

“Policy 6.x” : Consensual Relationships

A Proposal From

The Consensual Relationships Policy Committee

Charlie Van Loan and Anna Waymack (co-chairs)

[Current Rough Draft](#)

You can post comments
on this page.

[One-Page Synopsis](#)

For the Very Busy
Colleague

The Recommended Policy is Based On Broad Consultation and Research

1. The Committee has met 11 times since November.
2. Dozens of great insights posted by colleagues on our website.
3. Reviewed policies at 50+ peer institutions.
4. Have visited each assembly: SA, EA, UA, GPSA
5. Co-chairs have met with 7+ College HR directors, 20+ Graduate Field Assistants, and various student groups.
6. Upcoming: all the DGS's, Graduate Women in Science, Post Docs, and others.

Committee = Faculty + Grads + Ugrads + Post Docs + Employees + Key Offices

Ella Ackerman
Joseph Anderson
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Renee Cornell
Caitlin Gleason
Grace Park
Jesse Pollard

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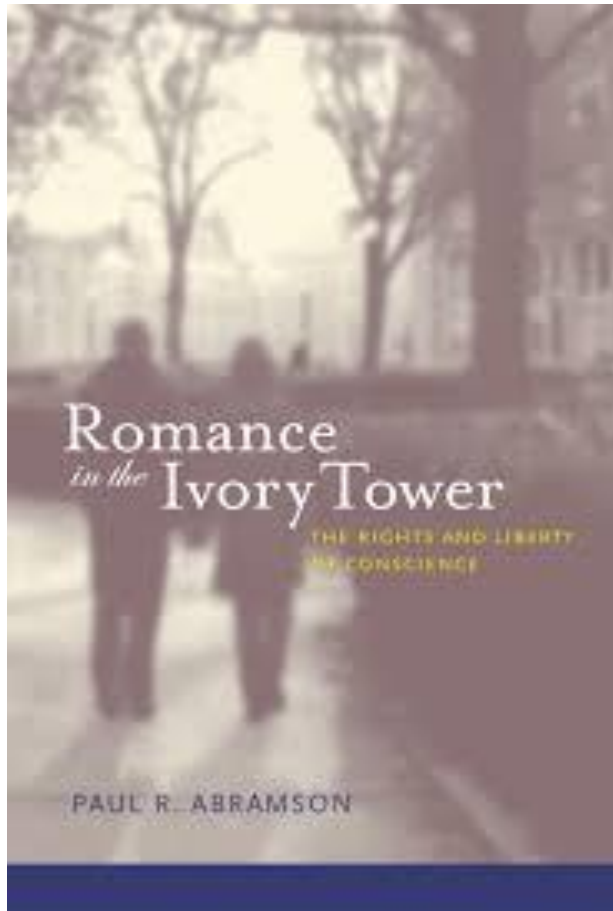
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Charlie Seyler
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Charlie Van Loan
Makda Weatherspoon

Tisha Bohr
Emily Davenport

Take the Time to Understand Colleagues with Whom You Might Disagree



We have a constitutional right to make intimate choices as long as they do not cause harm.

The Ninth Amendment protects the “right to romance.”

“Right to romance” is a fundamental right of conscience—as are freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

Take the Time to Understand Colleagues with Whom You Might Disagree

“If this is feminism, it’s feminism hijacked by melodrama.”

Unwanted Advances

Sexual Paranoia Comes to Campus

Laura Kipnis

“The stifling sense of sexual danger sweeping American campuses doesn't empower women, it impedes the fight for gender equality.”

“It’s not unheard of for professors to urge students to press charges against other professors, or otherwise play the process to their advantage.”

“Sexuality is often on public display, but people are also ready to be offended – and into this mess has stepped officialdom.”

