



September 14, 2020

To: Dylan Saake, Title IX Coordinator

From: Robert Morton, Title IX-DHR Investigator

RE: Confidential Investigation Report pursuant to Executive Order 1096;

I. INTRODUCTION

The California State University, Chico, Title IX/DHR office opened an investigation after receiving a report that David Stachura, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, (hereinafter Respondent) engaged in a consensual sexual relationship with a student over whom he had direct authority.

This investigation was conducted pursuant to Executive Order 1096: Systemwide *Policy* Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking against Employees and Third Parties and Systemwide *Procedure* for Addressing Such Complaints by Employees and Third Parties.

A. Background & Summary of Allegations

Campus was notified that there was a Consensual Relationship occurring between Respondent and Student [REDACTED]. Respondent is alleged to have been in a relationship with a student over whom he exercises supervision. Respondent was noticed that the investigation would proceed under Executive Order 1096.

II. INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

A. The following individuals were interviewed during the course of the investigation:¹

Assoc. Professor David Stachura

July 20, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

August 6, 2020 via Phone Interview

July 7, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

July 7, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

July 16, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

July 21, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

¹ All interviews were conducted remotely due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Respondent offered [REDACTED] a student, as a witness to explain his relationship with Witness [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was not interviewed because the witness was not present during any of the reported incidents and therefore could not provide information relevant to the central issues in this investigation.



July 22, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference
July 23, 2020 via Zoom Video Conference

B. The following documents were reviewed as part of this investigation:

- Executive Order 1096R
- Respondent's Response to Evidence Considered (EO 1096_001000–001011.)²
- Respondent Letter (EO 1096_001012–001013.)

C. Procedural Compliance

Pursuant to Article III, Section C., Subsection 7., of Executive Order 1096, prior to reaching a final conclusion or issuing a final investigation report, Respondent was advised, in writing, of any and all evidence upon which the findings would be based and was afforded an opportunity to respond to the evidence, including presenting further relevant evidence, information, additional witnesses, or arguments that could affect the outcome. This was accomplished by providing Respondent, via email sent on August 6, 2020, an Evidence Report that included all evidence considered up to that point. This included a written document containing the parties' and witnesses' verbal statements and documentary evidence as of that date and providing Respondent until close of business on August 17, 2020 to respond with any further information as noted above.

On August 11, 2020, Respondent responded to the Evidence Report. (EO 1096_001000–001011.)

III. APPLICABLE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

A. Policy: Executive Order 1096

The California State University (CSU) is committed to maintaining an inclusive community that values diversity and fosters tolerance and mutual respect. We embrace and encourage our community differences in Age, Disability, (physical and mental), Gender (or sex), Gender Identity (including transgender), Gender Expression, Genetic Information, Marital Status, Medical Condition, Nationality, Race or Ethnicity (including color or ancestry), Religion, (or Religious Creed), Sexual Orientation, Veteran or Military Status, and other characteristics that make our community unique. All individuals have the right to participate fully in CSU programs and activities free from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation. The CSU prohibits Harassment of any kind, including Sexual Harassment, as well as Sexual Misconduct, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking. Such misconduct violates University policy and may also violate state or federal law.

Executive Order 1096, Article I, F., defines Consensual Relationship as follows:

Consensual Relationships. Consensual relationship means a sexual or romantic relationship between two persons who voluntarily enter into such a relationship. While sexual and/or romantic relationships between members of the University

² In the Evidence Report shared with Respondent, a "Formal Complaint" was mistakenly identified as Exhibit 1. A written complaint was not submitted in this matter and therefore none is attached.

community may begin as consensual, they may evolve into situations that lead to Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating or Domestic Violence, or Stalking subject to this policy.

A CSU Employee shall not enter into a consensual relationship with a Student or Employee over whom that employee exercises or influences direct or otherwise significant academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority. In the event such a relationship already exists, each Campus shall develop a procedure to reassign such authority to avoid violations of this policy.

Executive Order 1096, Article VI., Section Q., defines Employee as follows:

Employee means a person legally holding a position in the CSU. This term includes full-time, part-time, permanent, tenured, probationary, temporary, intermittent, casual, and per-diem positions. This term does not include auxiliary or foundation Employees or other Third Parties.

Executive Order 1096, Article VI., Section LL., defines Student as follows:

Student means an applicant for admission to the CSU, an admitted CSU Student, an enrolled CSU Student, a CSU extended education Student, a CSU Student between academic terms, a CSU graduate awaiting a degree, a CSU student currently serving a suspension or interim suspension, and a CSU Student who withdraws from the University while a disciplinary matter (including investigation) is pending.

B. Standard of the Evidence:

In weighing the evidence, the Investigator used a preponderance of the evidence standard in making a determination regarding the facts of the investigation. Executive Order 1096, Article VI., Section Z., states:

Preponderance of the Evidence means the greater weight of the evidence; i.e., that the evidence on one side outweighs, preponderates over, or is more than, the evidence on the other side. The Preponderance of the Evidence is the applicable standard for demonstrating facts and reaching conclusions in an investigation conducted pursuant to this Executive Order.

IV. EVIDENCE CONSIDERED³

A. Account of Respondent, Associate Professor David Stachura

First interview, July 20, 2020. Respondent knew about the allegations prior to the interview and sought to respond to the allegations throughout the interview. Respondent started working for California State University, Chico in 2014, initially as an Assistant Professor, and he is now an Associate Professor. Respondent's research focuses on blood development and the genetics of zebra-fish. Respondent is the Lantis Endowed Research Professor.

Respondent described his relationship with student, Witness [REDACTED] as a mentor-mentee relationship. Respondent regularly interacts with Witness [REDACTED] within the lab as he would with other students. Respondent stated, "Witness [REDACTED] she graduated in May." Respondent and Witness have things in common, both are married, [REDACTED]. Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] hang out together frequently, socially and academically.

