

9.2.1 **Employment in General**

9.2.1.1 *Nature of Employment*

Every employee represents Bellarmine to our students, their parents, and the public. The way we do our jobs presents an image of our entire community. We are judged by how we treat our constituents. Therefore, one of our first priorities is to assist anyone who needs our help. Being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention you give to others is a cornerstone of our philosophy of hospitality and service.

Our personal contact with the public, our manners on the telephone, and the communications we send to customers are a reflection not only of ourselves, but also of the professionalism of Bellarmine.

Bellarmino believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors and/or to the Human Resources staff.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors and vice versa, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that Bellarmine amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

9.2.1.2 *Equal Employment Opportunity*

Bellarmino will base its employment decisions on merit, qualifications, and abilities. It is the policy of Bellarmine not to discriminate against any individual or group of individuals but to provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, religion, age (over 40), national origin, ethnicity, disability, military status or Vietnam veteran era status. The goal of Bellarmine is to select the best qualified person for each position. This applies to recruiting, selecting, training, promoting, and all other personnel actions and conditions of employment, such as compensation, job assignments, benefits, transfers, layoffs, reinstatements, disciplinary actions and terminations. Bellarmine will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship.

Bellarmino also strongly opposes and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse or retaliation, by its employees against any other employee, supervisor, faculty member, student, customer, client, visitor or applicant. Nor will Bellarmine tolerate any form of sexual misconduct by someone who is not employed by the University. Any employee who believes that (s)he has been subject to discrimination or sexual misconduct should immediately bring the matter to the attention of his or her supervisor or area head. In the alternative, concerns may be reported to any officer of the University or the Human Resources Office. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of retaliation. All complaints will be kept confidential, except to the extent that disclosure is necessary to investigate and resolve the allegations of discrimination or unfair treatment. Any person found by Bellarmine, after investigation, to have violated Bellarmine's policies on equal employment, will be subject to appropriate sanctions and discipline up to and including termination of employment, depending on the circumstances. Bellarmine's Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy and the steps to follow to report and resolve claims of discrimination or sexual misconduct are more fully set forth in Sections 9.2.7.2 and 9.2.7.3 respectively of this handbook.

9.2.1.3 Disability Accommodation

Bellarmino is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled employees, where their disability affects the performance of job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual. If an applicant for employment or an employee believes s/he is eligible for such an accommodation, the individual must notify the Human Resources Office and provide adequate information about the disability and requested accommodation, including such medical documentation as may be required for the University to respond to the request.

Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation (or changes in compensation) as well as in job assignments, classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, and opportunities for promotion. Bellarmino is also committed to not discriminating against any qualified employees or applicants because they are related to or associated with a person with a disability.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. Bellarmino is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

9.2.1.4 Business Ethics and Conduct

The reputation of Bellarmino and our successful meeting of the University's mission are built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of Bellarmino is dependent upon our constituents' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to Bellarmino, students, parents, vendors, and employees to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Bellarmino will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and expects employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

9.2.1.5 Hiring of Relatives; Dating Relationships

The employment of relatives or individuals involved in a dating relationship in the same area of the University may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships.

For purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. A dating relationship is defined as a relationship that is currently or may be reasonably expected to lead to the formation of a consensual "romantic" or sexual relationship. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Although Bellarmine has no prohibition against employing relatives of current employees or individuals involved in a dating relationship with current employees, it is strongly discouraged. Bellarmine is committed to monitoring situations in which such relationships exist in the same area. In case of actual or potential problems, Bellarmine will take prompt action to avoid favoritism or inequitable treatment of other employees. This can include reassignment or, if necessary, termination of employment for one or both of the individuals involved.

Bellarmino's educational mission is promoted by the professionalism in its faculty-student and staff-student relationships. Faculty and staff are cautioned that consensual romantic relationships with student members of the University community, while not expressly prohibited, can prove problematic and may lead to complaints by students of sex discrimination or sexual misconduct. While some relationships may begin and remain harmonious, they are susceptible to being characterized as non-consensual and even coercive. This sometimes occurs when such a relationship ends and is exacerbated by the inherent power differential between the parties. A faculty or staff member involved in a consensual relationship with a student is expected to remove him/herself from academic or professional decisions concerning the student. This expectation arises because the relationship may impair, or may be perceived as impairing, a faculty or staff member's ability to make objective judgments about that student.