"Policy 6.x" : Consensual Relationships

A Proposal From

[The Consensual Relationships Policy Committee](#)

Charlie Van Loan and Anna Waymack (co-chairs)

[Current Rough Draft](#)
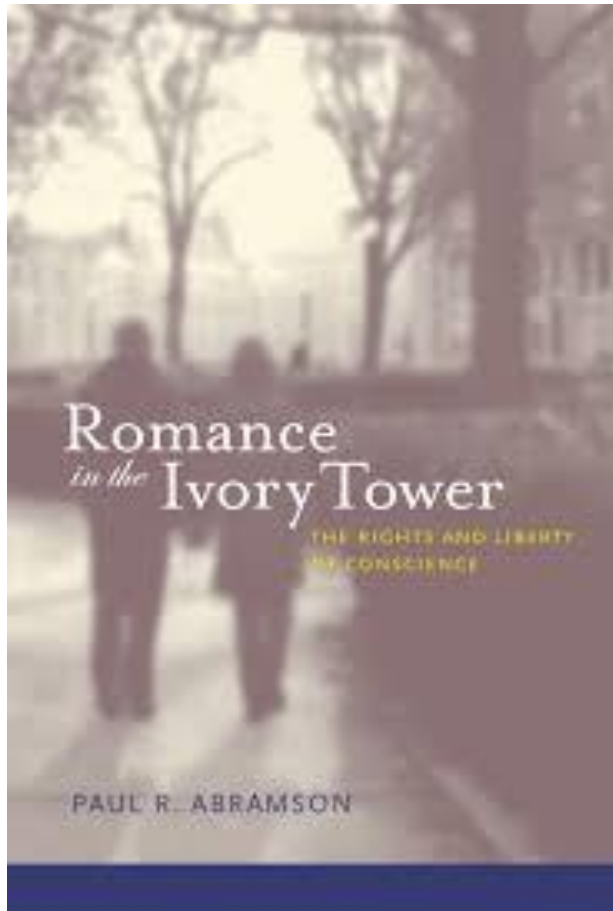
You can post comments on this page.

[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 (or will visit) 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.

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.

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
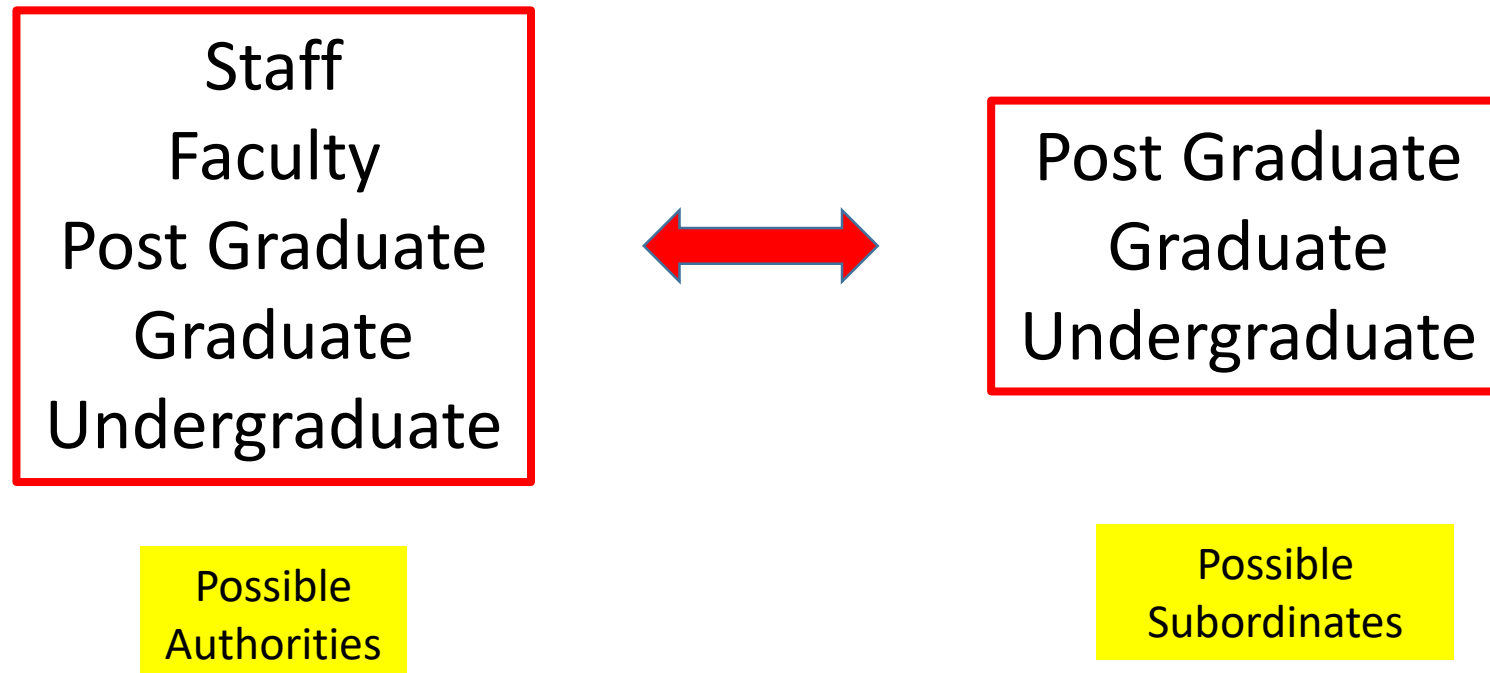
Public comment period for about 3 weeks. **Go Here to Participate**