According to Respondent, he and Witness [REDACTED] did not engage in a sexual relationship nor did anything inappropriate happen between them. Prior to an academic trip with his peers in Santa Clara, Respondent met with other faculty and expressed concern about traveling with students. But in this instance, Respondent did not see Witness [REDACTED] as the "other students" because she was not a traditional student. The commentary in the dean's office was connected to the age of the students. "I carpooled with just [REDACTED] and I was at the bar with my students who were of age; my laboratory is like a team. Team building exercises, we discussed."⁴ Respondent did not remember having a personal conversation about his wife with them. He explained that he has twin daughters. He did not recall having an inappropriate conversation with the students about his wife.

Witness [REDACTED] and Respondent had gone to [REDACTED] Pizza and had pizza and a couple of beers. They were relaxed in the office. "People have a terrible impression of me and of this student."

During the COVID-19 campus shutdown, Respondent had been in discussion with FMS/Administration about HVAC issues in Holt Hall and had created a message to his fellow faculty members. On June 23, 2020, Witness [REDACTED] stated that while he had not responded to Respondent's thoughts on the HVAC, he did have another issue to discuss. Witness [REDACTED] contacted Respondent and said that multiple faculty members had come to him and said that they heard Respondent having sex in his office with Student [REDACTED]. Respondent said that they were mistaken. Respondent asked if he could chat with those who believed that he was engaging in sex with [REDACTED] to discuss their concerns since it was not happening. Respondent was unsure if Witness [REDACTED] conversation was a warning, a knock it off situation, but because he does not know him Respondent was unsure of how to take the conversation. Respondent said, "We are friends, we do have a relationship, we have a good friendship. I have a feeling that people just have a feeling in

³ The party and witness statements were shared with Respondent. This final investigation report corrects typographical and grammatical errors that may have been present when they were shared with Respondent; no substantive changes were made.

⁴ In response to the Evidence Report, Respondent clarified, "I consider socializing at meetings with them a team-building exercise."

their head.” Witness [REDACTED] had told Respondent that there were allegations that something was going on.

Following his conversation with Witness [REDACTED] “I offered to speak with Witness [REDACTED] about the allegations and she did not want to discuss them.” In an in-person meeting in Holt Hall, Witness [REDACTED] told Respondent “your life is sliding downwards, and this is for your own good. I don’t want to talk about this, the only way you can get better is when something catastrophic happens, you can climb yourself out of it.”

Witness [REDACTED] came into Respondent’s lab and discussed safety information she had been given from a Campus official. Respondent stated, “While [REDACTED] and I were standing close to each other, we were standing by a PCR machine, and a bench in the back of the room. We were standing close to each other, but we were not kissing. I was up and moving, and [REDACTED] was doing something else. We were physically close but we were not kissing.”⁵

Respondent continued, “Not in an effort to retaliate, I wanted to talk to speak with Witness [REDACTED] When he met with [REDACTED] following their conversation in the lab, she gave him a look. “We went out to have juice before she thinks she saw me kissing [REDACTED] [REDACTED] we went out for juice before she spoke to me in the lab about the safety practices.”

Second interview, August 6, 2020. When asked why he believes he is facing allegations that he has a consensual sexual relationship with a student, Respondent stated that he is being targeted by at least two witnesses because of their personal grievances towards him. Respondent indicated in his interview, “Witness [REDACTED] and I have had a confrontational relationship at work. We don’t have a good working relationship.” Witness [REDACTED] was hired to teach a specific class, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] She has never taught this course, and this has been a contentious issue. She was hired to teach a class that she does not want to teach. There have been a few heated discussions about Witness [REDACTED] not doing what she was hired to do. Respondent has been vocal about it and told Witness [REDACTED] “If I ever become chair, you will be teaching the [REDACTED] class.” Respondent also stated, “I do not think that she is purposely lying.”

When Witness [REDACTED] started, [REDACTED] Respondent asked her if his music was too loud, and Witness told him “no.” If the music did not bother her, “I am unsure how she can hear perceived sex sounds, when she said she couldn’t hear my music.” Respondent feels that if sex noises were coming from his office, then it did not disturb her. Witness [REDACTED] and Respondent [REDACTED]

Respondent described another personnel issue, where Witness [REDACTED] is in charge of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and Respondent have had “some significant disagreements.” Witness [REDACTED] told him that she felt that his email communication was hostile towards her, for example, using the word “team” offends Witness [REDACTED] Respondent feels that Witness [REDACTED] issue with him has skewed the way she is perceiving what she has seen between him and Witness [REDACTED] According to Respondent, “This feels like a vindictive thing to teach me a lesson. ... We [Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] do drink together; we go floating together. I don’t

⁵ Referring to Witness [REDACTED] in this quote.

think this as a bad thing to do. I feel like I am being mischaracterized. I feel like they are trying to speak truth to power or trying to knock me down.”

The day in question (in early June), Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] “watched a movie called *6 Underground* and the other movie was *The Proposal*. I don’t recall watching any other movies.” He added, “We for sure did see other movies.” None of the movies had pornographic content, although there might be sex scenes in the films.

Respondent’s concern about the allegations grew as the questions in the interview became more focused on the behaviors which occurred between him and Witness [REDACTED]. Respondent noted, “This feels like a deep dive into my personal life and all of the things that I’ve done over the past year.”

Regarding being seen at a restaurant on Valentine’s Day, Respondent stated, “Witness [REDACTED] and I went out to a bar on Valentine’s Day at [REDACTED] Brewery, and it’s like a food truck. ... I was coming from the lab and I was not dressed up and this was not a date. Unfortunately, something as simple as going to get a drink is being characterized as a date or something unprofessional.”

B. Account of Witness, Professor [REDACTED]

Interview, July 7, 2020. Witness started working for California State Chico, University in [REDACTED] as an [REDACTED] and is now an [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] As colleagues, they maintained a good relationship. Over the past year, Respondent had become more negative and their relationship changed but she would not classify it as bad. During the COVID-19 campus closure, faculty have continued to take care of their animals.

