FAQS

Are consensual sexual relations or dating permitted between faculty and students?

In a broad set of circumstances, consensual sexual relations between faculty and students are prohibited. Effective March 27, 2018, consensual sex or dating relations are categorically prohibited between Penn faculty and undergraduate students. Consensual sex or dating relationships are also prohibited between faculty and those graduate or professional students over whom faculty have supervisory "academic responsibility" as defined in the policy.

As to graduate and professional students for whom faculty do not have academic responsibility, Penn faculty are nevertheless strongly discouraged from consensual sex or dating relationships. The policy applies to all categories of standing faculty, associated faculty, academic support staff, and staff and students who teach, grade or have other academic responsibilities for students.

Professionalism in the academy requires recognition by faculty that their positions come with authority and stature which convey power over students. In light of inequalities and asymmetries of institutional power, consensual sexual relations between faculty and students may involve unintended advantage-taking and manipulation. Sexual relations potentially compromise judgment and seriously undermine the climate of trust critical to the academic enterprise. Consensual sexual relations can create the perception that faculty preferentially treat one student or category of students over others. As a consequence of sexual relations, students can become mired in conflicts of interest that deprive them of many of the benefits of their University education. These benefits include unencumbered access to faculty expertise, mentorship, evaluation, and endorsement. Not only can sexual relations with faculty diminish the educational experience of the individual students involved, they disturb the educational environment enjoyed by other students, by raising the possibility or perception of discrimination, bias, and harassment. Because of differences in power and authority, consensual sexual relations between faculty and students risk characterization as non-consensual or coercive, opening the door to allegations of sexual harassment or assault with the threat of liability for faculty and for the University.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/vi/vi-e/*) for the Sexual Misconduct Policy, Resource Offices and Complaint Procedures.*

May I go up for tenure or promotion in my terminal year?

Effective February 2015, terminal year promotion or tenure reviews are no longer permitted or encouraged as a routine alternative to mandatory review year review. All faculty members will be reviewed in their designated mandatory review years. Rare exceptions may be made, but require the advanced approval, normally prior to the mandatory review year, of both the faculty member's Dean and the Provost. Extensions of the probationary period for new children, medical problems and other special situations will be granted as in the past. Where terminal year review is approved, approval does not foretell or guarantee success.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-c/*) for the Policy on the Tenure System.*

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-d/*) for the Policy on Academic Appointments and Promotions.*

What role do faculty play in the appointments of senior faculty administrators?

Faculty are typically represented on the consultative committees for the appointments of deans and University-wide administrators. For dean searches, Schools nominate specific faculty members to the President for appointment to the consultative committee.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/i/i-g/#apptofadminstrators*) for the Policy on Consultation Procedures for the Appointment and Reappointment of Deans and University-wide Administrators.*

What is the role of the department in appointments and promotions?

Appointments and promotions are initiated in departments (or Schools, if the School has no departments). Faculty members with a rank equal or equivalent to the rank of the proposed appointment or promotion are eligible to vote. Only faculty members with tenure may vote on cases of faculty members proposed for tenure.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-d/*) for the Policy on Academic Appointments and Promotions.*

Can I be tenured at Penn if I am not a permanent resident of the United States?

No. Only permanent residents or citizens of the United States can receive tenure at Penn. It is possible to serve initially on the Penn faculty with a non-immigrant visa and then be tenured upon receipt of permanent residency status.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-d/#appt non-us personnel*) for the Policy on Appointment of Non-U.S. Personnel.*

Can my tenure clock be extended?

A faculty member can have his or her tenure clock extended due to a new child, a catastrophic event, a serious health condition, or the caregiving of another with a serious health condition. Extensions are not granted for government service or fellowships.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#extension of probation periods*) for the Policy on Extension of Probationary Periods.*

What are the policies for the parent of a new child?