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"

Staff
Faculty
Post Graduate
Graduate
Undergraduate

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Post Graduate
Graduate
Undergraduate

Possible Authorities

Possible Subordinates

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 <u>based solely on their academic abilities</u>.

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

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

NOPE

Graduate Student

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

Faculty Supervisor
Department Chair
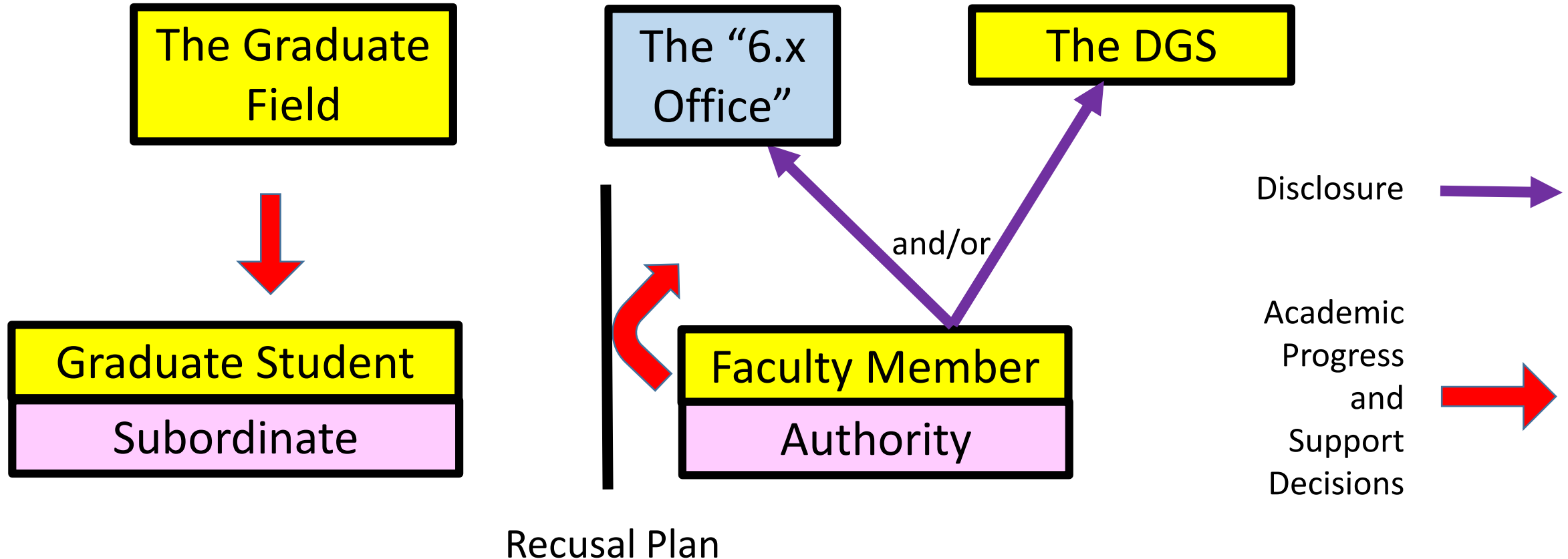Center Director, etc

