harassment Policies (VII.G (https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/community-standards-policies/vii-g-freedom-expression-academic-freedom-anti-harassment-policies/)), if the party making the allegation construes the alleged relationship to be harassment.

This policy does not apply to relationships existing prior to the student's matriculation at Denison.