

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
COMMAND**

AETC INSTRUCTION 36-2909

2 MARCH 2007

Certified Current 26 September 2011

Personnel



**PROFESSIONAL AND UNPROFESSIONAL
RELATIONSHIPS**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

ACCESSIBILITY: This publication is available for downloading or ordering on the e-Publishing website at www.e-publishing.af.mil.

RELEASABILITY: There are no releasability restrictions on this publication.

OPR: HQ AETC/JAJ
Supersedes AETCI36-2909, 31 May 2006

Certified by: HQ AETC/JA (Col Dwight D. Creasy)
Pages: 9

This instruction implements AFPD 36-29, *Military Standards*, and AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, with an emphasis on recruiting, training, and education environments. It applies to the following individuals assigned or attached to, or operating on, an AETC unit as faculty, staff, trainees, cadets, and students: active duty military, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command members; DoD civilians; Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) cadets; international military or civilian personnel; and contractor personnel. It also applies to recruiters performing in any of the capacities detailed in paragraph 3.4. and first-term Airmen who participate in the Recruiter Assistance Program (RAP). **Note:** These Airmen are referred to in this instruction as RAPPers.

Military members who violate a prohibition in paragraph 4. (or any subparagraph there under) of this instruction and/or paragraph 3.5. (or any subparagraph there under) of AFI 36-2909 are subject to prosecution under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) as well as any other applicable article of the UCMJ.

Civilian personnel who violate a prohibition in paragraph 4. (or any subparagraph there under) of this instruction and/or paragraph 3.5. (or any subparagraph there under) of AFI 36-2909 will be subject to disciplinary action under AFI 36-704, *Discipline and Adverse Actions*.

The ability to take adverse action against personnel from other Services, international personnel, or contractor personnel will depend on the applicability of a current memorandum of understanding, memorandum of agreement, international agreement, or contract.

This instruction may only be supplemented with the prior approval of HQ AETC/JA.

Attachment 1 contains a glossary of references and supporting information. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with AFMAN 37-123 (will convert to AFMAN 33-363), Management of Records, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at https://afrims.amc.af.mil/rds_series.cfm.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This revisions reflects the AETC/CC signature to ensure the instruction is clearly considered a general regulation for military justice purposes.

1. Overview:

1.1. **Professional Relationships.** Professional relationships covered by this instruction include faculty, staff, trainees, cadets, students, recruiters, recruits, applicants, RAppers, and detachment staff. Personnel in each category are encouraged to communicate freely regarding their careers, classroom performance, duties, and missions. This type of communication enhances performance, morale, and discipline and improves the training environment. At the same time, it preserves proper respect for authority and focuses on the mission.

1.2. **Unprofessional Relationships.** Unprofessional relationships covered by this instruction include relationships involving faculty, staff, trainees, cadets, students, recruiters, recruits, applicants, and/or RAppers. Whether pursued on or off duty, relationships are unprofessional when they detract from the authority of superiors or result in (or reasonably create the appearance of) favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests. Unprofessional relationships include relationships between officers; between enlisted members; between officers and enlisted members; between recruiters and recruits, applicants, or RAppers; between RAppers and recruits or applicants; and between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel.

2. General Guidance on Relationships:

2.1. The AETC mission demands that personnel maintain proper and professional relationships in the training and recruiting environment. Faculty, staff, or recruiters involved in consensual but unprofessional relationships with trainees, cadets, students, recruits, applicants, or RAppers will be held primarily accountable. Conversely, trainees, cadets, students, and RAppers have an independent obligation to avoid prohibited behaviors.

2.2. Not all contact or association between trainees, cadets, students, recruits, RAppers, or applicants and staff, faculty, or recruiters is prohibited. This instruction provides general guidance to allow for the application of sound judgment and common sense. A commander must consider the total circumstances when determining whether the personal relationship at issue violates this instruction. Factors to consider include whether the conduct has compromised the chain of command, resulted in the appearance of partiality, or otherwise undermined good order, discipline, authority, and/or morale.

2.3. The camaraderie essential to military organizations is particularly beneficial in the military training and education process. Personnel covered by this instruction are encouraged to participate in appropriate organizational functions, such as picnics, sporting events, graduations, student achievements, Air Force-approved fund drives, membership campaigns, and other activities authorized by their commander.