On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, around 3:30 p.m., Witness knew that several of her colleagues were on-campus, including Respondent and Witness [REDACTED]. Witness made masks for her colleagues and went to campus to meet with a student to culture bacteria.⁶ Witness first encountered Witness [REDACTED] whose office door was open, and provided her with a mask and just chatted about life. Witness asked if Respondent was in and then went to check to see if he was in.

When she got close to his door, she heard the voice of Respondent and knew he was present. Witness knocked on the door and the room grew quiet, then she heard shuffling inside his office, and then Respondent opened the door. There was a strange odor emanating from the room; it was a “hot, no-air-flow kind of smell.” The aroma was “sweaty.” Respondent went back to his seat and sat on his yoga ball chair, with his shoes off; he was in his socks and the lights were off. The computer did not appear to be on and the black loveseat/futon in the office was laid out flat. Witness saw Witness [REDACTED] sitting on the futon, with her back up against the wall of the office. They each had a can in their hands, but Witness is not sure what they were drinking. Witness gave Respondent the mask she made for him and engaged in conversation about him wearing this mask instead of wearing a zebra fish thong mask, a joke gift he had received and posted on Facebook.

⁶ Bacteria needs to be transferred every three weeks to propagate them. “You got to feed them, living things need to be fed.”

Witness [REDACTED] then responded that Respondent could post a picture on Facebook. Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] then discussed their frustration with the new ASC,⁷ and Respondent then told Witness [REDACTED] “oh yea, I haven’t told you about her yet.” Witness then decided that she needed to go speak with and check in on her undergraduate student. Witness was with the student for about two hours and supervised him as he was working with compressed gases and an autoclave.⁸ Witness and student left around 5:30 p.m., after sterilizing the lab. As Witness left the building, she could still hear voices and she said “goodbye” to Respondent, and Respondent responded with the same. Witness [REDACTED] was present in Respondent’s office at that point.

On the ride home on her bike, Witness was concerned about her colleague, Respondent, and it made her remember two other instances. These instances, which occurred much earlier, made her question Respondent’s and Witness [REDACTED] relationship based on the interactions Witness saw between Respondent and Witness [REDACTED]. One such instance was in January at the [REDACTED] Conference, which was held in Santa Clara, [REDACTED] during the NFL Playoffs. The conference hotel had a bar in the downstairs area. Respondent and Witness were there with students and Respondent began to “bad talk” his wife in front of the students. The entire group of faculty moved away from the bar as a result of feeling uncomfortable with Respondent having this type of discussion in front of the students. Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] remained at the bar. The other incident occurred during the pandemic. Witness and her son went to [REDACTED] and she observed Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] together, which made her ponder why they were always together.

On June 4, 2020, Witness texted another faculty member, Witness [REDACTED] indicating her concern about Respondent. On June 5, Witness and Witness [REDACTED] met at [REDACTED] then picked up [REDACTED] and then went to [REDACTED]. Witness told Witness [REDACTED] that while she did not know the nature of Respondent’s relationship with Witness [REDACTED] she knew something did not feel right. Witness [REDACTED] responded that as a result of [REDACTED] with Respondent, she had heard Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] having sex in the office. Witness [REDACTED] told Witness that she then attempted to limit her time [REDACTED] with Respondent.

Witness was bothered by the conversation and found herself unable to sleep. Witness’s concerns were the result of the workplace being used to deal with personal relationships, the hierarchy between Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] and the impact that the relationship would have on their student-teacher relationship.

Somewhere between the 4th and 10th of June, Witness asked Witness [REDACTED] if he found the relationship between Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] strange and he indicated that he did. While they were in conversation, Witness [REDACTED] walked in and shared her concerns about the relationship between Respondent and Witness [REDACTED]. Witness asked [REDACTED] what she should do in this scenario. Witness then met with a faculty-neighbor and she was referred to “Safe Space” and then to Dylan Saake, Title IX Coordinator. Following this conversation, Witness reached out to senior faculty member [REDACTED] to seek his advice on how to handle the

⁷ Academic Support Coordinator.

⁸ A sterilizer.

⁹ [REDACTED]

situation.¹⁰ Witness ██████ told Witness that he would reach out to Respondent to get a sense for what was happening.

Witness ██████ reported back to Witness that he (Witness ██████) had contacted Respondent and told him to knock it off. Respondent then asked Witness ██████ to have a meeting with those who had brought up the allegations. Witness ██████ contacted Witness ██████, Witness ██████ and Witness ██████ through Zoom. In this conversation, Witness ██████ told Witnesses ██████ and ██████ that Respondent had denied their reports of inappropriate conduct and responded that he and Witness ██████ had been watching movies in his office. Respondent stated that he wanted to have lunch with the group, but they declined.

On June 25, 2020, Witness sent an email to Dylan Saake, Title IX Coordinator, following her meeting with Witness ██████ on June 24, 2020. On June 25, 2020, at 9:51a.m., Respondent asked Witness if they could meet as friends. Witness did not want to meet with Respondent at that time but was not opposed to meeting with him in the future. She and Respondent texted back and forth to figure out a time for their conversation. Witness and Respondent met in the lab. He asked if she wanted him to put on his mask, and when she said yes, he left the lab to go to his office to get his mask. When Respondent returned to the lab, he and Witness began to talk. Respondent indicated that he had been having some personal issues in his home. Witness expressed her concern about his well-being and his behavior. Witness did not go into detail or provide Respondent specifics. However, Respondent appeared to be aware of Witness' concerns regarding his interactions with Witness ██████. In this conversation, Respondent cautioned Witness from going to administration "because they wouldn't understand him."

On Monday, June 29th, ██████ ██████ called Witness and stated that she walked in on Respondent and student, Witness ██████, kissing in Respondent's laboratory. Witness was very angry about this behavior and met with Dylan Saake to discuss it.

C. Account of Witness, ██████ ██████

Interview, July 7, 2020. Witness started working at California State University, Chico, in the fall of ██████. Witness and Respondent have a good working relationship.