A faculty member may be entitled to tenure-track extension and teaching relief upon the birth of, adoption of, or initiation of a foster care relationship with a child. Short-term Disability Leave and Family Medical Leave may also be available to faculty members as employees of the University; faculty members are advised to consult Human Resources (https://www.hr.upenn.edu/) about these benefits.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#extension of probation periods*) for the Policy on Extension of Probationary Periods.*

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#faculty parental policy*) for the Faculty Parental Policy.*

Can I take a leave of absence before my first reappointment?

It is possible but not expected for a faculty member to take a leave before the first reappointment. If a faculty member on a term appointment is granted a scholarly leave, the leave will be counted as part of the time accumulated toward tenure, unless the formal action approving the leave expressly provides otherwise.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#faculty LOA*) for the Policy on Faculty Leaves of Absence.*

Under what circumstances can I take a leave of absence from Penn?

Faculty members may take scholarly leave (sabbatical); leaves for employment at other institutions, agencies, or firms; reductions in duties; and leaves for various personal circumstances.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#faculty LOA*) for the Policy on Faculty Leaves of Absence.*

How do I take a sabbatical leave?

Sabbatical leaves with pay are available to standing faculty members and certain other categories of faculty. Faculty members can apply for sabbaticals through their departments or Schools. Sabbatical requests must be approved by the Office of the Provost. Faculty are generally eligible for leaves of one semester at full pay or one year at half pay, although shorter sabbaticals may be permitted for otherwise eligible faculty.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#faculty LOA*) for the Policy on Faculty Leaves of Absence.*

What is Penn's policy in conflicts of interest?

Faculty are asked to report each year on their extramural activities. Outside employment may violate Penn's conflict of interest policy, as may teaching online courses not offered through Coursera.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#COI for faculty*) for the Policy on Conflicts of Interest.*

What is Penn's policy on misconduct in research?

For tenured faculty members, *click* here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/iii/iii-b/*) for the Policy on Misconduct in Research.*

For non-tenured faculty members, *click* here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/iii/iii-c/*) for the Policy on Misconduct in Research for Non-Tenured Faculty Members of the Research Community.*

What is Penn's policy on copyright protection?

The Penn Libraries offer an overview of Copyright Basics (https://guides.library.upenn.edu/copyright/), as well as an FAQ on Copyright Issues (https://guides.library.upenn.edu/copyright/FAQ/).

Who owns my inventions?

The University generally owns inventions and associated materials that are conceived or reduced to practice in the course of employment at the University or with a substantial use of University resources. The University's copyright policy (https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v47/n24/ORcopyright.html) describes applicable rules for copyrightable works. In some cases, the terms of a sponsored research agreement may affect ownership. Please contact PCI for advice on specific cases; details of Penn's policy on ownership can be found in the patent policy (https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/volumes/v57/n01/pdf_n01/Patentpolicy.pdf).

How do I file a grievance?

The Deans, the Ombudsman and the Vice Provost for Faculty may be able to help faculty resolve serious conflicts related to employment at Penn. A faculty member who wishes to file a formal grievance should follow the procedures described here (https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#faculty grievance) in the Faculty Handbook.

What benefits are available to retired faculty?

The Office of the Provost publishes a comprehensive brochure on benefits available to retired faculty at Penn (https://pasef.provost.upenn.edu/retirement/). Faculty nearing retirement age are also invited to visit the Office of Human Resources (https://www.hr.upenn.edu/) to learn more about the many benefits enjoyed by retirees.

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/#retirement*) for the University's Retirement Policy.*

Under what circumstances can I use an "emeritus" title post-retirement?

Emeritus status is conferred upon Professors and Associate Professors in the Standing Faculty and upon Standing Faculty-Clinician Educators at the time of retirement. Retiring standing faculty members have the option of using or not using the modifier "Emeritus." Those who retire from administrative or non-standing faculty positions may not use the emeritus modifier (e.g., "emeritus dean" or "emeritus department chair").

Click here *(*https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-b/#emeritus*) for the Policy on Emeritus Faculty.*