Locally We Need as Many Campus Critics as Possible to Look at the Proposed Policy 6.x

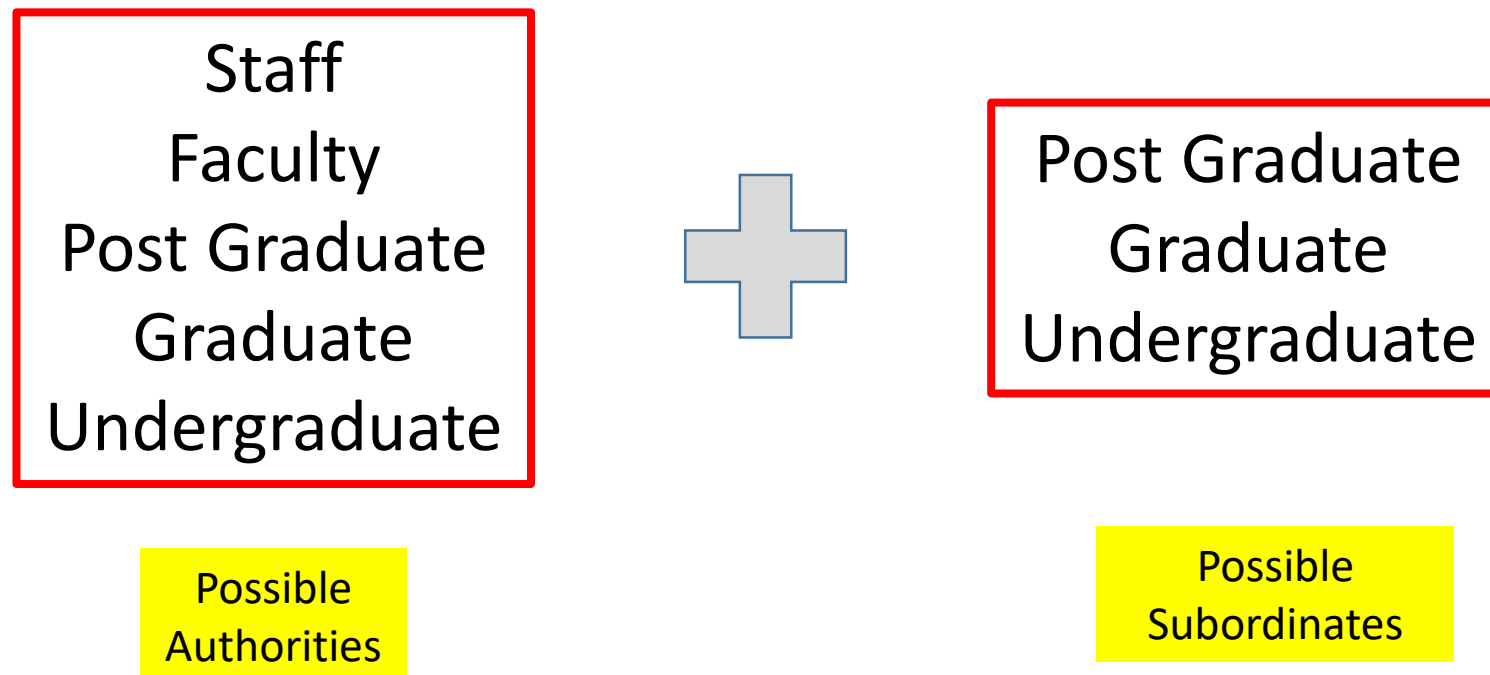
Public comment period for about 3 weeks. [Go Here to Participate](#)

Final revisions in time for an April Senate vote. Same with all the other assemblies.

All vote totals together with associated commentary goes to President Pollack by May 1 along with the Committee's final report.

Let's do it ----->

Scope: 6.x Deals With Authority-Subordinate Pairs Where the Subordinate is a Student or Postdoc



6.x Prohibits Romantic or Sexual Relationships Between Faculty and Undergraduates

All undergraduates have the right to take courses and participate in research throughout the university based solely on their academic abilities.

Any interference with that dynamic runs counter to the Cornell principle of “any person any study.”

