

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 24, 2008
TO: Deans
FROM: John Pritchett, University Provost and
Chief Academic Officer
SUBJECT: Supervision of Academic Work by Relatives

Florida Atlantic University strongly endorses the principles of academic responsibility and the expectations of ethical conduct of its faculty that are articulated in the *Faculty Handbook*, the *Guidelines on Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment and Outside Activities, Including Financial Interests*, *Personnel Policy 070.0 Employee Ethical Obligations and Conflict of Interest*, the *BOT/UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement*, and the *Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees*. This memorandum addresses the further articulation of those principles in regard to the instructional mission of the University.

No faculty member may assign a grade to a relative or evaluate in any way a relative who is a student at the University. In addition, no faculty member may:

1. Supervise a relative as part of a Directed Independent Study or other form of individualized instruction;
2. Serve as a member of a relative's honor's thesis, master's thesis, or doctoral dissertation supervisory or examining committee;
3. Participate in an individual or committee decision (i.e., nomination or conferral of awards, recommendation for fellowships or university positions, complaint about a course) involving a relative where there might exist a conflict of interest.

In situations where a student is planning to take a course from a relative, the faculty member is required to disclose this to his or her immediate supervisor (Chair, Director, Dean or Provost). The supervisor must approve the enrollment and a written plan assuring fair evaluation and grading (i.e., grading by a disinterested party). The supervisor may also suggest other course options for the student in regard to fulfilling degree requirements.

A *relative* for the purposes of this policy is anyone related to an employee in the following ways, and includes those within these categories who are referred to as adopted, step-, grand-, half-, in-law or great-:

- parent
- child
- sibling
- uncle or aunt
- first cousin
- nephew or niece
- spouse

Persons who intend to marry or with whom the employee intends to form a household, and any other person having the same legal residence as the faculty member, are included in the definition of *relative*. In addition, the faculty members should consult with their immediate supervisors in cases where there has been a past relationship with the student or a member of the student's family, where there might be a perceived conflict of interest.

It will be considered misconduct, subject to disciplinary action, for a faculty member to evaluate or supervise any enrolled student in the situations identified above, unless an approved management plan is in place. Any disciplinary action proposed will be in accord with University Regulation 5.012 (*Employee Standards and Disciplinary Procedures*) and/or Article 16 (*Disciplinary Action and Job Abandonment*) of the BOT/UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, as applicable.

Please circulate this memorandum to all your faculty and faculty administrators. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Diane Alperin, Associate Provost of Academic Personnel, at 7-3068.

cc: President Frank Brogan

Provost's Council

Eric Shaw, President
University Faculty Senate

Anita Pritchard, President
FAU Chapter of the United Faculty of Florida