3. Terms Defined:

3.1. **Faculty and Staff.** This includes DoD and international personnel, either military or civilian, who are directly or indirectly involved in training or education and could influence or use their posi-

tions to take advantage of trainees, cadets, and students attending courses of instruction. This category does not include base support personnel (for example, finance, personnel, contracting). It includes, but is not limited to, military training instructors, military training leaders, Officer Training School (OTS) instructors, instructor pilots, professional military education instructors, AFROTC instructors, and other instructors of trainees, cadets, and students.

3.2. Trainees and Cadets. This includes military and civilian personnel who are assigned or on temporary duty to AETC bases, wings, detachments, or schools to attend training prior to reporting to their permanent duty stations of assignment. This also includes personnel who (1) are awaiting or have completed training, and (2) have been eliminated or disenrolled from training and are awaiting reassignment or discharge. Examples include, but are not limited to, basic military trainees, technical school trainees, OTS cadets, AFROTC cadets, and officers attending commissioned officer training (COT), undergraduate pilot training (UPT), and undergraduate navigator training (UNT).

3.3. Students. This includes military and civilian personnel who are assigned or are on temporary duty to AETC bases, wings, detachments, or schools to attend courses of instruction and who have already reported to their permanent duty stations of assignment. Examples include, but are not limited to, those attending the Airman Leadership School (ALS), NCO Academy, Senior NCO Academy, Air and Space Basic Course (ASBC), Squadron Officers School (SOS), and Judge Advocate Staff Officer Course (JASOC).

3.4. Recruiters. This includes any military member whose primary duty is to recruit persons for Air Force nonprior service, prior service, OTS, health professions programs, AFROTC, and other accessions programs. Recruiters include, but are not limited to, AFROTC admissions liaison officers, liaison officer directors, regional directors of admissions, assistant regional directors of admissions (commonly referred to as gold bars), Military Entrance Processing Station liaison NCOs, and unit admissions officers.

3.5. Recruits. This includes any person who applies for an enlistment, appointment, or commissioning program and signs an enlistment, appointment, or commissioning contract, respectively. Recruit status terminates upon entry into the Air Force, withdrawal of selection, permanent disqualification, or applicant-initiated termination of processing.

3.6. Applicants. This includes any person who tells a recruiter that he or she is interested in joining the Air Force. Applicant status (1) terminates upon signing of the enlistment, appointment, or commissioning contract; (2) continues as long as the applicant pursues entrance into the Air Force, or (3) continues until the applicant is notified in writing of permanent disqualification.

3.7. RAPpers. This includes first-term Airmen who participate in the Recruiter Assistance Program (RAP) which is governed by AFI 36-3003, *Military Leave Program*.

3.8. Immediate Family. This includes the mother, father, siblings, and spouse.

3.9. Training. This includes entire blocks of training, such as, but not limited to, basic military training, technical training, AFROTC training, OTS, COT, UPT, and UNT.

3.10. Course of Instruction. This includes classes designed to educate members, such as, but not limited to, ALS, NCO Academy, Senior NCO Academy, ASBC, SOS, and JASOC.

4. Specific Prohibitions and Responsibilities:

4.1. Military members, DoD civilian employees, and applicable contractor employees are responsible for complying with this instruction both on and off duty in their personal behavior and in the treatment of others. These personnel must ensure their actions do not detract from the professional image the Air Force intends to project.

4.2. Common sense exceptions, to include accommodations of a blood or marriage relationship, may be allowed when authorized in writing by the person's commander. Those authorized such exceptions will respect all customs and courtesies observed by members of different grades when they are on duty, in uniform in public, or at official social functions.

4.3. Faculty and staff will:

4.3.1. Ensure their relationship with any trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of any trainee, cadet, or student is professional and impartial, as follows:

4.3.1.1. The duty to maintain a professional relationship with *trainees or cadets* will continue throughout the entire period of training or instruction received by trainees and cadets prior to reporting to their permanent duty stations of assignment. This duty applies regardless of the existence of a direct relationship between a faculty or staff member and a trainee or cadet. For example, basic military training instructors are prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with trainees while the trainees are in basic military training and technical training.

4.3.1.2. The duty to maintain a professional relationship with *students* in the same course of instruction will continue throughout the entire course of instruction. This duty applies regardless of the existence of a direct relationship between a faculty or staff member and a student. For example, instructors in ASBC are prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with ASBC students while the students are attending the course.