Witness met Witness ██████ as she was taking his course, Biology ██████, an orientation for biological science majors, in the fall of ██████. Witness had no real relationship with the student, but he did remember the student because she was more interactive than her peers. Early in June 2020, Witness, Witness ██████, ██████ and Witness ██████ had a conversation which was initially between Witness ██████ and Witness ██████, but Witness ██████ walked in as they were talking. The conversation was initially job related. Witness ██████ then asked Witness if he noticed anything strange occurred between Witness ██████ and Respondent. Witness stated that the question "triggered a memory of something that had happened six weeks prior; he found the behavior strange but not initially inappropriate." When he was asked the question, it let him know that what he had observed had also been observed by Witness ██████.

¹⁰ Respondent indicated the sequence of events was unclear in this paragraph. To clarify, ██████ spoke to ██████ to get advice after speaking with ██████ and ██████ and before speaking with her faculty-neighbor, who referred her to the Title IX Coordinator.

and perceived as being inappropriate. Witness asked, "Do you mean inappropriate or of a sexual nature?" and Witness [REDACTED] replied "yes."

In late March, early April, Witness walked past Respondent's office, en-route to his own lab space. Campus was closed and no one was in Holt Hall, other than those maintaining cell cultures or animals. Respondent maintains a colony of zebra-fish. Witness observed student Witness [REDACTED] come out of Respondent's closed office door. It struck Witness as odd because of the timing. Witness explained that during the year he could understand scenarios where students might need to engage in delicate conversations with faculty behind closed doors, but because campus was in a shutdown situation, this behavior struck him as odd. However, since he was unsure of what occurred behind the closed office door, he could deem it inappropriate or ill advised.

Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] described behaviors that they had seen and heard, and it caused him to reinterpret what he had seen in a different light. Witness [REDACTED] office is [REDACTED] Respondent's. Witness [REDACTED] went to Respondent's office to relay a message, and neither Respondent nor Witness [REDACTED] were wearing socks or shoes. Witness [REDACTED] described the room as smelling like beer and sex. Respondent has a couch in his office which folds out into a bed, and the bed was out. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had been noticing a fondness between Respondent and the student, and while she did not describe it, she started talking about how the fondness increased after campus shutdown and what she meant was that, while in her office, she could hear Respondent and Witness engaging in sexual activity in his office. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Witness [REDACTED] told Witness that she heard sexual noises coming from Respondent's office. Respondent and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] where the fish live, and when she went into the space, she detected the smells of sex on the person of Respondent and student Witness [REDACTED]

Most recently, Witness is aware that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] walked into the Respondent's primary lab space, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and observed Respondent and the student kissing. Witness [REDACTED] does not believe that Witness [REDACTED] addressed the issue with Respondent, but Respondent did attempt to speak with [REDACTED] Witness [REDACTED] did not feel comfortable addressing the issue with Respondent and in fact she felt uncomfortable during her conversation with Respondent.

[REDACTED] and Witness felt that it was prudent to approach Respondent. [REDACTED] felt that he could safely have that conversation with Respondent about the idea that members of the faculty felt that he was having an inappropriate relationship with a student. Respondent denied that anything was happening between him and the student. Following Respondent's denial to Witness [REDACTED] Witness [REDACTED] informed Witness [REDACTED] that she saw Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] kiss in a lab.

D. Account of Witness, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Interview, July 16, 2020. Witness [REDACTED] started as an [REDACTED] in the fall of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Respondent has been an informal mentor to [REDACTED] and Witness. Witness described Respondent as being friendly and providing advice. "One of those things which he instructed me to do, was to not be in my office with a student and have the door closed."

if she knew of anything going on between Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] Witness said yes and that she was concerned about having to hear their sexual encounters. Witness [REDACTED] suggested that Witness should file a complainant. Witness again was concerned about her job security. Witness then heard another sex event occurring between Respondent and [REDACTED] in his office. Witness [REDACTED] shared this information with a senior faculty member who in turn spoke to Respondent. The senior faculty member, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] did not disclose who shared the information with him, but Witness believes that Respondent narrowed it down to Witness, Witness [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Respondent approached Witness and stated that nothing inappropriate was occurring but did admit that he was watching films with Witness [REDACTED] in his office. Respondent, in his meeting with Witness, stated that it would be a mistake for someone to file a complaint and that it would damage Witness [REDACTED] career. Witness did not feel comfortable during the conversation; she did not want to argue about it and Respondent denied it. Witness knows that Witness [REDACTED] was approached by Respondent as well. That following week, when they were getting ready to open their labs, Witness went into Respondent's lab to share about a conversation she had with the safety officer regarding how to open the labs, and she saw Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] kissing. As soon as she walked in, they separated and then they had an awkward conversation about the safety protocols. Witness left the lab and Respondent came to her office and invited Witness to go out for drinks. The next day, they went to drink juice.

E. Account of Witness, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Interview, July 21, 2020. Respondent informed Witness that he had been approached by another faculty member. "I then heard from another faculty member, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who asked me if I had seen anything unprofessional. [REDACTED] is more relaxed, but he still remains professional with Respondent. I see it as a strength that he is able to connect with students, this may be a result of his age, but based on what Witness has seen, he's only seen professional conduct from his colleague."¹² Witness has not seen Respondent much since March. [REDACTED] there has been very little interaction or collaboration. Witness [REDACTED] was an undergrad and did an honors project. Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] have a mentor/mentee relationship and she is an exceptional student. She is unique inasmuch as she had a career prior to her undergraduate experience. "She is one of our best students."

F. Account of Witness, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Interview, July 22, 2020. Witness graduated from Chico State in [REDACTED], with a Bachelor of Science degree, [REDACTED]. She starts her master's in biology this fall. Respondent was her [REDACTED] advisor, research advisor, and he taught two courses she has taken. Witness considers Respondent a friend. Witness said that she and Respondent have not engaged in a sexual relationship. Witness and Respondent have a friendship that is not sexual in any form. Witness and Respondent did not kiss each other in the laboratory. Witness does not know why anyone would suspect anything happening between her and Respondent which was unprofessional. Witness is doing research and cell culturing [REDACTED] The cell culturing will assist her in her master's work, including fish injections and husbandry.

