GPSA Resolution 7: Supervisor-Student Relationships

Sponsored by: Anna Waymack, Daniel Citron

WHEREAS, the Cornell University graduate school policy on faculty-student relationships is only outlined at http://gradschool.cornell.edu/policies/relationships; and

WHEREAS, it is therein unclear who enforces this policy and in what ways the policy is enforced; and

WHEREAS, this existing policy requires that such relationships must not develop or continue without an exemption from the supervising dean of the person in authority; and

WHEREAS, there is no enforcement provision in place for violations of this policy; and

WHEREAS, unreported relationships with such academic and professional power differentials are rife with potential for abuse; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Cornell faculty, administration, and student body that Cornell avoid attracting negative journalistic attention in line with recent publicized cases from peer institutions;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the GPSA strongly recommends that in cases of violation of this policy, the presumption of wrongdoing be on the person in position of authority, as it is their responsibility to report; and

BE IT FURTHERMORE RESOLVED, that the GPSA strongly recommends that in cases of violation of this policy, the professional relationship shall be dissolved; and

BE IT FURTHERMORE RESOLVED, that the GPSA strongly recommends that said professional relationship be replaced with one amenable to the student at no financial cost to the student; and

BE IT FURTHERMORE RESOLVED, that the GPSA strongly recommends that said cases be handled, insofar as is within university control, without professional repercussions to the student.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
Anna Waymack,
GPSA Field Representative, Medieval Studies

Daniel Citron,
GPSA Field Representative, Physics