4.3.2. Comply with the limitations identified in AFI 36-2909 as well as the more specific guidelines in this instruction.

4.3.3. Not establish, develop, attempt to develop, or conduct a personal, intimate, or sexual relationship with a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, cadet, or student. This includes, but is not limited to, dating, handholding, kissing, embracing, caressing, and engaging in sexual activities. Prohibited personal, intimate, or sexual relationships include unprofessional relationships conducted in person and/or via cards, letters, e-mails, telephone calls, instant messaging, video, photographs, or any other means of communication.

4.3.4. Not establish a common household (that is, share the same living area in an apartment, house, or other dwelling) with a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, cadet, or student. This prohibition does not extend to situations where military operations reasonably require the sharing of living accommodations.

4.3.5. Not use his or her grade or position, threats, pressure, or promise of return of favors or favorable treatment in an attempt to gain sexual favors from a trainee, cadet, or student.

4.3.6. Not make sexual advances toward, or seek or accept sexual favors from, a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, cadet, or student.

4.3.7. Not solicit donations (other than for official Air Force campaigns) from a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, cadet, or student.

- 4.3.8. Not gamble with a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, cadet, or student.
- 4.3.9. Not lend money to, borrow money from, or otherwise become indebted to a trainee, cadet, student, or member of the immediate family of a trainee, student, or cadet.
- 4.3.10. Not develop, attempt to develop, establish, or carry on a personal social relationship with a trainee, cadet, or student.
- 4.3.11. Not attend social gatherings or frequent clubs, bars, or theaters on a personal social basis with a trainee, cadet, or student.
- 4.3.12. Not provide alcohol to, or consume alcohol with, a trainee, cadet, or student on a personal social basis.
- 4.3.13. Not accept the personal goods of a trainee, cadet, or student for storage or any other reason.
- 4.4. Trainees, cadets, and students will:
- 4.4.1. Ensure their relationships with faculty and staff are professional, as follows:
- 4.4.1.1. The duty of *trainees and cadets* to maintain professional relationships with faculty and staff continues throughout the entire period of training or instruction received by trainees and cadets prior to reporting to their permanent duty stations of assignment. This duty applies regardless of the existence of a direct relationship between a faculty or staff member and a trainee or cadet. For example, trainees in basic military training are prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with instructors in basic military training while the trainees are in basic military training and technical training.
- 4.4.1.2. The duty of *students* to maintain professional relationships with faculty and staff in the same course of instruction continues throughout the entire course. For example, ASBC students are prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with ASBC instructors while the students are attending the course.
- 4.4.2. Not engage with faculty or staff in the activities identified in AFI 36-2909 as well as the more specific guidelines in this instruction.
- 4.4.3. Not establish, develop, attempt to develop, or conduct a personal, intimate, or sexual relationship with faculty or staff that includes, but is not limited to, dating, handholding, kissing, embracing, caressing, and engaging in sexual activities. Prohibited personal, intimate, or sexual relationships include those unprofessional relationships which are conducted in person and/or via cards, letters, e-mails, telephone calls, instant messaging, video, photographs and by any other means of communication.
- 4.4.4. Not use threats, pressure, or promise of return of favors or favorable treatment for the purpose of gaining sexual favors from faculty or staff.
- 4.4.5. Not make sexual advances toward, or seek or accept sexual advances or favors from, faculty or staff.
- 4.4.6. Not gamble with faculty or staff.
- 4.4.7. Not lend money to, borrow money from, or otherwise become indebted to faculty or staff.

4.4.8. Not establish a common household with a member of the faculty or staff (that is, share the same living area in an apartment, house, or other dwelling). This prohibition does not extend to situations where military operations reasonably require the sharing of living accommodations.

4.4.9. Not develop, attempt to develop, establish, or carry on a personal social relationship with faculty or staff.

4.4.10. Not attend social gatherings or frequent clubs, bars, or theaters on a personal social basis with faculty or staff.

4.4.11. Not accept alcohol from, or consume alcohol with, faculty or staff on a personal social basis.

4.5. Recruiters will:

4.5.1. Maintain high standards of conduct and be totally professional in their relationships with recruits, applicants, and RAPpers.