¹² Respondent.

With regard to Professor [REDACTED] coming by Respondent's office, [REDACTED] wanted to give Respondent a mask she had made for him. Witness [REDACTED] and Respondent were hanging out, just sitting around talking. They do watch movies in the office; they watched *6 Underground*, and *The Proposal* with Ryan Reynolds and Sandra Bullock. She has a "huge crush" on Ryan Reynolds. Witness explained that they have periodically had lunch in Respondent's office.

On Monday, Respondent told Witness that our office would be contacting her as a witness. He said that there were some allegations that they were having an inappropriate relationship. Witness recalled it being awkward because Monday was [REDACTED] Witness was last in the lab on Monday, July 20, 2020. [REDACTED] Witness and Respondent engage in a cordial non-sexual relationship because of their similar interests, but Witness is unsure why anyone would think that they had inappropriate encounters.

G. Account of Witness, [REDACTED]

Interview, July 23, 2020. Witness has not been on campus since mid-March, so he has not seen or heard anything from Respondent or Witness [REDACTED]. Witness [REDACTED] a friend and colleague, has come up to his home periodically to keep him included in what has been going on in the department. He is unsure of when he was told by Witness [REDACTED] that she believed that Respondent had been having an affair with a student, Witness [REDACTED]. Witness [REDACTED] expressed concern that both she and Witness [REDACTED] had heard Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] engaging in sex while [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in their respective offices. Witness comforted Witness [REDACTED] and when she told him that she was willing to file a Title IX complaint, Witness expressed concern that someone should attempt to talk to speak with Respondent prior to filing a formal complaint.

Witness [REDACTED] described his role as being minimal "at best" in this situation, as he only relayed the concerns of the other faculty members to Respondent. Witness did this because he had no investment in the outcome and, because of his [REDACTED] status, he stood no chance of Retaliation. Witness was told by Witness [REDACTED] of several incidents, the first being when Witness [REDACTED] went to campus to provide Respondent with a mask. When she encountered Respondent and Witness [REDACTED] in Respondent's office, Witness [REDACTED] stated that she felt like she was interrupting what they were doing.

Witness asked Witness [REDACTED] if anyone had talked to the student? Witness [REDACTED] said to her knowledge that no one had shared anything with either Respondent or Witness [REDACTED]. Witness felt that if the allegations were true, then this was poor judgement on both sides, Respondent and Witness [REDACTED]. Witness sat on a committee which awarded Witness [REDACTED] a scholarship and he was familiar with her life story.

Witness told Witnesses [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that he was willing to speak to Respondent as a disinterested party and that he could reach out to him. He was willing to reach out to him.

Witness explained that Respondent had reached out to faculty in an effort to get the air in the building turned on. Witness explained that several problems occur when members of faculty and

their research teams are doing research and there are extremely warm temperatures, as research organisms are affected by the building temperature. Witness was happy to see Respondent take the lead on this. Witness also saw this as an opportunity for him to speak with Respondent concerning the allegations. On either June 23, 2020 or June 24, 2020. He did a follow-up zoom meeting with Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

In Witness' conversation with Respondent, Respondent admitted that he had spent time with Witness [REDACTED] alone in the office but said that he had done nothing romantically. Respondent said, "That's awful, I would never do that, it would be inappropriate." Witness told Respondent that if he was doing it, he should stop.

Witness felt that maybe it was a misunderstanding. They all said that they are completely sure of their observations and they are sure that Respondent was not telling the truth. Witness [REDACTED] felt that she was obliged to file a Title IX complaint. During the first week of July, Witness [REDACTED] shared that Witness [REDACTED] walked into Respondent's lab and she saw him kissing the student. Witness [REDACTED] did not feel safe doing anything on her own.

Respondent began asking colleagues about what he should do, and Witness told Respondent that the Title IX complaint had been filed. Witness shared his concerns with the impacts that this could have on junior faculty. Witness is not sure why Respondent would lie about this, or why this otherwise excellent student would consent to such a bad decision. He struggles to believe a particular party, but he cannot think of a reason why they would make it up.

V. Analysis

Based on the analyses below, the preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that Respondent engaged in a Consensual Relationship, as defined in Executive Order 1096, with Student [REDACTED]. The preponderance of the evidence shows that Respondent and Student [REDACTED] had a relationship which included consensual sexual encounters and kissing. This is a violation of the policy. In making these determinations, the investigator is limited to the evidence provided.

A. Credibility Analysis

The task of this investigation is to make a determination based on the evidence. Thus, a finding of responsibility means that when weighing the evidence provided during this investigation, the evidence of a policy violations outweighs the evidence that there is not a policy violation. The issue of credibility is integral to this case, most notably because Respondent disputes the accounts of Witnesses and contends that they are using professional differences as a reason to come forward with these allegations. Witness and Respondent credibility were assessed throughout the course of this investigation. Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] provided accounts which were corroborated at times by Respondent, and by Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Respondent provided certain information which was corroborated by Witnesses [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].

Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did not appear to have anything against student, Witness [REDACTED]. Witnesses [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] all described Witness [REDACTED] as being an exceptional student. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 7, 2020; Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 16,

2020; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 23, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 21, 2020.)

█████ was found to be credible because he had no apparent motive to falsify information, he did not observe any of the reported behavior, and appeared to report forthrightly and honestly what was communicated to him by Witnesses and Respondent. █████ was informed by █████ and █████ that they had witnessed Respondent and █████ engage in inappropriate behavior. (Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 16, 2020.) █████ spoke to Respondent about what was being alleged but did not disclose to Respondent who his “accusers” were. (Witness █████ Account, July 23, 2020; Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) █████ does not purport to have observed any of the behavior discussed and sought to provide Respondent an opportunity to hear the allegations against him. (Witness █████ Account, July 23, 2020.) █████ account shows that █████ and █████ sought out assistance from a senior faculty member prior to reporting Respondent to the Title IX office. This suggests that █████ and █████ were initially reluctant to report Respondent when they perceived he was in a Consensual Relationship with the Student, and instead attempted to seek counsel with someone who may intervene to get Respondent to stop the inappropriate behavior. It was only after █████ reportedly observed Respondent and █████ kissing in the laboratory, after █████ had spoken to Respondent about the concerns, that the Title IX office was notified about the alleged Consensual Relationship. (Witness █████ Account, July 16, 2021; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020.)

