



**Title/Subject:** Duality of Interest: Faculty Health Provider/Faculty Mentoring and Advising

**Applies to:**  faculty       students       staff       Other

Policy       System       Process/Procedure       Guideline/Standard       Position Description

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● **Introduction**

- **Contextual Overview:** Conflicts of interest, real or perceived, may arise when members of COM faculty participate in assessment or grading involving a student or applicant with whom they have a personal, professional, or academic relationship.
- **Reason for the Policy/Process:**  
When a faculty member has a personal, professional, or academic relationship with a student, a duality of interest may be created. This policy is established to address the potential duality of interests that arise in these circumstances, with respect to:
  - Maintaining the rights of the student to confidentiality with treatment providers.
  - Avoiding the potential that assignments, assessments, grading, and progress could be impacted by a faculty member’s knowledge of a student’s illness or disability status.
  - Minimizing concerns about favoritism related to special relationships between a faculty and student
  - LCME Standard 12.5: *The health professionals who provide health services, including psychiatric/psychological counseling, to a medical student have no involvement in the academic assessment or promotion of the medical student receiving those services. A medical school ensures that medical student health records are maintained in accordance with legal requirements for security, privacy, confidentiality, and accessibility.*
- **Scope:** This policy applies to all College of Medicine students, including visiting students.

● **Policy Statement:**

- COM faculty providing, or who have provided, clinical care services for a student:
  - Must not serve in any academic (ongoing small group, clinical, or research) supervisory or mentoring role for that student. They specifically must not supervise the student in the clinical setting, provide an academic assessment of the student, participate in assigning grades for that student, or participate in making decisions about academic advancement or lack thereof for that student.
  - May function as a large group classroom teacher for that student at any time and may function as a small group teacher for that student as long as they do not participate in assessment or grading activities and may provide general support for classroom-based learning experiences for that student that requires their expertise.
  - Must not provide written or verbal statements regarding their involvement in the student’s care

Authority: Curriculum Committee

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or the nature of the student's condition to the College of Medicine administration or other bodies unless specifically requested by the student under their care and after the appropriate consent has been provided. Exceptions to the requirement of consent include the presence of life-threatening physical or mental conditions or other legally covered limits of confidentiality.

- COM Faculty serving in formal advising roles:
  - Must not assign summative course grades
  - May provide formative feedback to students as part of other teaching responsibilities. If this feedback is submitted to a course director as part of a summative assessment process, the advising relationship will be disclosed.

- **Procedures**

- In the event that a faculty member realizes that they have been assigned a role with an individual student that is prohibited by their current or prior clinical or familial/intimate relationship with that student, the course or clerkship director should be notified and reassignment requested. The reason given for the reassignment is duality of interest; the nature of the specific duality of interest situation need not be identified.
- If a student realizes they have been assigned a role with an individual faculty member that is prohibited by a current or prior clinical or familial/intimate relationship with that faculty member, the student should notify the course or clerkship director and ask to be reassigned. The reason given for the reassignment is duality of interest; the nature of the specific duality of interest situation need not be identified.
- **It is the expectation that the faculty member takes responsibility for managing the relationship based on the best interest of the student patient, while ensuring policy compliance. Consultation regarding potential or actual conflicts of interest may be sought from the dean or dean's designee.**

- **Policy Limitations**

- This policy is not intended to prevent the timely intervention by a qualified clinician in case of a medical emergency (e.g., cardiopulmonary arrest, suicidality, homicidality). Once the student has been stabilized or transferred to the appropriate care site, the faculty member with a duality of interest should relinquish care.

- **Resources and Tools:**

- Definitions:
  - Personal Relationship - A personal relationship exists if the faculty member is the spouse, partner, parent, sibling, child or other relative of the student or applicant.
  - Professional Relationship - A professional relationship exists if the faculty member has provided healthcare services to the student.
  - Academic Relationship - An academic relationship may exist if a faculty member has served as a formal mentor to the student, or provided the student with advice on personal matters
- Related Policies, Processes, and Guidelines:
  - Please also refer to *TAMU Regulation 07.05.01 Consensual Relationships* that prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between faculty and students.

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