4.5.2. Comply with the limitations identified in AFI 36-2909 as well as the more specific guidelines in this instruction.

4.5.3. Not establish, develop, attempt to develop, or conduct a personal, intimate, or sexual relationship with a recruit, applicant, or RAPper. This includes, but is not limited to, dating, handholding, kissing, embracing, caressing, and engaging in sexual activities. Prohibited personal, intimate, or sexual relationships include those unprofessional relationships conducted in person and/or via cards, letters, e-mails, telephone calls, instant messaging, video, photographs, or any other means of communication.

4.5.4. Not establish a common household with a recruit, applicant, or RAPper (that is, share the same living area in an apartment, house, or other dwelling).

4.5.5. Not use grade or position, threats, pressure, or promise of return of favors or favorable treatment in an attempt to gain sexual favors from a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.6. Not make sexual advances toward, or seek or accept sexual advances or favors from, a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.7. Not gamble with a recruit, applicant, RAPper, or member of the immediate family of a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.8. Not lend money to, borrow money from, or otherwise become indebted to a recruit, applicant, RAPper, or member of the immediate family of a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.9. Not develop, attempt to develop, establish, or carry on a personal social relationship with a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.10. Not attend social gatherings or frequent clubs, bars, or theaters on a personal social basis with a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.11. Not provide alcohol to, or consume alcohol with, a recruit, applicant, or RAPper on a personal social basis.

4.5.12. Not solicit donations (other than for official Air Force campaigns) from a recruit, applicant, or RAPper.

4.5.13. Not accept personal goods from a recruit, applicant, or RApper for storage or any other reason.

4.6. RAppers will:

4.6.1. Maintain high standards of conduct and be totally professional in their relationships with recruiters, recruits, and applicants.

4.6.2. Comply with the limitations identified in AFI 36-2909 as well as the more specific guidelines in this instruction.

4.6.3. Not establish, develop, attempt to develop, or conduct a personal, intimate, or sexual relationship with a recruiter, recruit, or applicant. This includes, but is not limited to, dating, hand-holding, kissing, embracing, caressing, and engaging in sexual activities. Prohibited personal, intimate, or sexual relationships include those unprofessional relationships conducted in person and/or via cards, letters, e-mails, telephone calls, instant messaging, video, photographs, or any other means of communication.

4.6.4. Not establish a common household with a recruiter, recruit, or applicant (that is, share the same living area in an apartment, house, or other dwelling).

4.6.5. Not use grade or position, threats, pressure, or promise of return of favors or favorable treatment in an attempt to gain sexual favors from a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.6. Not make sexual advances toward, or seek or accept sexual advances or favors from, a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.7. Not gamble with a recruiter, recruit, applicant, or the immediate family member of a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.8. Not lend money to, borrow money from, or otherwise become indebted to a recruiter, recruit, applicant, or member of the immediate family of a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.9. Not develop, attempt to develop, establish, or carry on a personal social relationship with a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.10. Not attend social gatherings or frequent clubs, bars, or theaters on a personal social basis with a recruiter, recruit, or applicant.

4.6.11. Not provide alcohol to, or consume alcohol with, a recruit or applicant on a personal social basis.

4.6.12. Not accept alcohol from, or consume alcohol with, a recruiter on a personal social basis.

4.6.13. Not solicit donations (other than for official Air Force campaigns) from a recruit or applicant.

4.6.14. Not accept personal goods from a recruit or applicant for storage or any other reason.

5. Training. Commanders will adhere to the requirements in AFI 36-2909. In addition, they will ensure faculty, staff, students, trainees, cadets, recruiters, and RAPPers are briefed on their arrival regarding the requirements of AFI 36-2909 and this instruction.

WILLIAM R. LOONEY, General, USAF
Commander

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

References

Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)
AFPD 36-29, *Military Standards*
AFI 36-704, *Discipline and Adverse Actions*
AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*
AFI 36-3003, *Military Leave Program*
AFMAN 37-123, *Management of Records*
Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS)

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFROTC—Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps
ALS—Airman Leadership School
ASBC—Air and Space Basic Course
COT—commissioned officer training
JASOC—Judge Advocate Staff Officer Course
OTS—Officer Training School
RAP—Recruiter Assistance Program
SOS—Squadron Officers School
UNT—undergraduate navigator training
UPT—undergraduate pilot training