█████ was found to be a credible witness. █████ provided a timeline of what she saw happening between Respondent and █████ from the █████ Conference in January 2020, through her encounter with Respondent and █████ in Respondent’s office on June 3, 2020. (Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020.) █████ did not speculate, and she provided information which was corroborated by Respondent. For example, while Respondent provided his perspective of the events, Respondent did not dispute that he traveled to the █████ Conference with only █████ (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020.) Respondent did not dispute that he had a conversation about his wife in front of his students. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020.) Moreover, Respondent did not dispute the account of how █████ encountered him at his office with the student. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020; Witness █████ Account, July 7, 2020.) Additionally, █████ account during this investigation was consistent with what both she and █████ stated she conveyed to him prior to reporting to the Title IX office. Accordingly, █████ was found to be a credible witness.

█████ was also found to be a credible witness because she appeared to answer questions honestly and forthrightly, and as discussed above, she did not have an apparent motive to falsify the allegations against Respondent. █████ a junior faculty member █████ described having a good, cordial relationship with Respondent. (Witness █████ Account, July 16, 2020.) █████ account during the investigation was consistent with what she conveyed to Witnesses █████ and █████ prior to reporting to the Title IX office. █████ heard sounds of sex from Respondent’s office. (Witness █████ Account, July 16, 2020.) █████ saw Respondent and █████ kissing in Respondent’s lab. (Witness █████ Account, July 16, 2020.) Respondent contends that █████ account is not credible because he had previously

asked her if she could hear music from his office, and [REDACTED] said no, so he contends she could not have heard anything through his office wall. Respondent stated that he felt that if sex noises were coming from his office, they did not disturb [REDACTED] because she would not have been able to hear them. (Respondent interview, August 6, 2020; EO 1096_0010003.) The investigator reviewed schematics of the floor and offices, and confirmed that Respondent's office [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] office.¹³ The fact that [REDACTED] reported to Respondent that she was unable to hear Respondent's music on a prior occasion did not diminish her credibility in reporting that she heard sexual encounter noises on other occasions.

[REDACTED] statement of what she heard was detailed, and while Respondent disputed that sex had taken place, Respondent based his response on the time specified in [REDACTED] account, not on whether a sexual act took place. Respondent stated that he was in Hawaii during spring break, 2020 (EO 1096_001012) and questioned when the other incidents [REDACTED] heard took place, stating it was hard to defend himself without knowing the dates of the alleged incidents. (EO 1096_001008.) Further, Respondent's rationale for why [REDACTED] credibility should be questioned was based on disagreements over course instruction¹⁴ and [REDACTED]. When weighing the evidence, these types of disagreements were not viewed as the type of conflict that reasonably results in the fabrication of the experiences reported by [REDACTED] and even if presuming that these types of disagreements existed, they do not diminish the credibility of [REDACTED] account.

The credibility of [REDACTED] statement was impacted by her short responses and occasional prevarication. For example, [REDACTED] repeatedly stated that she was unsure why anyone would think that she and Respondent were having inappropriate encounters, even prior to being asked substantive questions. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 22, 2020.) Additionally, [REDACTED] answers to the investigator's questions were brief and without explanation or elaboration to lend specificity or context to her answers. For example, [REDACTED] denied that she and Respondent were kissing in Respondent's laboratory when [REDACTED] walked into the laboratory. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 22, 2020.) However, when given an opportunity to explain what occurred in the lab at that time, [REDACTED] declined to state anything more than the kiss did not happen. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 22, 2020.) [REDACTED] resistance to explain and provide relevant information to this specific allegation, such as the uniquely close relationship Respondent described that she and he have, weighed against her credibility.

Respondent's statement, when viewed in light of the other evidence gathered, was found to be less credible than those of Witnesses [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. His credibility was diminished because he prevaricated, deflected to other issues rather than answer questions, and changed his responses to significant questions after his first interview or delayed answering questions until after he reviewed the Evidence Report. Respondent's depiction of his relationship with Witness [REDACTED] was couched in his pedagogy and how he manages his students overall. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) Respondent views his students as friends. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) Respondent described his investment in the lives of his students as being different and unique from his peers. Respondent views his team as a family, and in this respect, he connects with his staff outside of campus. Respondent described drinking beers and water/floating activities

¹³ Based on the schematics, Respondent's west office wall is shared with Witness [REDACTED] office.

¹⁴ Respondent provided emails of his communication between him and other faculty members.

as ways in which he has a different relationship with them than his peers. (EO 1096_001012–001013.) Respondent explained that he has more contact and is invested in the lives of his students outside of the classroom when compared to his peers. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) However, while Respondent’s account of how his relationships with students differ from those of his colleagues might have provided a plausible explanation for the occasions on which he was seen with the student at [REDACTED] Brewery or his actions at the hotel bar during the [REDACTED] conference, it does not explain or diminish the credibility of the evidence gathered related to the sounds of sexual activity or the reported kiss in the lab.

In Respondent’s second interview and his written response after his first interview, he spent time attacking the credibility of the witnesses rather than describing or explaining why he would be alone in his office with [REDACTED] with the lights off, the futon extended to a bed, and with what a witness reported as post-coital smells emanating from the room. With respect to the reported kiss, Respondent reported, “While [REDACTED] and I were standing close to each other, we were standing by a PCR machine, and a bench in the back of the room. We were standing close to each other, but we were not kissing. I was up and moving, and [REDACTED] was doing something else. We were physically close, but we were not kissing.” Respondent explained that he had his back against the wall and was in close proximity¹⁵ to [REDACTED] and thus [REDACTED] misperceived what she observed. When viewed considering all the evidence gathered, this explanation of the incident is less plausible than the event as explained by [REDACTED]. Moreover, Respondent, like [REDACTED] is also married and has children. This fact was considered during the investigation in two ways; initially it could be considered as reducing the likelihood that he would engage in a Consensual Relationship with someone else, but it also increases the likelihood that his account during this investigation would be shaped in a manner that would not impact his personal life.