6.x Prohibits Romantic or Sexual Relationships When One Party Has Academic Authority Over the Other

Coach
Job Placement Officer
Postgraduate Lab Supervisor
Graduate TA
Undergraduate Grader, etc



Undergraduate
Student

6.x Prohibits Romantic or Sexual Relationships When One Party Has Academic Authority Over the Other

Faculty Supervisor
Department Chair
Center Director, etc



Post Graduate

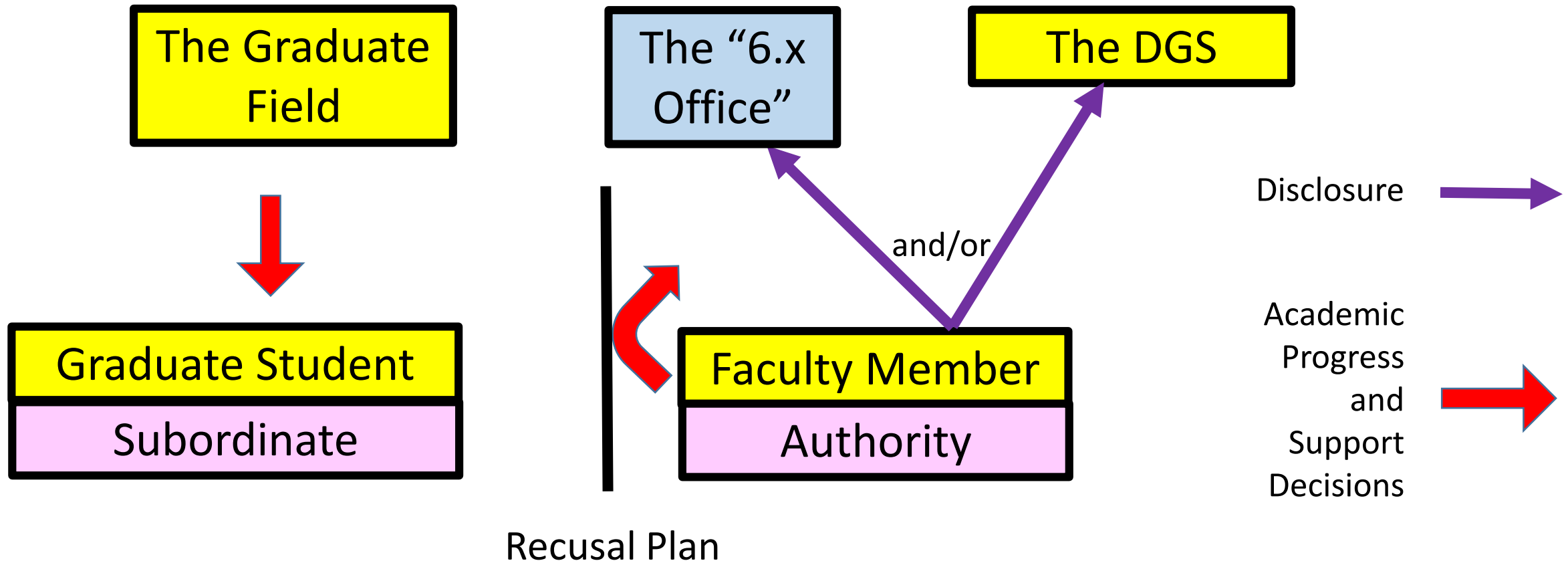
6.x Prohibits Romantic or Sexual Relationships When One Party Has Academic Authority Over the Other

Academic Advisor
Project Advisor
Special Committee Member
Course Instructor
Degree-program director
Department Chair
Center Director, etc



