All faculty, including any University staff employees with teaching responsibility or any position of authority with students as described below, are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with students. In keeping with the Elon University mission, faculty and staff relationships with students must maintain a central focus on student learning and development. Inappropriate relationships that potentially jeopardize the centrality of this focus are contrary to the mission of the University and counterproductive to the educational process. Intimate relationships between faculty and students or staff and students, even of a consensual nature, are inherently problematic due to the unequal status of faculty and students or staff and students. Therefore, any employee with teaching responsibility or other position of authority in relation to students may not engage in such inappropriate relationships with students. Pre-existing relationships are exempt from this policy.

An inappropriate relationship is defined as any romantic or physically intimate liaison. Positions of authority include, but may not be limited to, teaching, evaluating, supervising, coaching, or advising a student or student group.

Alleged violations of the Professional Boundaries policy should be reported to the Assistant Director of Human Resources for Employee Relations who will meet with the student, the faculty or staff person involved, and others with relevant information to address the complaint in as expeditious and as confidential manner as possible.

Faculty and staff who are found to be in violation of the Professional Boundaries policy and who wish to contest the findings should consult the staff grievance policy (see VIII-I).

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