

The Director
IIT Kanpur.

June 10, 2017

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find a joint proposal by the Women's Cell and ICC, for a policy on *Romantic or Sexual Relationships Between Individuals in Positions of Authority and Students/Employees of the Institute*. As discussed with you, the policy is being proposed in the light of several complaints over the past years to authorities and bodies in the Institute such as the DOAA, Director, Women's Cell and ICC. The complaints involved romantic or sexual relationships between individuals holding positions of authority in the Institute, and students (UG, PG), project staff and others over whom they exerted authority or influence. Such relationships and consequences thereof have affected not only the individuals concerned, but others in their vicinity as well. In several instances, the integrity of the individuals concerned have been brought to question and/or sexual harassment charges have been lodged. As a result, the related wings of the Institute have been brought to disrepute.

In view of the complaints and consequences mentioned above, the Women's Cell and ICC have jointly discussed the issue and formulated the policy, with the belief that adherence to it is likely to help members of the Institute in positions of authority to avoid situations of conflicts of interest (whether real or perceived). It has been suggested in the policy that complaints about violations of the policy may be handled by a *special standing committee* constituted by the Institute.

It is common in most of the leading universities and educational institutes around the world to have a policy of this kind in place that prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between individuals where there is a power asymmetry (see the Bibliography of the document for a few instances). Unfortunately, there is no educational institute in India, to the best of our knowledge, that has a similar well-formed policy on this important issue. We believe that it is high time such a policy is adopted at IIT Kanpur and our Institute leads other educational institutes of the nation by example.

We are forwarding the proposal to you for necessary action.

Thank you.

Mohua Banerjee
Chairperson, Women's Cell

Jonaki Sen
Presiding Officer, ICC