Graduate Student

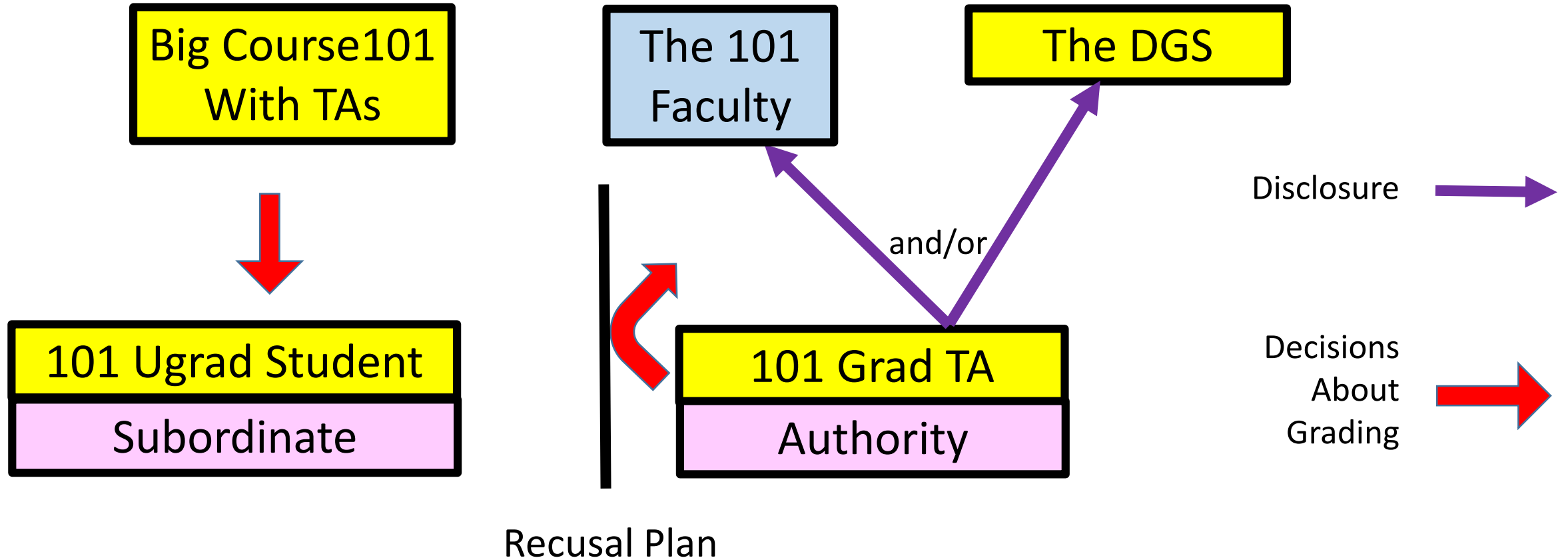
The Disclosure/Recusal Mechanism (Example 1)



Recusal Plan: Put together by 6.X office, DGS, and Faculty member.

Typical: Faculty Member cannot participate in Field decisions that concern the subordinate

The Disclosure/Recusal Mechanism (Example 2)

