

On May 23, the University's Board of Trustees voted to dismiss Dr. Joshua Katz from the Faculty effective immediately. The dismissal followed an investigation initiated in February 2021, after the University received a detailed written complaint from an alumna who had a consensual relationship with Dr. Katz while she was an undergraduate under his academic supervision. That relationship was the focus of a 2018 disciplinary proceeding against Dr. Katz, which resulted in a penalty of unpaid suspension for academic year 2018-2019 and three years of probation following his return to the Faculty in 2019.

The alumna did not participate in or cooperate with the 2018 disciplinary proceeding. When she came forward in 2021, she provided new information unknown to the University in 2018, and the University initiated a new investigation in accordance with its policies. The new investigation did not revisit the policy violations for which Dr. Katz was suspended without pay in 2018; it only considered new issues that came to light because of new information provided by the former student.

The 2021 investigation established multiple instances in which Dr. Katz misrepresented facts or failed to be straightforward during the 2018 proceeding, including a successful effort to discourage the alumna from participating and cooperating after she expressed the intent to do so. It also found that Dr. Katz exposed the alumna to harm while she was an undergraduate by discouraging her from seeking mental health care although he knew her to be in distress, all in an effort to conceal a relationship he knew was prohibited by University rules. These actions were not only egregious violations of University policy, but also entirely inconsistent with his obligations as a member of the Faculty.

Faculty discipline at Princeton is handled in accordance with the "Rules and Procedures of the Faculty," which guarantee numerous procedural safeguards for faculty members facing proposed disciplinary action. In cases involving a proposed suspension or dismissal, the affected faculty member has the right to seek review by an independent committee composed of members of the Faculty elected by their peers.

The recommendation to dismiss Dr. Katz was reviewed by the faculty committee, known as the Committee on Conference and Faculty Appeal. After reviewing the pertinent investigation reports and Dr. Katz's submissions, and interviewing Dr. Katz and others, that committee found that the reasons presented in the dismissal recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty were supported by the record. That recommendation was subsequently submitted to the President, who evaluated it and submitted it to the Board for action.

The Board voted to dismiss Dr. Katz on the recommendation of the University President and Dean of Faculty, after a review of the extensive record by an ad hoc committee of the Board appointed to consider the matter.