Respondent posits that Witnesses [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] had motive to fabricate the information they provided to somehow get back at him due to their professional differences. However, there is no evidence to support that their disagreements were so severe as to provide a plausible motive for them to, or that they actually did, fabricate the allegations. For example, Respondent did not raise the issue of a professional disagreement as a motive for Witnesses [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] to fabricate the allegations against him until his second interview, despite being asked about their potential motives during his first interview.

B. Did Respondent exercise authority over Student [REDACTED]

Executive Order 1096 explicitly forbids Consensual Relationships between members of the campus community, namely faculty and students, due to the actual and potential power imbalance between them. “A CSU Employee shall not enter into a consensual relationship with a Student or Employee over whom that employee exercises or influences direct or otherwise significant academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority.” (Executive Order 1096.)

[REDACTED] was an undergraduate student from Fall 2017 through Spring 2020. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Respondent was Complainant’s supervisor and in courses, Respondent was [REDACTED] instructor. Respondent and [REDACTED] had an academic relationship,

¹⁵ Investigators summary of Respondent’s comments, found in Respondent Account, July 20, 2020, and August 6, 2020.

in addition to the supervisory role that Respondent and [REDACTED] had as he managed his lab, [REDACTED] and which she used as a student. [REDACTED] and Respondent also [REDACTED] (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) There is no dispute that Respondent exercised a great deal of influence over [REDACTED] academic career. Respondent described Complainant as an excellent student, "I am close with [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. We have developed a close friendship. She is an excellent student and has achieved so much in my laboratory and at Chico State. [REDACTED] (EO 1096_001013.) Respondent supported [REDACTED] in his capacity as an advisor, when she presented her research and in her submission of peer-reviewed work, as aforementioned. (EO 1096_001005.) [REDACTED] was an enrolled student during Spring 2020, and thus, the Consensual Relationship policy would apply. Additionally, [REDACTED] is continuing at our institution as a graduate student, whose work will be with Respondent. Accordingly, Respondent exercised or influenced direct or otherwise significant academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, and extracurricular authority over [REDACTED] a Student.

C. Did Respondent engage in a Consensual Relationship with a student?

Respondent's connection to Complainant was both professional and personal. The issue is whether Respondent and [REDACTED] engaged in a Consensual Relationship, as defined in Executive Order 1096, which was sexual or romantic in nature. "Consensual Relationship means a sexual or romantic relationship between two persons who voluntarily enter into such a relationship." (Executive Order 1096.)

According to Respondent, [REDACTED] shares interest in Respondent's research, and that, in and of itself, is reason for Respondent and [REDACTED] to work together, converse and even develop a strong relationship. This investigation is not a rebuke of Respondent's interest in building relationships with his students, but looks only at whether the preponderance of the evidence indicates that this particular relationship meets the definition of a Consensual Relationship as written in the Executive Order 1096.

There is a dispute in this case over whether sexual activity took place, not just on one occasion, but on several occasions. Respondent denied having sex with [REDACTED] in Respondent's office. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) However, by Respondent's own admission, he had a relationship with her that was different than with other students. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.)

Witnesses [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] accounts provide evidence that Respondent and [REDACTED] engaged in a consensual sexual relationship. [REDACTED] witnessed Respondent and [REDACTED] in Respondent's closed office, with Respondent's lights off. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 7, 2020.) [REDACTED] described what she saw and what she smelled. Respondent and [REDACTED] were not wearing any shoes and [REDACTED] was laying on the futon bed in Respondent's office while Respondent's laptop was closed on the desk. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 7, 2020.) [REDACTED] described the smell emanating from the room upon the door being opened by Respondent as post-coital. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 7, 2020.) Respondent, in his account, said he closed his laptop once [REDACTED] came into his office. (EO 109_001004.) Respondent explained that he and [REDACTED] had come to his office, after leaving [REDACTED] Pizza in downtown Chico, [REDACTED] blocks from

campus. Respondent described consuming alcohol while at the pizzeria. Respondent and [REDACTED] both discussed watching films in Respondent's office, although it is not clear if this was one such occasion. (Respondent Account, July 20, 2020.) Respondent and [REDACTED] in their accounts, shared that they watched at least two films in Respondent's office, including *The Proposal* and *6 Underground*. (Respondent Account, August 6, 2020.) Respondent shared that neither film has pornographic content, although there "might be sex scenes." (EO 1096 001003-001004; Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 22, 2020.) In this particular incident, while [REDACTED] did not say that she witnessed Respondent and [REDACTED] engaging in sexual activity, she provided her perspective on what she saw: Respondent and [REDACTED] behind closed doors in a University facility, with the light off, futon extended and neither were wearing shoes, in addition to the smell she encountered. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 7, 2020.) Neither Respondent nor [REDACTED] refute what [REDACTED] states she saw, but they dispute that sexual activity took place. What makes [REDACTED] more credible in this instance is not simply the partial confirmation by both Respondent and [REDACTED] of her ([REDACTED]) account, but that this instance is one in a series of such incidents perceived by the reporting faculty. Additionally, as discussed below, [REDACTED] account was consistent with [REDACTED] account describing Respondent and [REDACTED] behavior.

In addition, Respondent's admitted conduct of having a student in his office, without either wearing face coverings, as well as standing in close proximity to her in the lab, again without either wearing face coverings, violated the COVID-19 rules¹⁶ put in place to protect both employees and students. Respondent's behavior further demonstrates his poor judgment and disregard for the rules in his interactions with Student [REDACTED] in particular.