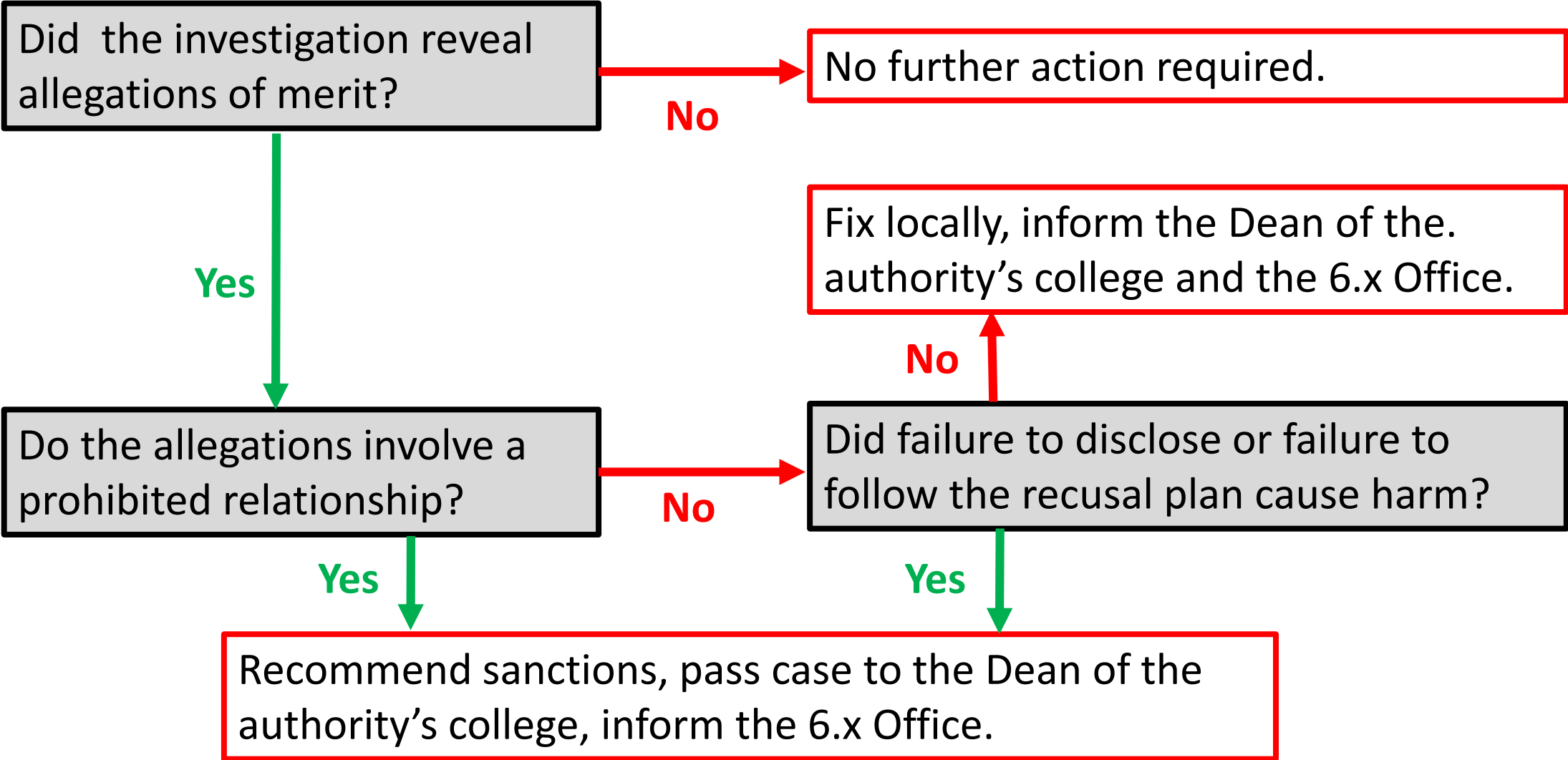


Recusal Plan: Put together By Instructor and Grad TA.

Typical: Ugrad not in TA's section. TA does not grade ugrad's tests or assignments.

Enforcement Essentials

Start



The Committee Needs
Your Help With
Three Critical Questions

1. The Big Chill / Big Brother Question

Can we improve climate w/o negative side-effects?

The disclosure/recusal mechanism must balance the right to privacy with the right to have an unbiased learning environment.

Enforcement procedures must promote ethical behavior through clarity, not through the threat of punishment.

We cannot sacrifice the best part teaching and research: relaxed informality and collegiality.

2. The Ugrad-Faculty Question

Would Something Less Restrictive Be Better?

A romantic or sexual relationship between an undergraduate student and faculty member is prohibited **only if the faculty member has academic authority over the student or is likely to have academic authority over the student in the future.**

Issue: Who would decide if the prohibition criteria apply?

3. The Grad-Faculty Question

Would Something More Restrictive Be Better?

Faculty in the same grad field.
Faculty in same department.



Graduate Student

Issue: Do graduate students deserve an academics-only zone?

Principle: Any person, any study **within the field**