

# SOUTHERN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY POLICY

<b>Policy Title:</b> Personal Relationships	<b>Policy Number:</b> 4.4
<b>Authority:</b> Director of Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator, President’s Cabinet, President	<b>See Also:</b> 4.1 Protection of Minors 4.3 Sexual Misconduct Student Handbook Faculty Handbook Staff Handbook
<b>Date Adopted:</b> 09/04/2018 <b>Revised:</b> 08/06/2019; 08/25/2020	

*Southern Wesleyan University is fully committed to the Biblical Standard of sexual integrity as defined and practiced by The Wesleyan Church. At no time should the discussion of sexual behaviors cited within this policy be construed as endorsement of inappropriate sexual activity.*

## I. Policy Overview

Southern Wesleyan University endeavors to create an environment in which all members of the community are treated with the dignity and respect inherent in their position as creatures made in the image of God. Relationships (hereafter defined as romantic, sexual (outside of marriage), or exploitive relationships between individuals who have unequal positions in an educational setting) can undermine the trust necessary to fulfill the university’s mission and the integrity of the educational experience as well as the supervision and/or evaluation process in the workplace and classroom.

This policy provides guidance regarding personal relationships between employees and between employees and students, or other relationships, as defined in Section II.

## II. Prohibited Relationships

Southern Wesleyan University prohibits romantic relationships that may fall within the following general categories:

1. Relationships between university employees that may be defined as directly or indirectly supervisory-subordinate in nature.
2. Relationships between university employees and students outside of marriage to each other.
3. Any relationship (romantic or not) that may cause unnecessary disruption to the normal operations of the university.

The above is in no way an exhaustive list and other situations of personal or disruptive relationships may also result in a violation of this policy. If the alleged romantic relationship is confirmed and found to be in violation of this policy, the university employee will be subject to employee disciplinary procedures up to and including termination. The established policies and procedures for employee disciplinary procedures and dismissal for cause apply in all such cases.

**III. Additional Guidance**

Southern Wesleyan University's current Sexual Misconduct Policy provides expanded definitions and guidelines about the university's strong stance against discrimination based on gender, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Any employee who experiences, observes, or becomes aware of incidences of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence may report these incidences to the Title IX Coordinator, Director of Human Resources, or any responsible employee with a duty to respond to complaints. Reported incidents will be investigated in a timely manner in accordance with the university's standing policies.

As with any policy, there are exceptional circumstances that fall outside the parameters defined in the policy. If a circumstance exists where there is uncertainty regarding the appropriateness of a relationship, disclosure of the relationship should be made to the employee's supervisor. The employee's supervisor should then discuss the matter with the department head, and area vice president. In consultation with the Director of Human Resources, a determination will be made as to whether an exceptional circumstance exists.