The University's policy on consensual relationships does not preclude an educator, staff or administrator from showing investment in the lives of students, nor does it prevent the existence of personal relationships. It does, however, attempt to protect students and the integrity of its academic programs by prohibiting consensual sexual relationships where there is an inherent power imbalance. In this case, multiple instances of romantic or sexual encounters between Respondent and [REDACTED] Respondent's student, were reported by other witnesses. This was not a one-off, or isolated incident. [REDACTED] account highlight's instances of her hearing sexual sounds coming from Respondent's office. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 16, 2020.) Respondent's response to evidence suggests that since [REDACTED] could not hear music coming from Respondent's office, that she would be unable to hear sexual sounds coming from Respondent's office. (EO 1096_001003.) Respondent and [REDACTED] shared that they did not watch pornographic material in their offices, and given the credibility of [REDACTED] as discussed above, she had little reason to fabricate the accounts of what she heard. [REDACTED] was able to identify [REDACTED] voice making sexual sounds, saying "hold on" and then the sexual sounds continuing. (Witness [REDACTED] July 16, 2020.) This evidence and the accounts of [REDACTED] provide a preponderance of evidence to support a finding that Respondent engaged in sexual activity with [REDACTED] in his office on more than one occasion.

Evidence further supporting the contention that Consensual Relationship existed between Respondent and [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] witnessing of a kiss between Respondent and [REDACTED] in Respondent's lab. (Witness [REDACTED] Account, July 16, 2020.) As discussed above, Respondent's

¹⁶ In his response to the evidence, Respondent stated that COVID regulations permit only two people to be in the fish room because of the size of the space, although he did not mention the face coverings requirement.

explanation as to why [REDACTED] misperceived them kissing was not found to be credible. As such, the preponderance of the evidence supports finding that [REDACTED] saw Respondent and [REDACTED] kissing in the lab.

Accordingly, the preponderance of the evidence supports finding that Respondent engaged in a Consensual Relationship with a Student.

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the preponderance of the evidence obtained in this investigation supports a finding that Respondent violated Executive Order 1096 by engaging in a Consensual Relationship with a Student.




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August 10, 2020

Robert Morton:

I have completed addressing the issues in the "Evidence Considered" document and wanted to summarize my take on all of it. To state this clearly: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I have not had, and are not currently having, a romantic or sexual relationship.



First, there is basically only testimony from one person- Dr. [REDACTED] who claimed that she heard me having sex with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in my office. The first accusation? Over Spring Break. I wasn't even in town- I was in Hawaii with my family celebrating [REDACTED] (I send you emails about this). The other accusations? I have no idea when they occurred, so it's hard to defend myself. The other testimony? Dr. [REDACTED] saw me in the office with [REDACTED]. This happened. But there was no mention that anyone heard sex noises or really anything else strange except the room was warm and "smelled." That's because there was nothing going on. Then there is Dr. [REDACTED] testimony, which basically states that he didn't think anything of our behavior until it was brought up by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. That's how gossip and rumors start. They incepted this idea into his head. The kissing incident? [REDACTED] [REDACTED] doesn't even seem to remember it from her testimony, and this whole situation started the ball in motion to file a complaint with your office. Because [REDACTED] said she saw me kissing [REDACTED] the complaint was filed and [REDACTED] agreed with their assessment. That's very convenient. These accusations are all fraught with a multitude of discrepancies, which I highlight in the document. All of these people I have a strained relationship with. [REDACTED] is impossible to share [REDACTED] with and is not doing a good job in the department. [REDACTED] disagrees with me on a multitude of curriculum and scheduling issues. [REDACTED] has killed all my cell lines in the past due to his laziness and inattention to detail. I have sent you emails attesting to these facts. Dr. [REDACTED] "testimony" is all hearsay- he has no real participation in this at all. Dr. [REDACTED] states that I am a professional and he has never seen anything strange. I work with [REDACTED] every day. And he knows that there is no sexual/romantic relationship going on. Finally, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] denies this as well. So, the two people having a "consensual relationship" are denying it, while two women that I have a contentious relationship with are accusing me of it.

I don't know if this is all due to COVID or not. People have been stressed. I have been stressed. I have been trying to relieve that stress by coming into work and getting things done. But it has not been business as usual. I have seen homeless people roaming the hallways of Holt Hall. The heat has been unbearable in the building. There is a person that defecates everyday outside of the door to the building. There are needles scattered all over the place outside. So, I hope people can understand why I go in the office to work with [REDACTED] and shut the door. [REDACTED] shuts and locks the door, too. She and I have both confronted homeless people, and so has [REDACTED]. It's scary. I am trying to avoid



those situations by keeping our presence low key in the building and by closing and locking doors behind me. One thing I'm not doing? Loudly having sex in my office.

I am close with [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. We have developed a close friendship. She is an excellent student, and has achieved so much in my laboratory and at Chico State. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] That is phenomenal. She is working [REDACTED]. Ask [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] how many they have [REDACTED] as actual professors. They are jealous of my relationship with [REDACTED] and that we work well together. They are jealous of the fact that we are hard workers. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are not hard workers. Ask them both how much they have accomplished over the COVID shutdown. The answer: "not much." So yes- I have been doing work with my student and getting things done. We are good friends. I ask her about childcare advice (her kids are teenagers). I had a beer with her, her husband, and son [REDACTED] the other week ([REDACTED] is 16- he wasn't drinking beer) at the [REDACTED]. Her and her husband have been over to my house for parties. I helped him make a graduation video for [REDACTED] because of the fact that she couldn't get to walk in the ceremony that wasn't held this year. She's been waiting 20 years to do that. I even had lunch with [REDACTED] mother the other week. Does this seem like the behavior of someone that is cheating on his wife and having an affair with his student? No- it is the behavior of a faculty member that cares very deeply about his students. Ask any of my students and they will tell you that I am one of the only people here in the Biology department that goes above and beyond for them. I can show you letters, emails, etc. I care. That's why I work here. I am not abusing that power.



I await the decision of your office, and hope you can see my point of view on these issues.

Sincerely,

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