NOPE

Post Graduate

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
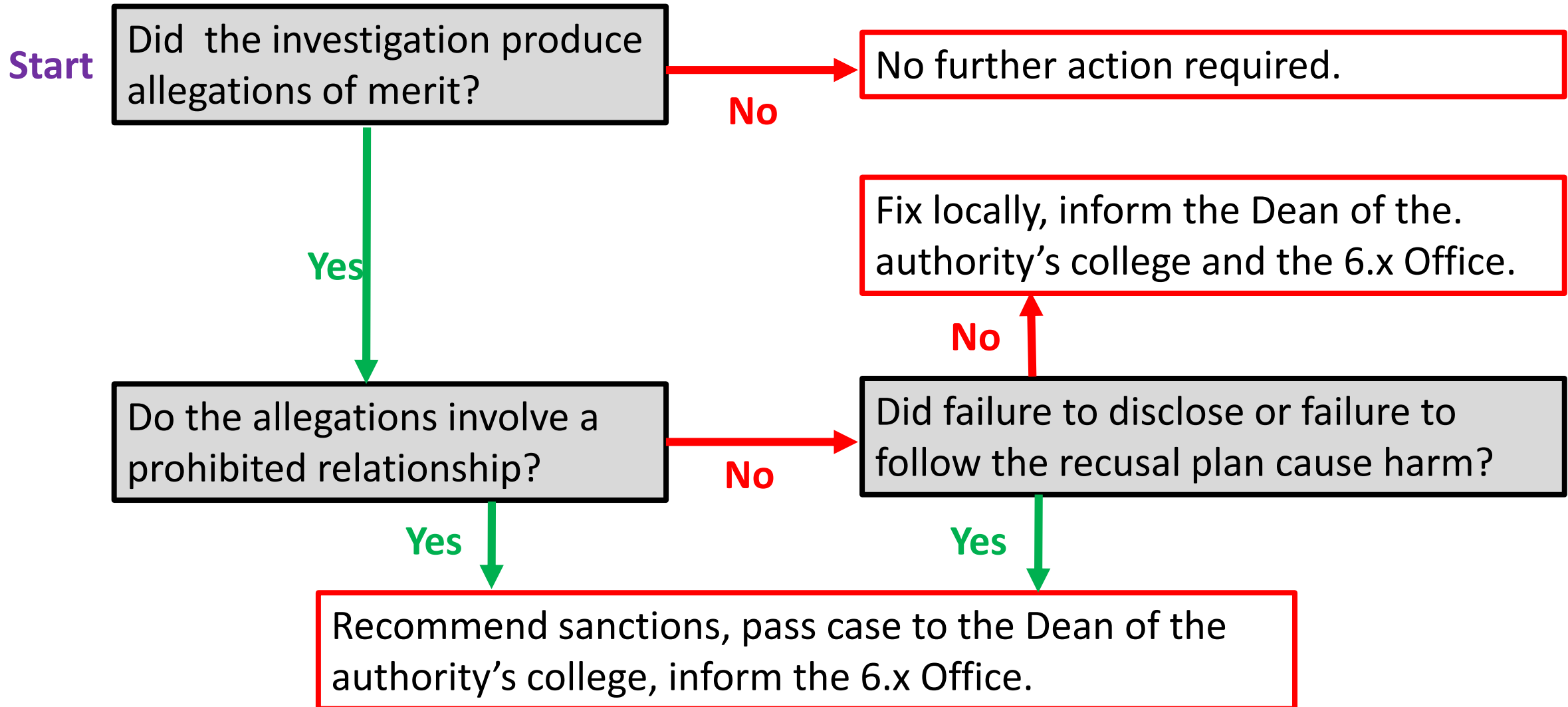
NOPE

Undergraduate Student

The Disclosure/Recusal Mechanism (Example)

Recusal Plan: Put together by 6.X office, DGS, and Faculty member.
Typical: Faculty Member cannot participate in Field decisions that concern the subordinate

Enforcement Essentials

Start

Did the investigation produce allegations of merit?

No → No further action required.

Yes ↓

Do the allegations involve a prohibited relationship?

No → Did failure to disclose or failure to follow the recusal plan cause harm?

No ↑ Fix locally, inform the Dean of the. authority's college and the 6.x Office.

Yes ↓ Recommend sanctions, pass case to the Dean of the authority's college, inform the 6.x Office.

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Summary of Proposed Policy 6.x

1. The faculty-undergraduate prohibition follows from a commitment to "any person any study" .

2. The prohibition when one party exercises academic authority over the other follows from a commitment to avoid conflict of interest.

3. The disclosure/recusal mechanism is designed to guard against real or perceived favoritism.

4. The 6.x Office would also coordinate with department chairs, degree program directors, college deans, the dean of faculty, and others to ensure that enforcement procedures are evenly applied and faithfully executed.